

they increased the duty to 30 per cent plus a specific duty of twenty-five cents a pound. On stockings, of which we imported nearly \$3,000,000 worth from Great Britain—

Mr. GOTT: White stockings.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Yes, they were white stockings. Stockings were free from Great Britain. The white ones came in free. That is why the hon. member for Weyburn (Mr. Young) was complaining. They increased the tariff on stockings which were formerly free, to 30 per cent, and imposed an added duty of one dollar a dozen pairs. No wonder my hon. friend was taking white stockings round to the ladies in his constituency. I do not wonder my hon. friend is complaining against such an outrageous advance in the duty on that commodity. On electrical apparatus—I am taking only instances where there are imports from Great Britain—they increased the duty from 15 to 25 per cent, and on boots and shoes from 17½ per cent to 25 per cent.

My right hon. friend went to Great Britain to an imperial conference, and what did he say? Let me give you his own words; he quoted them this afternoon, but just for fear some of my hon. friends should forget, I shall read from page 32 of the second part of the report of the Imperial conference. This is what the Prime Minister said:

I offer to the mother country, and to all the other parts of empire, a preference in the Canadian market in exchange for a like preference in theirs, based upon the addition of a ten per centum increase in prevailing general tariffs, or upon tariffs yet to be created. In the universal acceptance of this offer, and in like proposals and acceptances by all the other parts of empire, we attain to the ideal of empire preference.

I amplify and explain this offer in the following ways:

In the first place, the rate I have mentioned, cannot be uniformly applied. The basis of the proposal is the adequate protection to industries now existent, or yet to be established.

That was the offer. This was the increase in tariffs before he went to the Imperial conference. Over this increase British imports must come to Canada and on top of this increase they were to be protected by a 10 per cent further increase in order to allow them to enter Canada. Do hon. members think they were going to get in over a tariff like that? Yet our government was terribly wrong in the supposition that if we wanted to increase British trade in order that they might buy more goods from us, we should increase the British preference, or our hon. friends opposite no more can boast about their loyalty to British connections, because I fail to under-

stand how any British manufacturer can get over a tariff of that kind. It is an utter impossibility and an absolute absurdity. One cannot conceive of anything more absurd than for a body of intelligent men to go to a group of intelligent men in Great Britain, make such suggestion to them and say: Here we are offering you something for which we ask something in exchange. If my right hon. friend had said: We propose to make the duty such that we may trade with you; if we can exchange our commodities on a free basis, then I am ready to do that—that would have been reasonable. But he does not say that; he never says that. What he aims to do and what his colleagues aim to do is to shut out of Canada every import of any sort that can interfere with the Canadian manufactured product.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): That is what he aims to do, and they are doing it every day. They allow nothing to get into Canada to compete with what is being manufactured here. That is the object they have in view. They are going to make a small isolated, North American colony of Canada. That will be the result of a policy of this kind.

I will confess, Mr. Speaker, that I am rather glad that for once the Tory party are having the courage of their convictions, and are putting their policies into effect. We are pretty poor in western Canada just now. Almost seventy-five per cent of the farmers of that country are in a rather serious financial position. They do not know whether or not they should go on. Why? Because there is not a vestige of hope for them in the immediate future. I have lived in that country for twenty-five years and have seen some pretty hard times, but never in all my experience have I seen conditions in the west as bad as they are to-day. My hon. friends opposite stated during the election that they had a panacea for the difficulties of western Canada. They put a duty of eight cents a pound on butter, and increased the duty on eggs; but when have eggs and butter been as cheap as they are to-day?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, when they were as cheap as they are to-day, and that was in the dying days of the old national policy. We in the west are told by this government: You do not need to raise wheat any longer. Go into the dairy and poultry business. It serves you