

the eve of an election any legislation designed to improve salary and working conditions of civil servants, thus counting on belated gratitude to have political effect at the right time. The bill in regard to the increase in the Senatorial representation of the West was not brought forward until the last week of the session although promised at the very beginning. It failed to become law because the Government would not adhere to precedent and constitutional usage and refused the legitimate request of the Liberal majority in the Senate that the increase should take effect at the same time as the increase in the elective chamber, under the Redistribution Bill. The design, of course, which the Government had in mind was to give it immediate party control of the Senate by the prompt appointment of Conservative politicians from the West. It may be noted that although the Government has not a majority in the Commons from the Western provinces, it seeks a dominating majority of Conservatives from the West in the Senate. The argument that it is unfair to the West to refuse the increased representation in the Senate is hardly justified in view of the fact that such increased representation would be purely of a party bias and would in no way represent the real feelings of the West in political matters.

The Tariff Issue.

The opening Liberal attack led by Sir Wilfrid Laurier at once placed the tariff issue in the forefront. In the Liberal leader's amendment to the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, regret was expressed that despite the admission of depressed business conditions no steps were promised to relieve the situation. Liberalism pointed the way of relief and drew the moral of the defeat of the wider markets proposals of 1911 and the refusal of the tariff reductions therein involved. The need of wider markets for the



producers and for lessening the burden of tariff taxation on consumers was emphasized by the existing commercial and industrial conditions. The Government's reply was, in essence, simply a supine reliance on time and on the resources of the country to remedy the situation. Sir Wilfrid's amendment was defeated by a vote of 108 to 64, a Government majority of 44.

The opposing stands of the two parties from the first day of the session were defined in concrete form and the cleavage was emphasized by the subsequent debates and divisions dealing with the tariff question. Mr. D. B. Neeley, of Humboldt, on January 28th, moved an amendment declaring for Government action to take advantage of the standing offer of the United States to secure free access to the neighboring markets for Canadian wheat and wheat products.

This amendment was in line with what was practically the unanimous demand of the farmers of Western Canada and in accordance with resolutions passed by the Legislatures of the three prairie provinces, including the Conservative legislature of Manitoba. It was turned down by a vote of 102 to 57, a Government majority of 45.

On February 10th, Hon. H. R. Emmerson brought up a specific increase of tariff burdens on the farmers through the decision of the Customs Board of the present Government, making basic slag dutiable. Under the Laurier Government it was on the free list. Basic slag is used as a fertilizer to a large extent in the Maritime provinces. The duty was placed at 10 per cent under the general tariff, at the instance of one manufacturing concern. The result was a prompt increase in the cost of fertilizers, amounting to some tens of thousands of dollars, as Mr. Carvell said, in his constituency alone. The Government heard the situation explained by Mr. Emmerson, but preferred to favor one manufacturer at the expense of thousands of farmers.

On March 11th, Mr. W. E. Knowles, of Moose Jaw, moved a resolution calling for the removal of all duties on agricultural implements. The resolution was supported by Liberal members representing every province. It was shown that Canadian implement manufacturers were at the present time competing successfully with the implement trusts of the United States in the free trade markets of Great Britain and in other countries. It was shown that tariff protection to the manufacturers of the instruments of production was not necessary to the maintenance of the industry in Canada and was unfair to the farmers who asked only for a fair field and no favors in the marketing of their products. The amendment was defeated a vote of 82 to 44, a Government majority of 38.

The Budget Debate.

These were the preliminary votes leading up to the introduction of the budget by Hon. W. T. White on April 6th. The finance minister announced a tariff revision upwards on 59 items in the tariff schedules, designed to benefit specially favored manufacturing interests. It was the first upward revision of the tariff in twenty years and it was opposed to the present fiscal trend in every other country in the world. There were tariff increases on the basic items of iron and steel, brass, and building stone, all tending to increase the profits of privilege and monopoly, to intensify the evils of factitious industrial expansion and to accentuate the increase in the cost of living and the inequalities of opportunity of the masses of people in buying and selling in the best markets. One tariff change

