

mills could not compete against them, and it would be the means of closing our mills.

Mr. HENDERSON. I did not say that.

Mr. RATZ. And again. Idle men are supposed to walk the streets, tall chimneys are expected to tumble down, the cotton mills would close their doors, and so on. So, the hon. member for Halton predicts. Why or for what reason is all this to happen? There must be a cause for it. The hon. member himself has given a very effective answer. He says that the preferential tariff granted in favour of Great Britain will be the means of reducing the prices of cotton to the Canadian people. It will make cheap cottons to the farmer, to the labouring man, to the artisan. The hon. member now sympathizes with the cotton manufacturers. His fatherly care for the farmer has ceased for the present moment. He allows the farmer to content himself with the reduction of duty on post-hole diggers.

The hon. gentleman knows and he admits that the preferential clause means a reduction of taxation, that it makes cheap cottons, he tells us that, and every consumer of cotton knows that a reduction in duties means cheaper goods. He was very much alarmed the other day about the closing of the cotton mills, but I noticed in the newspaper the other night that some of the eastern cotton mills are nearly doubling their capacity. I notice that some of them are adding 3,000 horse power to their motive power. These gentlemen understand the preferential clause just as well as any one, and if they thought that their business was going to be injured by it, they would not go on increasing their plant.

The hon. member told this House that he was perfectly satisfied himself with the reduction of postage, and that it was a great boon to the business man; but here again the poor farmer suffers very heavily, because he does not write as many letters as the business man writes. I would like to ask the hon. member in what respect the farmer or anybody else was injured? We remember quite well that under the rule of hon. gentlemen opposite there was a deficit in the Post Office Department of \$781,000. At that time repeated demands were made by the people of Canada for a reduction in the postal rate; but, Sir, we were always told that it was impossible. We were told that the department was managed with the greatest care, and that the greatest economy was practised, and that with a deficit of over three-quarters of a million dollars, the request could never be granted. But, Sir, when a change had taken place, when this government came into power, when the pruning knife had been applied, when the useless hangers-on had been cleared away, and mail contracts let by public tender, and the department placed under proper business management, then, Sir, a rapid change soon took place.

In two short years the Post Office Department was placed on an equilibrium, a reduction in the management of the department of three-quarters of a million dollars was made in that short time, the mail-carrying mileage was increased by hundreds of miles per day, hundreds of new post offices were opened up all over the country, and a mail service established into the far-off Yukon district, and yet the hon. the Postmaster General was able to grant a penny postage rate, which is a great boon to all classes of the Canadian people.

And, Sir, what is the result? Is it a deficit of \$781,000, such as existed under hon. gentlemen opposite? Not at all. Is it a deficit of a million dollars, as predicted by the hon. leader of the opposition? Not so, Sir. A deficit of \$388,071, with a 2 cent rate, or less than half of what it was under hon. gentlemen opposite, with a 3 cent rate and a 5 cent rate to Great Britain. Does the hon. member for Halton think that such a record would incense the farmers of Canada very much? Does he think they are dissatisfied when they get cheaper letter rates, and the country a better and cheaper mail service?

The hon. member spoke at considerable length of the leather and glove industries, stating that in his opinion they were ill-treated, and very badly used, and that serious crippling of that business would follow. And for why? Because of the preferential tariff which has made a great reduction in prices of leather goods. The hon. gentleman has a very sweet faculty of changing his attitude. A short time ago he was spreading his tender wings over the farmers and consumers of Canada, claiming that they were not well enough treated by the government, because the reductions of the tariff did not go far enough to benefit the farmers. But, Sir, now the leather men are suffering, and the glove men are suffering, and the farmers, and consumers of those goods, are profiting too much by the tariff reductions. I may say to my hon. friend that where it suits him to soothe the farmer he has a happy faculty of doing so, and where he considers it convenient to nurse the manufacturer, he also extends him a helping hand.

Mr. Speaker, under the policy of the present government the affairs of the country were well and economically managed, new life was inflated into the business industries of Canada, raw material was made cheaper, so that the manufacturer to-day is able to compete with his manufactured goods in the markets of the world.

The farmer was placed in a better position, taxation upon his articles of consumption was reduced, better markets for his products were secured, and he is in a more prosperous condition, under the policy of the present government, than he ever was heretofore. The artisan, the labouring man, are in a far better position under