

It will aim, having in view the commonwealth of our common country, to go as far as may be justifiable toward the trade policy of England, the shining example of the world, although it cannot be expected that we can accomplish in one or two generations what it took in England eight centuries to arrive at.

That word 'justifiable' seems to me a fairly elastic word. I do not know any policy whatever which the right hon. gentleman might bring down regarding the tariff that he might not say was in consonance with the language I have just quoted. He found great fault with the term 'adequate protection.' But that was definiteness itself compared with the term my right hon. friend used in western Canada, when confronted with his own specific declarations as to what his policy would be when he came into power.

That there is protection in the tariff at present, even my hon. friend the Minister of Customs will not deny.

Mr. FOSTER. I think he denies it.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. If he does I refer him to the Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding) who in answer to myself, in 1907, when I asked him if there was not protection in the tariff, said frankly and manfully, that there was. The Minister of Commerce knows that it is there and he knows quite well that, when in opposition, he declared that the principle of protection was a curse to the country and that he and his friends would absolutely abolish it. It is these things which the farmers are considering at present, and it is some explanation as to these bygone promises and present indefinite utterances, which the farmers of the west will require when they come down here in December.

My hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. E. M. Macdonald) was in the west with the Prime Minister and no doubt enjoyed himself very much. I observed that he was frequently entertained by some of his old friends from the maritime provinces and I am glad that he was thus honoured. But on his return to Nova Scotia he presented the theory that the only free-traders in the west were a few Tories. The Prime Minister, on the other hand, says that the only protectionists in the east are a few Tories. So that the utterances of these two hon. gentlemen do not seem to square with one another.

In 1908 my right hon. friend was very willing to devote himself for an hour or two in this House to a certain speech which I made in Halifax in August, 1907, in which I undertook to lay down some principles of action and of policy for the Conservative party. He was exceedingly distressed because the word 'protection' was not found in the articles of that policy as laid down. He said the thing itself

might be there, but it was writ very small, indeed. But I do not notice that my right hon. friend in the west emphasized that element of the situation. There he was very desirous, indeed, to hold up the Tory party as a party which, in some mysterious way, had tied his hands during 15 years and prevented his bringing about the realization and fulfilment of the promises he had so frequently made to the people during the ten years preceding 1896.

My right hon. friend was exceedingly distressed and grieved, and almost ashamed, in 1908, because I had stated to the people of British Columbia that my declaration to them in 1904 that they should have a board of arbitration to consider the justice of their claims would hold good if we came into power. I made that declaration to them then and I stand by it to-day. But what of the lavish promises of public works that decorated every speech of my right hon. friend from the time he started until the time he ended his tour. He had not gone to more than about half a dozen meetings before he had emptied the public treasury for five years to come. At Fort Francis, on his return, I am told,—he will correct me if I am wrong—the people asked for some assistance toward a highway. He misunderstood and thought they asked for a railway, and promptly said that they should have a railway, for which they had never asked. And my hon. friend the Minister of Railways (Mr. Graham) joined in the chorus; and, needless to say, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Pugsley) was the very head and front of the offending on such occasions. In passing I may say that I understand my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works declared in the west that I had been making statements on the public platform in Ontario that I would not dare to repeat in the House of Commons. Lest there be any misunderstanding, I tell him that I repeat every one of them now in the House of Commons, and the hon. minister is welcome to take any action he may see fit in regard to any of those utterances. But I was saying that the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals joined in this chorus of promises. One story was that we were to have a canal across the continent. I do not know whether it was to be extended across the Rocky mountains, but there are newspaper reports which would indicate that even that was not thought out of the way. The Minister of Railways and Canals put it upon the ground that this canal was a necessity to control the rates upon the Transcontinental. It is perfectly clear that something will be necessary to control rates on the Transcontinental, because,