

those three years had increased 17 per cent; 100,000 more people were employed, factories were working full time; wages increased between 5 per cent and 35 per cent and 10,000,000 bushels of grain were consumed in the first two years of protection more than in the last two years of free trade and low tariffs. To show with what care the data was secured, Sir Leonard Tilley informed the House that he had instructed his investigators to "get data that could not be shaken by any statement of fact that could be produced in the House." Farming conditions were much improved and the farmers' home market was greatly increased. A prominent Liberal manufacturer named Green was asked the question:

If wages were high how could the price of commodities be low?

This was the manufacturer's reply:

Now we have doubled our production we have orders ahead, our expenses of management have not increased, and we can sell at lower prices than we could before.

Looking at the improved conditions from the standpoint of the farmer, the labourer and the mechanic, we find—and these are actual authoritative figures which can be verified at any time—all agricultural implements were from 5 to 20 per cent cheaper; for instance, ploughs were 15 per cent less; carriages which in 1871 cost \$110 and in 1881 were \$105 had dropped to \$100; furniture of common quality was obtainable at low prices; stove castings and hardware were a little higher; wagons which sold at \$64 in 1871 and \$62 in 1878 had been reduced in price to \$60 by 1881; boots and shoes were less, with the factory wages higher; tea was 5 or 6 cents a pound cheaper; sewing machines were \$10 cheaper; the average price of woollen goods was lower than it had been for ten years prior to 1878; flannels and blankets were at as low a price as at any time within the past ten years, although the average duty on woollens had increased from 7½ to 9 per cent; farmers' products had a better home market, higher prices being obtainable for vegetables, fruit, poultry, lamb, butter, cheese, oats and corn. In short, to use the words of Sir Leonard Tilley:

The labourer was getting higher wages, the manufacturer was making more profits, the farmer had a demand at good prices for all his products, the merchant had doubled his business, and the government's finances were in a very satisfactory condition.

Those were the results of three years' operation of the National Policy. And it is a well-known fact that in 1874 the United States raised their tariff. The mistake we have always made is that instead of keeping pace with the United States tariff duties we have

[Mr. Ladner.]

allowed ours to remain as low sometimes as half those of the United States.

This budget is the result of the importunate demand of our grain-growing farmers. In this connection it is interesting to notice how this section of our agriculturists stand in regard to the total agricultural production and wealth of the Dominion. I have collected some data from the Monthly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics for March, issued by the Department of Agriculture. No doubt most hon. members have received their copies. There can be no doubt that the readiness of the government to lower the tariff is actuated by pure political expediency in order to retain the support of their Progressive friends. That, of course, is their own business, but so far as the real interests of Canada are concerned, I submit the government has delivered a staggering blow to our economic life, and I shall endeavour to prove this from the data I will refer to. The gross agricultural production in Canada in 1923 was \$1,342,000,000. Of this amount the three prairie provinces Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba produced approximately \$575,000,000 in general agricultural produce. The rest of Canada produced about \$767,000,000. Therefore the agricultural production of the three prairie provinces constituted 36 per cent in value of the total agricultural production of the Dominion. So in effect the demand for lower tariffs comes from those responsible for 36 per cent of our total gross agricultural production only. Let us consider for a moment the total gross agricultural wealth of Canada. It is estimated in 1923 at \$7,365,000,000, of which the three grain-growing provinces, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, own \$2,337,000,000, or 31 per cent. These three provinces have 22 per cent of our total population. But I submit that it is not all our agricultural producers who would insist upon lower tariffs. Many of them produce commodities which require a home market. This budget is the result of the political insistence of the grain-growing and grain exporting element of our farming population. But we must remember that a considerable amount of our agricultural production is exported. The export of wheat and wheat flour from Canada for 1922-23 amounted to 280,000,000 bushels, which, according to the prices contained in this statistical pamphlet, were valued at \$185,000,000. This export wheat and wheat flour amounted to 14 per cent of the total gross agricultural production, which means that the producers of that 14 per cent of the gross agricultural production of the country are dictating to the government a fiscal policy for Canada. In its