

promised reign of righteousness would be brought into existence. I had learned at the feet of those Liberal statesmen to believe that the tariff was bleeding the people until they were white. Indeed, I had listened to the declarations of all the Liberal leaders on this question in the old days. I had seen the blue blood course through the bald head of Sir Richard Cartwright as I was sitting in the Press gallery listening to his denunciation of a total annual expenditure by the Dominion of \$37,000,000 as a shame and a disgrace. He said it meant the ruin of the people. The first year of the so called Liberal Administration the expenditure for civil government was increased to the enormous sum of eighty millions. I had heard the appointment of members of Parliament to office denounced as an outrage. I had heard the Senate cursed from Dan to Beersheba, and we were told that if we put the Liberals in office all these things would be corrected. But they were not. I remember going to one of the leaders of the party who had taught me the principles of Liberalism, and I remember protesting to him with great earnestness as a young man that the policy and platform of the Liberal party should be adhered to. I remember saying to him in my childish way—because I was quite young then—that Providence had raised him up to be a great leader in the Liberal party so that he might have it in his power to do a good turn to the people of Canada and set a new ideal before them. I said to him: I have a desire to assist you in carrying out your programme and doing some good to the people of Canada; if you will do this, you will have my devoted assistance, not only in everything that my paper can do in helping you along the line of lifting the people out of the slough of political despond in which they have been wallowing for all these years, but my personal help also. What do you suppose was the answer to me, and I have often wondered if the same answer had been given to my young friends from Calgary and Fort William, what they would have thought. This leader of the Liberal party looked at me and said: "Bob, you are too good for this world." I never had any idea that I had a passport for Paradise or that I had all the virtues that would put me there by Limited Express but I had the old-fashioned notion that a platform that was made to get in on should be a platform that was made to stand on.

Let us just look for a moment at what the promise was in regard to the tariff. My respected friend from Red Deer (Mr.

[Mr. Richardson.]

Clark) quoted it the other night. I shall take the opportunity of repeating it:

I submit to you that the ideal fiscal system is the British system of free trade.

Let it be well understood that from this moment we have a distinct issue with the party in power. Their ideal is protection; our ideal is free trade.

Under the administration of the Conservative party that sponsored the National Policy, the average tariff was about 35 per cent. Sir Clifford Sifton and other leaders had gone into the West for years and declared to the farmers that if they understood the iniquity of this thing they never would stand it for a moment. They said: Let us have some other policy. Well, Sir, the tariff was revised in 1897 and what do you suppose, Mr. Speaker, was the reduction? I just put it to you. You are a successful and a wise man and I would like to get an expression of opinion from you privately as to what you really thought of it. I am pleased to see the prophet from Brome (Mr. McMaster) in his place and listening to what I am saying. The old Tory tariff was 35 per cent on the average and the total reduction made by the Liberal Government, according to the hon. the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster) who was the financial critic for the Conservatives at that time, and whose statement I have never heard challenged, was seventy-one one-hundredths of one per cent.

Now it is true—my hon. friend opposite would interrupt me but I will anticipate him—we had also the British preference. I will give the Liberal government all credit for everything they did; we had the British preference, but 71/100 of one per cent was the reduction in the tariff. I think I could have stood it, I think, perhaps, I could have borne with Christian fortitude the situation, only my friends the Liberals expected me to be pleased about it, to giggle, as it were, over the fact that their pledges had been redeemed. I was perfectly willing to bear with equanimity the situation, but I will be hanged if I was able to laugh over it. I did considerable squirming, and when the Opposition introduced their catch-votes, to catch some of us new members, I naturally, was terrifically uneasy, and I was shooting around trying to get my bearings, but old Doctor Landerkin, a fine old chap, would say: "Oh, stand by your party, R. L. stand by your party; this is the usual thing, just vote it down, and never mind what anybody says." But an agricultural implement resolution was brought up, and inasmuch as I had stumped Lisgar on free implements and the