

man comes to me and says: Mr. Fielding, I entirely agree with your policy in having a stable tariff; we do not want to make changes generally, but we want you to make this particular change, and everybody will be perfectly satisfied. But I have not found that everybody would be satisfied with the particular change which my particular friend would desire. As a rule, the tariff items have relation one to another, and it is not easy to make any considerable number of changes without opening the door to a wide revision of the tariff. I think the business men of the country have appreciated the value of some measure of stability in the tariff. I have again and again expressed the opinion that it was better we should bear some imperfection and some inequalities than to be constantly engaged in the process which is irreverently described as tariff tinkering.

Therefore, we say, considering the tariff has only been in force for four years, that we think it is not unreasonable that it shall continue for the present without the changes that some desire to have, for some will always think that it might be a little better for them, and they are patiently waiting for the day to come when there shall be a wider revision than is possible to-day and when possibly we may be able to do some of the things that they desire to-day. I think, that, while, here and there, some particular set of people, or some particular interest, would prefer that we would make changes, the judgment of the country will be that it is better to have some stability about the tariff and not make any changes at the present time.

I have stated that we shall make no changes, but that is not strictly correct, and I shall qualify that statement in respect to one item, which is scarcely in the nature of a change but rather in the nature of an explanation of a feature of the tariff adopted last year. We have been asked to consider the question of establishing the beet-root sugar industry in this country. We have been asked to grant bounties to that industry and we have not been able to comply with that request. We found that the bounty system, adopted some years ago and put in operation, was not successful, and we are not quite satisfied yet that we would be justified in granting bounties to revive

that business. In saying that it is not my wish to discredit, if I could, and I could not because my knowledge would not permit me to do so, the statements of gentlemen who have represented to us that the conditions in the province of Ontario to-day are much better than the conditions were in the province of Quebec and that, therefore, they could probably make the industry a success. We think, at all events, that we have not yet reached the point that would justify us in reviving the bounty system, which was tried before and which was a failure. At the same time, we, last year, made a concession to this industry in the form of free machinery. It was represented to us that they were hoping to secure a bounty from the Ontario legislature, and that if, in addition to that, we could grant them exemption from duty on the machinery, it would be a very valuable concession, inasmuch as machinery is a very large item in the cost of a beet-root sugar factory. Responding to that wish—of course, there are many who would have been pleased had we gone farther, but, responding to that extent—we introduced an item into the tariff for the purpose of making machinery free, but it was qualified with the words that the machinery should be of a class not made in the Dominion of Canada. That is the usual condition of any exemption of that character. It has been represented to us that that qualification, as respects the machinery being made in Canada, prevents the concession becoming of any substantial value to the promoters of this industry. It is represented, and it seems to me to be reasonable, that a beet-root sugar plant is a somewhat delicate piece of machinery and that it is important that it should all be made, or controlled, by one manufacturer or contractor, so that he may be held responsible for the equipment of the whole factory, and if he is obliged to buy one piece of machinery in Canada and another in the United States there is an absence of that harmonious co-operation that is essential to success. Taking that into consideration, we have concluded to interpret our Act of last year, and to introduce an amendment which will make it clear that for one year, reserving the question as to whether circumstances will warrant us in