

proposed? What is the Government going to do about revenue? That question is put to me when I go home, and I receive many letters inquiring about it. Where are we going to get off?

If we take the legislation embodied in the next Bill that is to come before us, we find that on the eve of the attendance of the Prime Minister at the Imperial Conference duties are being increased tremendously, and that the British preference is being reduced. Will that tend to increase or restrict our trade with Great Britain and her colonies? We send out to Great Britain and her colonies more than twice the value of goods that we buy from them. How is this legislation going to affect the balance of trade? Is it going to increase it or diminish it?

These are some of the questions that I should like to have cleared up, and I hope the honourable leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Willoughby) will give us some information along these lines. Some question has been raised in regard to the amount of Empire cotton contained in manufactures imported into this country under the British preference. This is a question with which I must confess I am not familiar. I heard the discussion in another place, however, and it was stated, with no uncertainty, by the Prime Minister, that the countervailing duties and the Dunning Budget were a camouflage, a farce, a foolish piece of legislation, and that the 33½ per cent or the 50 per cent, or whatever it was, was inserted with the knowledge that the Old Country manufacturers could not meet the condition owing to the difficulty of securing raw material, and therefore the thing was simply window dressing—a mere gesture. Now we hear from the honourable gentleman on the other side of the House remarks indicating that he has altogether different views. I say that the whole question of the tariff is one for experts, and in my opinion—which will not be changed unless some strong evidence to the contrary is produced—the changes were made hurriedly and without the necessary consideration. It seems to me that the result will be confusion and loss to importers, and, in the end, the consumers will suffer.

Hon. W. B. WILLOUGHBY: Honourable senators, I purpose to make but a few remarks, because I prefer that the principal explanation of the Bill should rest with the responsible Minister (Hon. Mr. Robertson). I should like to advert to one or two things mentioned by my right honourable friend from Eganville (Right Hon. Mr. Graham). He seemed

to apprehend that under the new tariff the Government would not have the same opportunity as exists under the present tariff for securing a market for our grain. I must confess that I see nothing to warrant such an opinion. There would have been a great advantage if the late Government had been in a position to bargain for the disposition of the current year's grain crop, in bulk or otherwise. I cannot speak with authority of what that Government did or omitted to do, and I prefer not to repeat in this House any mere rumours that I have heard. In any event, there will be nothing to prevent the new Government from doing anything that the late Government did. The Government will now have a weapon—I do not use that word in any offensive way, of course—in dealing with Great Britain; in other words, it will now be possible to offer quid pro quo. As we all know, Great Britain, which is a nation of traders, is anxious to increase its exports; and it might be possible to arrange for a market for our grain in that country in return for tariff concessions in Canada with respect to certain products manufactured wholly or partly in Great Britain; preferably those wholly manufactured there. I say that the new tariff will strengthen the hands of our representatives at the coming Economic Conference.

The right honourable gentleman contends that the new legislation will give greatly increased power to the Minister. Now, if he will look at section 43 of the Customs Act he will find that there is only one difference between the old and the proposed legislation. Section 43 of the Act as it now stands is restricted to "natural products of a class or kind produced in Canada," whereas the amended clause will cover "goods of any kind." Under this Bill, as under the existing Act, the Governor in Council determines the amount of duty that shall be paid. The right honourable gentleman said that perhaps it would be found far more difficult to deal with "goods of any kind" than with "natural products." Well, the natural products of this country are of a very wide range, and include those of the farm, the vineyard, the mines, the forests—

Hon. Mr. FORKE: But the articles were specified; the Act did not cover all natural products.

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: It says, "natural products of a class or kind produced in Canada." That is the wording of section 43, at all events.