

said to me: The returns of the census were to me a bitter disappointment. We cannot stand, he said, another census in Canada like that. If we should find as a result of the next census that there is no better showing, then, he said, I shall lose all faith in the future of Canada, and I shall have to look to some other country as a field for my capital and my enterprise. We hope and believe that by a change of policy the census returns of the present decade will not show such a bad result, and we hope and believe that when the second census is taken, and when we shall have an opportunity of comparing ten years of Conservative rule with ten years of Liberal rule, the results will not be such that any one of our leading Liberal manufacturers or capitalists will have to say that he is losing faith in the country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as to the manner in which this tariff revision should be brought about, I want to read to you, not that it has any element of novelty, but because it properly fits in at this stage of my speech, the platform adopted by the Liberal party in the great convention held in the city of Ottawa in 1893:

We, the Liberal party of Canada, in convention assembled, declare,—

That the customs tariff of the Dominion should be based, not as it is now, upon the protective principle, but upon the requirements of the public service;

That the existing tariff, founded upon an unsound principle, and used as it has been by the Government, as a corrupting agency wherewith to keep themselves in office, has developed monopolies, trusts and combinations;

It has decreased the value of farm and other landed property;

It has oppressed the masses to the enrichment of a few;

It has checked immigration;

It has caused great loss of population;

It has impeded commerce;

It has discriminated against Great Britain;

In these, and in many other ways, it has occasioned great public and private injury, all of which evils must continue to grow in intensity as long as the present tariff system remains in force.

Mr. FOSTER. Here endeth the second lesson.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. There are some excellent lessons yet to come.

That the highest interests of Canada demand a removal of this obstacle to our country's progress, by the adoption of a sound fiscal policy, which, while not doing injustice to any class, will promote domestic and foreign trade, and hasten the return of prosperity to our people;

That to that end the tariff should be reduced to the needs of honest, economical and efficient government;

That it should be so adjusted as to make free, or bear as lightly as possible upon, the necessities of life, and should be so arranged as to promote free trade with the whole world, more particularly with Great Britain and the United States;

We believe that the results of the protective system has grievously disappointed thousands of

Mr. FIELDING.

persons who honestly supported it, and that the country, in the light of experience, is now prepared to declare for a sound fiscal policy.

The issue between the two political parties is now clearly defined.

The Government admit the failure of their fiscal policy, and now profess their willingness to make some changes; but they say that such changes must be based on the principle of protection.

We denounce the principle of protection as radically unsound, and unjust to the masses of the people, and we declare our conviction that any tariff changes based on that principle must fail to afford any substantial relief from the burdens under which the country labours.

This issue we unhesitatingly accept, and upon it we await with the fullest confidence the verdict of the electors of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the electors of Canada, in due course, gave their verdict upon that and upon other issues, and subject to such changes as changing circumstances may require, and as to which I shall have something to say as I proceed, we accept the Liberal platform of Ottawa as the declaration of principles which we are bound to follow in our tariff reform.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Fielding). Mr. Speaker, when you left the Chair at six o'clock, I had just finished reading the Liberal platform adopted at the Ottawa convention, in which the party placed on record its desire for tariff reform. It has been a common complaint of our opponents that the policy of the Liberal party on the tariff and in the direction of tariff reform was a policy that was adverse to the interest of the manufacturing industries of the country. We have in times past protested against this view, and we still protest against it. We do not admit that a high protectionist tariff is necessary for the development of manufacturing industries in Canada. One would almost think from the manner in which this argument is so frequently used by our opponents that there were no manufacturing industries in Canada before the days of the National Policy. The fact, I think, is that while perhaps we had not so many large industries as we have to-day, we had on the whole a more healthy and satisfactory condition of manufacturing industry before the days of the high tariff than we have had since. That, Sir, I think has been the experience of many of the communities of Canada.

It is true that we have changed our methods of dealing with manufacturers, and the change, I think, has not been for the better. We developed manufacturing in the good old days in the good old-fashioned way. An honest workman opened his modest shop in a growing town. He made