

Mr. Jas. McIsaac's, M.P., Address on the Budget

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Table with financial data: Main Estimates and Supplementary Estimates about \$774,000,000; Railways 25,000,000; Floating obligations 74,953,000; Total \$873,953,000.

This will leave an adverse balance of \$100,000,000 which amount has to be provided for by means outside of the ordinary. At this point the Minister of Finance did another courageous thing something for which he certainly deserved to be praised.

At this point the Minister says: "We shall have no more loans." I wish to dwell for a moment on the question of loans. Canada, in so far as her domestic loans are concerned, stands in an enviable position.

The Minister of Finance presents to us, in order to make up the balance between the ordinary estimated revenue and the expenditure, several different phases of taxation. I am sure it will be generally accepted that taxation is not an agreeable subject under any consideration.

With all due respect to them, I take the view that free trade is not a practical question in our tariff discussions of today.

There are some things that we should do well to remember. In the first place, it may be well simply to remember that there never has been in the Dominion of Canada such a thing as free trade.

a great stimulus in our industrial and commercial life. Figures are rather a dry subject and I am inclined to apologize for having dwelt so long on these phrasings of the question, but in considering a Budget speech one cannot avoid quoting figures and in very great numbers. Hence, I have tried to be brief and to the point, having taken cognizance of our different resources and our trade and manufacturing and other activities, having dealt with the position in which we now find ourselves in the present year. I shall refer briefly to some aspects of the fiscal question as presented by certain hon. gentlemen opposite.

While it is true that at all times for many years all our tariff discussions have been more or less tinged with the question of free trade.

There has of late been a revival of what I may call the free trade movement and the free trade question is now being discussed in our tariff discussions in a larger way than it has been in recent years.

That is the confession of a gentleman who was within the inner circles of the Liberal party—a confession that they were a free trade party only for the purpose of deceiving the people in order to get into power.

That is the fiscal policy under which we are operating now, and how does it differ from the National Policy of 1879? Did the Liberals when they came into power, notwithstanding their free trade professions and their convention resolution in 1897, take any steps to reduce the tariff when they brought down their Budget in 1897?

There is not anything of the kind now, and with all due respect to those who may be described as extreme free traders, I think it is no wild guess to assert that there will be no absolute free trade in Canada within the lifetime of any man who sits in this House today.

question is "camouflage," and I think the hon. member has given us a pretty good example of it. Proceeding, the hon. member said: There is not anything of the kind now, and with all due respect to those who may be described as extreme free traders, I think it is no wild guess to assert that there will be no absolute free trade in Canada within the lifetime of any man who sits in this House today.

Free trade principles do not seem sound or practicable to the hon. member today? It is marvelous that he has become such a protectionist when he was once a free trader. He is quite prepared to grant protection in the form of bounties; to grant protection in the form of anti-dumping regulations; to give protection in half a dozen other ways—he is a thorough going protectionist so to speak.

The political aspect of this question is interesting because it is so dramatic. The other night the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) stated his political creed on this matter and must say that to me it was surprising in many years I was accustomed to follow that hon. gentleman, and to agree that what he did in the public interest was right; and during that time any changes in the tariff from the old national policy of our Conservative opponents did not seem to us to be very shocking.

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I should have hoped it would have contained more milk and less water under those circumstances, and would have been less of a shilly-shally temporizing and opportunistic piece of print.



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That would shock one's modesty without his trousers on. That was a deplorable condition of things. But that is on a par with the argument that the hon. member for Brome (Mr. McMaster), brings to bear on this question when he discusses it in the House. I shall not say anything more in that regard; but if the hon. member had been in his seat, I would be disposed to have a little badinage with him.

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