

say, having due reference to the nature of the proceeding by which iron is smelted, that he was a man of blast and iron—an autocrat of iron furnaces. It was he who framed the tariff of 1887, and he framed it all apparently out of his own head, just as the cook on board a ship on which I once travelled made his puddings, because there was not the least sign of any other influence in it than his own.

The tariff of 1894 introduced by the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) when Finance Minister, was admittedly not framed by the Government at all, but by the Manufacturers Association of Canada. At any rate that was the assertion made at the annual meeting of the association in 1895. At that meeting they stated that they had sent a brief to the Finance Minister, and that he had accepted it and carried out what they had told him to do, and they published this statement in a circular which they sent to the members of this House. I read that circular in this House in the session of 1895, and it was afterwards read by other members, and the then Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) never ventured to contradict the statement of the Manufacturers Association that it was they who practically had made his so-called revised tariff.

Now, what about the tariff of 1897? The method of that tariff making has been already discussed, and I shall merely say in general terms, that it was the result of a prolonged search for information, in the first place. As I had the pleasure of being present on several occasions where the tariff commission was sitting, I am able to bear witness to the fact that the business men in the localities where the commission held sittings, were, without exception, satisfied with the manner in which that inquiry was conducted. They were convinced that they were dealing, not only with members of the Government, but with business men as well, fully capable of appreciating all the facts and arguments put before them in connection with the framing of a new tariff. The sittings of that commission were open to farmers and consumers of all kinds as well as manufacturers. There was full inquiry, followed by long conferences between the members of the commission and the members of the Cabinet; and judging from the fact that our Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding) was so overwhelmed with work, in the last few days before the tariff came down, I do not suppose he and his colleagues were able to finish the work absolutely until within a day or so of the delivery of the Budget speech. These gentlemen had obtained full information and given it mature consideration before coming to a conclusion.

The tariff, on the face of it, bears traces of mutual concessions on the part of those who wished to retain high protection and those who wished to approach very closely to free trade or at

least a tariff for revenue only. The making of mutual concessions was inevitable under the circumstances. We had been for eighteen years under a policy of protection, a policy of isolation, a policy which enervated and stunted the business life of this community. After having been submitted to eighteen years of that system, the business of this country was not in a position to stand that degree of freedom which it might have stood otherwise. Concession, therefore, was necessary. Protection for eighteen years, as I have said, had enervated and stunted the national life of Canada, and the stunting of the early growth of a nation, like the stunting of the early growth of a man or an animal, is something very hard to remedy in after years. If a colt, or a calf, or a child, or anything else is stunted while small, it is very hard to enable it to ever attain its natural growth. I say, therefore, that after eighteen years of protection, the national life of Canada became not only stunted and narrowed for the present but seriously injured as regards the possibilities of our attaining to the full growth of a nation.

I claim that in the period of protection which so injured us, no great natural industry, no new national industry, sprang into life, that the only industries which flourished were the natural ones which were not protected, and that its only effect on the existing manufactures of the country was to create monopolies in the hands of a few rich manufactures rather than to extend our manufacturing trade or build up anything new. But the worst of it was that it left us in a condition unfit for full freedom of action. The manufacturers are not the only people of Canada who were injured by it in their manhood. All the Canadian people had acquired the habit of waiting for Providence, or, in other words, the Government of the day, to do something for them. They had lost the habit of individual enterprise; they had lost the ability to struggle in free competition with the rest of the world. Protection has often been compared to a hot-bed system or the growth of tender plants under glass in a conservatory. That is a very appropriate comparison. We have also heard our industries described as infants, and we are to suppose these infants to have been in the nursery for eighteen years. What has been the effect on these infants and tender plants of fostering them in this way for eighteen years? Sir, they are not able to stand a draught of cool air, not to speak of the cold air which should blow upon them in order to render them really strong and vigorous. An infant puffed up with fat, it may be, but weak in vitality, is not fit to play in the same yard with other infants of the same age. The hot-house orchids or exotic pets, which have been the favourites of our hon. friends opposite for so many years, cannot stand the ordinary