

back through the eighteen long years during which the Tory party ruled this country before 1896, he will find that under that regime the law-abiding ministers of that day, Tory though they were, put the archives, the patent record, the census and statistics and the year-book also under the Department of Agriculture; and if the Department of Agriculture is that omnium gatherum which the hon. gentleman describes it, it is due to the fact that under the old Tory regime all these outside services were put into that department—why? Because it did so little for agriculture that its then minister had nothing to do, and the Tory party put under his control anything and everything the other ministers wanted to get rid of. But we have been doing something for agriculture, we have been increasing the expenditure on agriculture, we have been enlarging the Department of Agriculture until to-day it is doing five times the work it did in those days, spends five times the amount of money, and shows five times that appreciation of the interests and the power of agriculture that our predecessors showed. My hon. friend from Souris has said that the farmers were rising in their might and were going to wake up and run things in this country. I can tell my hon. friend that since the ministry at present in power have come in, they have been largely run by the agricultural vote; and if to-day, and during the last election, and the election before, and the election before that, and the election before that again, the Liberal party have been able to defeat the Conservative party, it has been largely because the agricultural vote of Canada has supported the Liberal party. We have shown consideration for the farmers in every respect, we shall be glad to show it in the future as we have done in the past, and if at any time the agricultural interests are not carefully safeguarded before the Railway Committee, I am quite sure that this government will see that they are looked after.

Hon. JOHN HAGGART (South Lanark). Mr. Speaker, I cannot congratulate the hon. Minister of Agriculture on his speech. My hon. friend here points out the importance of the farming interest in the Northwest, the immense development and production of that section, and claims that the expenditure for agricultural purposes is not large enough. The minister replies with the tu quoque argument. Whenever you find a gentleman using that argument, you may conclude that he has no other argument to offer; it is an admission that the hon. gentleman who spoke before him is right. The hon. minister says: I sent for the statutes of 1895, and I find that the Tory government expended only \$161,000 on agriculture. Suppose it did. The Tory government established the Depart-

ment of Agriculture and appointed the first minister. If we have a Department of Agriculture to-day, it is due to the Conservative government. The hon. minister forgot to tell us that from 1874 to 1878, when these gentlemen were in power, not one cent was spent for agricultural purposes. If the Northwest has to-day products amounting to \$180,000,000, it is due to the progressive Conservative government which built the Canadian Pacific Railway in spite of the opposition of hon. gentlemen opposite. Everything that is in the Department of Agriculture amounting to anything was initiated by the Conservative government, and the hon. gentleman has done nothing but follow the example set by them.

Mr. J. E. ARMSTRONG (East Lambton). I have listened with great interest to the speeches of the hon. member for Souris (Mr. Schaffner) and the hon. member for Macdonald (Mr. Staples). But I heard with regret the remarks of the hon. the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher). It was certainly a humiliating position for a minister specially charged with the advancement of the greatest industry in this country, to take when, in reply to the fair criticisms made on his department, he gave us nothing but politics of the smallest description. Just let us go back ten years and find what this minister has done for the agriculturists of Canada.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Hon. gentlemen may well say oh, but if they will follow back his record what will they find? They will find him first introducing his scissors policy, in which he invented a pair of scissors to cut the peaches off the tree—peaches that had no stems. Then they will find him with his chicken fattening stations, established in different parts of the country, at the expense of tens of thousands of dollars, where he was trying to educate our farmers' wives to line up their chickens and fatten them with a squirt gun. Then what about his cold storage proposition? Have we not been pounding at his door for years trying to impress on him the necessity of improving our cold storage system and giving us a better means of transportation. But what has he been doing? I need hardly tell you the history of that cold storage system of his. It has been a perfect farce. Look at the money he has spent in equipping vessels to carry our perishable products across the ocean. He has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in that direction and yet has no control over the temperatures in the boats or on the cars. Year after year we have been trying to convince him that he should have control over the temperatures of these boats and cars, but he keeps on making appointments in his depart-