

In 1905 the capital invested in manufactures in the United States was over \$13,000,000,000. The capital invested in railroads was \$13,000,000,000. The capital invested in agriculture was not \$13,000,000,000 but more than twice that amount, it was over \$30,000,000,000. The net return from products, manufactures, was \$2,093,893,976; from railroads, \$616,341,657, and from agriculture, net return, \$2,945,461,200. If that is so it is high time that the representatives of this country, even although they may not be as practical farmers as my hon. friend (Mr. Staples), should realize from a business point of view the great importance of the farming industry. I want to warn the Minister of Agriculture that the farmers are beginning to wake up. I shall not take up that issue to-night. I intend to take it up later and to show not only the government supporters but the leader of the opposition and every one on this side that they will waken up one morning and find that the farmers are going to do what they ought to do, that is run this country.

As to the Board of Railway Commissioners, no body of men in this country are charged with graver duties or burdened with severer responsibilities. I say without fear of contradiction that no question approaches in magnitude, in difficulty or in importance, this great question of transportation. Let us meet it fairly and squarely. I do not ask parliament that a farmer from the west should be chosen, although I would be justified in doing so. The four great provinces of the west, Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia are the great agricultural provinces, they are the great sources of profit to the railways. Why are the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway so anxious to get into that country? Not for fun, they are business propositions, they are anxious to get there because they know the farmers of that country will produce the stuff that will give business to these railways. Let us not consider creed or nationality, but in the appointment of men to this important institution let us recognize the claim of the farmer. I hope that the appointment has not gone so far that the minister cannot adopt the suggestions so eloquently made by my hon. friend from Macdonald and place upon the Board of Railway Commissioners a practical farmer.

Hon. SYDNEY FISHER (Minister of Agriculture). I would not have to say a great deal had it not been for the delicate attention the hon. member for Macdonald (Mr. Staples) has bestowed on me. It seemed to me that he had rather more to heart the showing up of my own delinquencies than the needs of the farmer or the constitution of the commission. His colleague (Mr. Schaffner) has said that his hon. friend does not make mistakes. I am

Mr. SCHAFFNER.

sorry I cannot agree with that, because it will be my duty to show that he has made a few mistakes in the remarks he has made. In the first place he says that the Department of Agriculture has received about \$500,000 in respect of agricultural work in the estimates. If he had studied the estimates of this session for the ensuing year he would have seen that after taking out all the estimates which he mentioned for extraneous subjects in the Department of Agriculture that department is asking the House for \$782,000. I would like, however, to refer to the figures of a few years ago, and just out of curiosity I sent for the Appropriation Bill of 1895, the year before we came into office.

Mr. STAPLES. I am not criticising the late government.

Mr. FISHER. I know that my hon. friend would not criticise the previous government. I dare say that when that government was in power, my hon. friend knew very little about public affairs in Canada; if he had, perhaps he would not have said everything he has said to-night. Under that government, in 1895, the purely agricultural appropriations for the benefit of the farmers came to \$161,000. There was \$40,000 more of advances to be made for dairy purposes, but that did not stay with the farmers, but came back into the public treasury; so that \$161,000 was the amount by which under the Conservative regime the treasury of Canada was the poorer for the benefit of the farmers.

Mr. STAPLES. Will the hon. minister in fairness tell the House how much money was being expended in the Dominion of Canada previous to 1896, and figure out what proportion the farmers got?

Mr. FISHER. Yes. Roughly speaking, the expenditure has increased by a little more than double for the whole of Canada, while the expenditure on agriculture has amounted to nearly five times as much. I can give the exact figures to my hon. friend, if he is seeking information, which he is sadly in need of. My hon. friend dwelt upon my iniquities in charging to agriculture the archives, the patent record, the census and statistics, the statistical year-book, and so on. I said a few minutes ago that my hon. friend probably did not know much about political questions in Canada when his party was in power some thirteen or fourteen years ago; but if he will look back to that time, he will find that these expenditures are placed under the control of the Department of Agriculture by statute; and being a law-abiding citizen and minister, I keep them in the Department of Agriculture. The hon. member, if he goes back a little further, will find that these laws were put upon the statute-book by the old Conservative government, and if he goes