

it out of the hands of a contractor, and we are having it done more efficiently at the Printing Bureau. Yet the change was made four years before the hon. gentleman took office at all, according to the report of Dr. Dawson, the Queen's Printer of Canada for 1898, published under the authority of this government.

Now, the next thing a government can do, is to secure and retain markets for the farmers of this country. On that point the Liberal party of Canada have a most unenviable record. They have never secured any market, and they have usually failed to keep the markets which naturally belong to our farmers. Let us see what took place between 1874 and 1878. In 1878, 2,071,513 bushels of oats came in free from the United States; of wheat, 1,519,703 bushels; of flour, 311,706 barrels; of lard, 2,345,807 pounds; of bacon, 2,825,169 pounds; of pork, 10,248,020 pounds; of corn, 3,400,562 bushels. These grains came in absolutely free. When we went to the border of the United States we had to pay a tax upon every pound of meat, upon every barrel of flour, upon every bushel of agricultural produce which we sold to that country. In other words, in 1878, Canada sold to the United States, \$12,000,000 worth, on which she had to pay a tax of \$4,000,000. The United States, under the regime of the hon. gentlemen in the same year, sold to Canada that year, \$15,000,000 worth, and had not to pay 1 cent to get into our market. Between 1874 and 1879, we imported from the United States, \$59,000,000 worth of agricultural produce free. 100,000 farmers petitioned to change that, and to hold our markets for ourselves, but the answer was given by the present Minister of Justice (Mr. Mills), who declared that if the farmers lost the market, the railroads at least made money in carrying this produce which was imported into this country to take the place of produce which was raised by our own farmers. Sir, we changed that all in 1879. We said to the people of the United States: If you do not give us your markets you cannot have ours. And what did the present Minister of Agriculture say with regard to that a few years later? He thinks they were right between 1874 and 1878, for he says:

I am prepared to believe that the farmer can exist without protection. The protection which has since 1878 been given to our farmers is a delusion and a snare.

Sir, what do the farmers of Canada think of that opinion? Well, Sir, now we come to 1890. The ex-Minister of Finance had the question pressed upon him by many leading members of the Conservative party. It was found we were importing 33,000,000 pounds of lard, bacon, ham, shoulders and sides, from the United States. Why were we importing it? Prices were cheap there, and they could raise these products and ship them over here and

undersell the Canadian farmer in our own market. Our duty was not high enough. What did we do? The Conservative government increased the duties, we put up the wall, and we put it up in spite of the protest of hon. gentlemen opposite. When the ex-Minister of Finance brought that tariff down, the hon. member for South Oxford, the present Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), moved this resolution:

That the additional taxation now sought to be imposed will still further increase the burthens of the people.

And my successor, the present Minister of Agriculture, used these words:

This kind of protection, instead of helping the farmers, hurts them. The intention may be good, but the results will not be good. I do not believe the home market will do much for our farmers. How can this kind of policy help the export trade in meats? The thing is nonsense.

Now, let us see. I may say that six members of the present government, including the Minister of Customs, voted for that amendment, against retaining the market of Canada for the meats produced by the Canadian farmers. What was the result? In 1890, 33,000,000 pounds, as I have said, of these meats, came in. When the hon. gentlemen took office in 1896, there were only 5,000,000 pounds of meat coming in, in other words, we had given to the farmers of Canada a market to the extent of 28,000,000 pounds of meat for each of the years between 1890 and 1896. What was the result as regards the prediction of the present Minister of Agriculture, that it would not help the export trade? Why, Sir, it gave the farmers of this country their own markets, and the possession of these markets gave them confidence. It gave them encouragement to go into the raising of hogs, and the result was that whereas the export of this same kind of meats in 1891 was 8,000,000 pounds, in 1896 it had grown to 55,000,000 pounds, and Canadian meats were known in the largest and best markets of the world. We kept our own markets. We supplied them ourselves, and we encouraged the industry so that we reached out with millions of pounds to the other markets of the world. Sir, we continued to cultivate the home market and what we did in meats we did in every other produce which the farmer had to sell. In 1896 an estimate was brought down here by which we hoped to open depots for the sale of Canadian products in the great cities of London, Glasgow, Bristol, Liverpool and Dublin. We proposed to advertise those products of the farmer in the markets of Great Britain, to give him all the advantages of their excellence, and to spend the money of this country in putting those products of our Canadian farms in the best possible shape before the consumers of Great Britain. Well, hon. gentlemen need only

Mr. MONTAGUE.