

would endorse. They knew perfectly well that they had taken the downward track, not, perhaps, with deliberation; but they blindly followed a blind leader, lacking political prescience, and who never could comprehend anything beyond his own prejudiced opinion that the whole people of this country could be hoodwinked day after day by the publications in the press of his party. The agriculturists had been forced to raise nothing, by the policy of that dictator, but cereals. They were prevented from having a profitable rotation of crops. The dictator, who had sometimes been called the wrecker, and his followers, professed to have the farming interests under their especial charge. How did they foster them? By placing a tax of 72c. a bushel on malt. That killed the barley crop. On our wheat a duty of 20c. per bushel was levied on the other side of the line; no duty was put on American wheat, and we were compelled to export ours when we had no surplus. Oats were interfered with by the vast production of the Western States, and he knew a case where two vessels, from Michigan or Wisconsin, came into the harbour of Sarnia, where the late First Minister resided, and, placing a large quantity of oats on the market, lowered the price five or six cents a bushel on market day, to the great disappointment and loss of the farmers who had oats for sale there. The late Finance Minister often said that he desired that our people should return to agricultural pursuits. He vehemently denounced the gathering together of communities in cities and towns. Agriculture, he (Mr. Plumb) acknowledged, was the basis of our wealth, but everybody knew that it paid a lower return for the capital and for the manual labour employed, than any other pursuit. Every man could not, or might not, wish to be a farmer, and no country was prosperous that did not possess a diversity of interests. The Government proposed that Canada should have all the benefits which the most favoured countries enjoyed. They did not believe that the Americans, as the *Globe* asserted, monopolised all the ingenuity, and perseverance, and inventive genius on this continent, but that Canada could successfully challenge them to friendly competition in all these respects. It was the duty of every

Government to endeavour to give diversified employment to its people, to keep its intelligent, active young men at home by giving them plenty of work, and he believed that the policy that his hon. friend proposed would have this effect. Mr. Steinway, the manufacturer of pianos, on being told that this tariff would shut out his pianos from Canada, said he would set 400 men at work here, and thus try to keep possession of our market in a way that we desired. The people who wanted our market must come here and manufacture for it, pay their portion of our taxes, support our Government, employ our labour, and buy our farmers' produce. It mattered very little to the farmers whether there was a duty more or less on the articles which they consumed, provided they could have a home market. If manufacturing centres were built up in their midst, the rise in the value of their lands and their crops would more than compensate for any trifling tax that might be put on them, and, after all, the only alternative to this tariff was to resort to direct taxation, as the late Finance Minister shadowed forth when he said that if there was any convenient way of levying an income tax after the manner of England, he would feel inclined to resort to it. Any man would have been recreant, as a member of the Government, representing the Liberal Conservative party, if, in making that scheme of taxation, he had not special regard to the struggling industries of Canada. The hon. gentlemen opposite had made their tomb. They stated there might be a reaction in their favour, but they caught at a very little gleam of hope. He could tell them, in the words of the hackneyed quotation:

"Facilis decensus Avernii,  
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad  
auras,  
Hic labor, hoc opus est."

Which he would venture to translate very freely:

"The engine may rush us down grade to Avernus;  
The steam may give out when it tries to return us."

And he prayed, in the best interests of Canada, that it might be many a long year before the hon. gentlemen opposite got back to the upper world from the local Avernus into which they had descended.