

who has just retired from the Department of Finance, and who has had an experience unique in its character. He has served under every Prime Minister of Canada since confederation, he has served under every Minister of Finance from confederation to the present time with one exception; and that public servant finds himself no sooner relieved from the duties of his office than he makes haste to sound a warning note to the people of Canada and to the government of Canada. He says :

A little swagger and extravagance might be conceded, but Canada is spending too much.

Any man who knows Mr. J. M. Courtney, who knows the moderation which always characterizes his statements, will understand that when words of that character fall from his lips it is well for the government and for the people of this country to consider whether some heed should not be given to his warning, and whether some of the expenditure of which we have complained in the past should not be brought to an end. Mr. Courtney also said :

Every effort should be made to save, and a halt should be called in many instances.

Does my hon. friend the mover of this address realize that during the last four years we have spent yearly on an average, \$73,700,000, including both capital expenditure and expenditure on current account, or nearly \$300,000,000 in the last four years. Yet my hon. friend is prepared to say that this expenditure should go on, not only that it should go on, but that it should be of the character, the undesirable character, of some of the expenditures to which we have called attention in past sessions.

My hon. friend alluded to the tariff; and my hon. friend the Minister of Finance has dealt with that subject in a somewhat indefinite way in a recent speech which he made in the city of Montreal. He seemed to complain a little that the government were somewhat embarrassed, as my hon. friend from Lambton says in effect that they are embarrassed, by the demands of the manufacturers on the one hand and the demands of the farmers on the other. Well, I have been observing the demands of the farmers as reported in the Toronto 'Globe' of a late date, and I find that they are couched almost exactly in the words of these hon. gentlemen themselves in the Ottawa convention of 1893, and in the language used by them over and over again on the public platforms of this country. Reference has been made to the rate of taxation, I think, by the hon. gentleman who seconded the address. The farmers declare that the rate of customs duties on dutiable goods was raised in 1879 to 21 per cent, was raised in 1882, I think, to 26 per cent, and that it is at the present time, 27½ per cent. They desire, in the concluding words of their resolution, this :

We therefore ask, in the coming revision of the tariff, that the protective principle be wholly eliminated.

Who taught these gentlemen to make these demands? I will not go over the quotations which have been made so many times in this House, and notably made by the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce the records of 'Hansard' for the year 1902, when he sat where my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) now sits, and when he turned and read a lecture to my right hon. friend the Prime Minister quoting the words of the right hon. gentleman at Winnipeg in 1894. I will not go over these again. They may be found in the records of 'Hansard' for the year 1902. I will not go over the story of protection, slavery and bondage which was repeated by the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce in the House in quoting from the utterances of the right hon. Prime Minister. I will not even allude to what the right hon. Prime Minister declared in Quebec when he said that protection was the sole bane and curse of Canada, but I will allude to one thing and that is that we were told in 1897 by the right hon. Prime Minister, and, if I remember right, by the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce, that the ships head was pointed towards the open sea of free trade, that a step had been made in the right direction and that the Liberal party had to a certain extent fulfilled its pledges made to the people of the country. Let me quote some of my right hon. friend's words which were not quoted by the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce in 1902; let me quote a pledge, expressed in as solemn language as it could be expressed, by the present Prime Minister of this country and let me give these words to the farmers of Canada as setting forth what they may reasonably expect from the government if they are true to their pledges :

When the Liberals are in power—

Said the present right hon. the Prime Minister, then in opposition :

When the Liberals are in power they will at once give a measure of freedom of trade—

They say they have done that. They say they did that in 1897.

When the Liberals are in power they will at once give a measure of freedom of trade and step by step they will follow it up, and if God spares our lives we shall progress steadily until we have it as full as Great Britain has it.

Well, it was in view of this that the farmers of this country couched their demand to the government in the language to which I have just referred.

Let me say also that the farmers should find consolation in the remarks of the hon. Minister of Finance, at Yarmouth, in 1902, because, in dealing with the question of bounties at that time, he informed the people of the constituency of Yarmouth,