

those duties. It is true that the advantage resulting from them was not so great for the time, but the day came when we were able to take advantage of them. There came a time, in 1894, when the city of Hamilton began a great iron industry. When I made that announcement, seated where the hon. Minister of Customs is now, that there was about to be erected in Hamilton an iron industry which would expend \$600,000, and employ some 200 or 300 men, the hon. member for North Norfolk and the hon. Minister of Customs laughed so that you could hear them all over the Chamber. I remember very well, because I took occasion to stop and answer them. I need only refer to the member for Hamilton to-day to show that those works have not only been established, but are increasing their capacity, at an expense of \$6,000,000. There is a great increase going on in other portions of Canada, as the Minister of Finance himself says, in connection with the iron industry.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. I said it took place under us.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. gentleman knows very well that if he and his friends had had their way there would not have been a tariff and bounty under which the shadow of an iron industry could have been established in this country. He says that they did not come in under the Conservative party. If they did not, it was because capital is nervous, and is not anxious to invest where it might very shortly, by adverse legislation, be destroyed, and here was the announcement of the financial critic of hon. gentlemen opposite when those iron bounties were voted. The hon. member for South Oxford said:

I disapprove of the whole business altogether. For my part, I refuse to be bound by it, and I say, expressly for the benefit of the manufacturers, that I for one utterly refuse to be bound by any such proposition. I take the opportunity to protest against it in advance, so that parties hereafter, should there be a change in the policy on the part of the people, may not be able to say they never had any warning.

What does that mean? It means to say to every man who was likely to invest a dollar in Canada in the iron business: If we get into power, we will take off the bounties, we will do away with this protection, and will destroy your investment without regard to yourself or your capital. Under these circumstances you could not expect much capital to be invested in this country under the iron bounties and iron tariff. But there came a change. There came a time when hon. gentlemen opposite came into power, when it was demonstrated that they were not going to do as they said they would do; and then, Sir, capitalists were no longer nervous because they had confidence in the policy of hon. gentlemen who now sit on the opposition benches, and they

were willing to invest their capital because the time had come, it was thought, when both parties were agreed upon the promotion and protection of Canadian interests and Canadian industries. Sir, if we had not given more protection and more bounties in 1887, we should to-day have no iron industries. More than that, Sir, if the hon. gentlemen between 1878 and 1896 had not by their never-ceasing howl against protection and their declaration if they ever got into power they would destroy it root and branch, we should have had many millions more, how many millions we shall never know, invested in Canadian enterprises. The hon. gentlemen prevented development, and they did it for party gain.

Now, I wish to say a few words on subjects of particular interest to the farmers of this country. Some men, Sir, are born too modest ever to be great;—but that is not the fact with regard to the members of the present government. And I think it is less the fact, perhaps, with regard to my hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher) and his department than any other branch of the administration at the present time. Among the loudest boasts that have been made by hon. gentlemen opposite, is the boast that they have done a great deal for the farmers of Canada, and first of all by appointing such a Minister of Agriculture. I am sorry the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fisher) is not here, because, I should like to refer to him in his presence rather than in his absence. The Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), at a meeting held in the province of Ontario, said this: I have given to you one of yourselves; I have given you a practical farmer. I have given you a horny-handed son of toil, to be your Minister of Agriculture. An hon. gentleman near me suggests that this was spoken at Orillia, but I think it was at Kincardine. At any rate, I have no desire to dispute the popularity of the Minister of Agriculture at five o'clock teas and other agricultural gatherings; but I submit that he can hardly be called a horny-handed son of toil, as he is described by the Prime Minister. The Minister of Agriculture boasts a great deal of his achievements. And I am prepared to admit that he is not without genius. We are told that there is a genius creative and a genius perceptive. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Fisher) has not much genius creative, but he has a good deal of genius perceptive and receptive; and he has done what hon. gentlemen opposite in other departments have sometimes failed to do—he has accepted what was done by his predecessors, and has had the good sense to continue the work. What can a government do for the farmers of Canada? In the first place, the government can make experiments for them at the public expense, it can establish experimental farms and experimental stations; then it can secure and preserve the