

principle is wrong. On the contrary, in the very same speech in which he announced the withdrawal of this oil bounty he reaffirmed the principle of bounties by adopting this method to stimulate the production of copper in the West. The people of Lambton and Kent were not getting something which the right hon. gentleman thought they should not get, that was not the trouble at all; he said in effect, "I am afraid for my balances, I am afraid that big discoveries of oil in the North and in the West will create an undue strain on the treasury if the bounty on oil is continued." But the threatened danger has never materialized. Still, these people know they are to be injured because of the prospect of big oil discoveries in other parts of the Dominion. They also know that if we merely adopt the simple provision of limiting the bounty to a small number of barrels per day per well—the suggestion last year was five barrels—the total charge on the treasury per well would only be \$2.60. We often hear it said that the farmers never get any benefit from our fiscal policy. Here is a case where they do get a benefit. I do not know what the idea of the government is. Last year there was to be a differential duty put upon sugar beets so that our farmers producing them would not be in as good a position to compete with the producers of raw cane sugar. My right hon. friend realized the mistake he had made and stayed his hand. He has made just exactly the same mistake here. I think if he were to stay his hand here also it would be equally to the purpose. Honestly, what else could he do? His whole reason for proposing the withdrawal of the bounty was these large anticipated oil finds which, as I have shown, have not yet materialized. I am confident that the right hon. gentleman would have stayed his hand in this case were he now at his desk. What did he do in connection with sugar beets? His idea was that having regard to the duties on raw and refined Cuban sugar the sugar beet producers were getting too great protection, and he cut the duty of 48 cents in half. We prevailed upon him to let it stand for a year. He did so because the refining company at Walkerville showed that they had made their contracts with the farmers and would be out the 24 cents if the duty was so reduced. After the right hon. gentleman allowed it to stand, it was pointed out that having done so for the reason stated, it was quite obvious to everybody that he was taking the money from the farmer and not from the refiner. Thereupon he very properly allowed the duty to stand. I am quite con-

[Sir Henry Drayton.]

vinced that the same sense of fair play so characteristic of my right hon. friend would influence him to take the same action in this case if he were here to-day.

Mr. MURRAY MacLAREN ((St. John and Counties of St. John and Albert): Mr. Speaker, I would take this opportunity of bringing to the attention of the House the condition of the oil fields in the county of Albert. This matter was referred to a year or two ago. In the county of Albert the oil fields are in the early or development stage; there has as yet been no large development. Up to the present I understand that between a million and a million and a half dollars of British capital have been invested in this work. The amount of production, I say, is not large; the work is in its initial stages. The bounty that has been paid is something about \$5,000 a year. If the bounty is to be abolished, as is now threatened, then this industry in Albert will lose that sum—a small sum, it is true, but it is something that would help. The profits are very small, or nil; therefore a bounty, even if a small one, is of first importance.

Two years ago the Minister of Finance of that day was very cautious about continuing the bounty, because he said there might be an outpouring of oil in the northern and western parts of this country. It was pointed out to him that that was a remote possibility; that it might happen within a year or perhaps not for fifty years; that he was legislating on something that might occur, to the great loss and disadvantage of industries that were being carried on to-day. It is important that this industry should not be subject to loss, because surely we will all agree that we should encourage the investment of money from without the country. The development of the oil area in Albert is a case in point, because it is largely British capital that has been invested in this work. The abolition of the bounty would unquestionably be a severe blow at the investment of British money in this part of the country. The work has not been put on a profitable basis, therefore those who have invested their funds in the work and are not yet receiving a fair reward cannot help considering that they are not being treated fairly. Surely there can be a means of providing that any such wonderful development of oil as has been predicted will not plunge the country into an enormous expenditure; surely the bounty can be limited to a certain point of production. I place this matter again before the minister in the hope that it may make some little impression on him. I sincerely believe that to abolish the bounty will not