

Seventeen years have passed away since the promise was made that hon. gentlemen opposite would secure for us a reciprocity treaty with the United States—not a reciprocity of tariffs but a reciprocity of trade with the great country to the south of us. This promise was made by the great chieftain, Sir John Macdonald himself. It was that promise that returned him to power in 1879, that promise the fulfilment of which meant the return of prosperity to this country the like of which those engaged in agriculture have not enjoyed since the days we lost our treaty with that nation. No man of sense can fail to see the enormous benefits of that market to us. Ask those who are engaged in developing the natural wealth of this country what they think about it; ask our fishermen; our miners, our lumbermen, or our farmers, what benefit that market would be to them. In reply to the demand that an honest effort be made to obtain a reciprocity treaty with the United States, securing to us free access to their markets, an effort is made to attract our exports to Australia, Mexico, South Africa, Brazil—any where in all the broad earth rather than to the market lying at our door.

In our country we have vast mineral wealth. The Geological Survey has been piling up evidence of this, year after year, for many years; and now it is known that Canada is rich beyond the conception of man, in mineral wealth. Well, vast as is our mineral wealth, our exports last year were less than \$6,000,000, of which more than \$3,000,000 was for coal, leaving about \$2,500,000 as to the value of our exports of every other kind of mineral. Surely this is a pitiful showing for a country so rich in mineral wealth as Canada undoubtedly is. Countless millions of tons of iron ore are to be found everywhere throughout the province of Ontario, and last year our total export of this article was 618 tons, less than a week's output for a small pit.

In what way has the Government contribute to the prosperity of the lumber trade? Is it by taxing the blankets, axes, saws, iron and machinery used in that industry? How have they contributed to the development of it? They have contributed by leaving it alone. Never having been made the subject of the class or special legislation of this Government it has grown to be one of the two mighty interests of our country, second only to agriculture, and contributing \$26,000,000 to our exports, unaided by any legislation, allowed to go free, to develop itself by a natural process, until the great lumber trade of Canada has become an object of pride to all Canadians.

The farmers have contributed \$52,000,000 to our exports. What has protection done for them, a class seeking markets in foreign countries, a class to find markets for whom hundreds of thousands of dollars yearly are spent by this Government, so they say? What use is protection to them? Protection on their cereals, and on their meats,

when they have vast quantities of these to sell, and do sell them in the same market in which their great competitor, the American farmer sells his.

Let me tell hon. gentlemen opposite that the farmers of Canada have nothing to fear from American competition. The Americans furnish a discriminating market; they know a good article when they see it, and they know it better when they taste it. Canadian farm products, as was shown by the World's Fair, stand second to none in all the world. Americans recognize this fact, and in their large cities, when their market is open to us, we will find abundant customers for our butter, for our cheese, for our meat, for our barley, our beans and pease, all known to be of quality superior to any that is produced in the United States.

The National Policy, however, has done something for the farmers, it has oppressed him, it has forced him for sixteen years to pay heavily through the customs on such goods as he chooses to import. It has forced him also to pay tribute to the manufacturers of this country; it has forced him to pay tribute to the sugar refiners; it has forced him throughout the whole of the last year to pay a uniform price for his sugar, 20 per cent in excess of what the same article could be laid down for by the British refiner. It has forced him to pay more for his forks, rakes, hoes, nails, chains, shovels, axes, wire fencing, agricultural machinery—everything, in fact, that he requires—more than he would have to pay were it not for protection. The tariff practically prohibits him from purchasing abroad, compels him to buy at home, and pay the enhanced prices which it enables the manufacturer to charge.

A short time ago I noticed a comparison of prices between Saginaw and Montreal, in a few articles in common use by farmers. I found that the farmer who purchases in Montreal must pay 60 per cent more for his cut nails than the prices charged his American neighbour, the price in Saginaw being \$1.25 per cwt., and in Montreal \$2.25. For his piping for pumps he pays 55 per cent more, the price in Saginaw being \$5.25 per 100 feet, and \$8.10 in Montreal. He pays 39 per cent more for spades, the price in Saginaw being \$3.50 and \$4.75 in Montreal. He pays 40 per cent more for barbed wire, the price being \$1.90 in Saginaw, and \$2.87½ per cwt. in Montreal. Now, we learned the other day the extraordinary precautions the Government are taking to prevent the importation of hardware from the United States. In this short table of prices we find the secret of their hostility to American goods.

Let the farmer of Canada purchase his supplies in the cheapest market he can, and he will ask you for no protection. Doubtless, the farmers were bringing their grievances to the ears of the Ministers when they were out on a tour last fall, and to comfort them the Ministers as-

Mr. DAWSON.