

Those remarks made by Mr. Marvin were made subsequently to the report of our own Senate, which I will not read in whole, as I suppose nearly every one in the House has read it. The report of the Senate says :

It is not, however, to the steady thriving oil industry of Ontario that I desire to call attention, but to the newly discovered deposits in the great Mackenzie Basin, respecting which the Select Committee of the Senate of Canada appointed to inquire into the resources of the region, reported last year that : "The evidence submitted to your committee, points to the existence in the Athabasca and Mackenzie valleys of the most extensive petroleum field in America, if not in the world. The use of petroleum, and consequently the demand for it, are increasing at such a rapid ratio that it is probable that this great petroleum field will assume an enormous value in the near future, and will rank among the chief assets comprised in the Crown domain of the Dominion. For this reason your committee would suggest that a tract of about 40,000 square miles (the area of the Russian deposits at Baku is only 1,600 square miles) be, for the present, reserved from sale, and that as soon as possible its value may be more accurately tested by exploration and practical tests."

This report gives the limits of the oil territory which was recommended to be reserved. It may be said, perhaps, that that is of little value to us at the present day, because there are no railways, and that is perfectly true. There are no railways, and, in one sense, the region is inaccessible ; but before those oil fields in Russia were developed they were much further away from railway communication than is Athabasca from our Canadian Pacific Railway. At the time the Caspian district was discovered there was no railway in the district, but shortly afterwards railways were constructed. The Russians, at that time, were importing over 13,000,000 gallons annually, of American oil. The Russian Government imposed a duty of 14 cents per gallon, and within four years of the discovery of petroleum, American oils were practically excluded, because the quantity that entered the country was reduced to the nominal one of 50,000 gallons. The tariff encouraged the petroleum industry beyond question, and if that tariff had not been established there would have been no petroleum industry in Russia to-day. This is conceded on all hands. After I have explained the extent of capital and labour employed in our country in developing the coal oil industry, I shall show that it would be a dangerous course to pursue either to allow the importation of American refined oil free, or even to trifle with or tamper with the tariff which, at the present moment, gives us our protection. If my remarks in this debate are more extended than usual, I trust I will be pardoned by hon. members on account of the attacks made on the industry by numerous newspapers in the country. Some have gone the length of publishing caricatures. One paper in Montreal occupied half a page with a caricature of an American girl and a Canadian girl buying petroleum. A number of the

articles have contained many misstatements, I will not say wilful misstatements, as to the quality and the price of oil, and as to the capital and labour employed in the industry. Those articles have shown to any one familiar with the business that the persons who wrote them were not well up in the subject, and it would have been well if, before they scattered these statements broadcast throughout the country, they had taken the trouble to ascertain the facts. The press, having done so much already, and having alarmed those engaged in the industry, I may be pardoned for trespassing longer on the time of the House than I otherwise would have thought of doing. The hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills), a few days ago referred to the policy of the Government as stated in the Budget speech of 1882, and he said that speech was a guarantee to the people for the safety of capital they might invest in this country, and an assurance that the capital invested would be protected. Under the policy of a Conservative Government, under a policy that was inaugurated before the National Policy was ever thought of, under a policy decided upon thirty years ago, and under a tariff made by Hon. Alexander Mackenzie himself, and under assurances given in Parliament ever since 1877, capitalists have been invited to invest their money in developing the oil regions of Canada. A bargain was made to a certain extent—I speak figuratively—and capitalists were led to understand that their investments would be protected, and it is not difficult to understand that the people engaged in that industry in the county of Lambton feel alarmed at the agitation created by the newspapers. If Canada could not supply the home market with such petroleum as is required, if the Canadian producers were taxing the public to an extent that would make the buyers suffer in the least, if they were not giving a good article and did not possess an abundant supply, if they were using the tariff under a system of "combinations," thus raising the price of the article and taking extra profits from the consumer, then all assurances given by the Government would be cancelled as between them and the producers. But so long as the petroleum industry furnishes a good article and the quantity required in the country, and does not exact any money improperly from the public by reason of the tariff, so long as there are no combinations but free competition between producers and manufacturers, then the people are justified in looking to this House and the Government for a continuation of the protection under which this industry has grown and prospered. Since I have had the honour of holding a seat in this House there have been no combinations either among manufacturers or producers. I make this statement because it has been charged since I have been here that there were "rings" in the oil trade. There are no "rings" in the oil trade, nor have there been any "rings" since I have sat in Parlia-