

pily the weevil had disappeared, and they hoped to be able to raise wheat in as considerable a quantity as had formerly been the case. If, however, the weevil returned, its culture could be suspended for some years, and the farmers could turn their attention to other matters. Tobacco, for instance, could be cultivated. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Laurier) knew very well that foreign tobacco in the leaf was subject only to an excise duty as well as home-grown tobacco; and what advantage then was afforded the Canadian farmer? The hon. gentleman held that the foreign article was worth more than Canadian tobacco, and what advantage then did the Canadian farmer possess in this respect? If this article could be advantageously cultivated in Canada, and if by this means our farmers could make a considerable profit, why should the Government not favour the motion of the hon. member for Beauce? They were here not merely to pass laws in regard to abstract principles, but it was also their bounded duty to apply the best principles possible to the circumstances of this country. The question before them was one regarding the application of a principle in the interests of this country. The agricultural class was in need of encouragement. It was known that, without this class, the people of the towns could not subsist. If the farmers did not toil every day in the cultivation of their land, where would we be? This class required encouragement in some way, and this motion was intended to effect this object. He knew that the other day, when the agents of the Government in the parishes of St. Paul and Les Eboulements went to seize from certain farmers a few pounds of tobacco, which were absolutely necessary for their needs, these farmers were justly indignant at such conduct. They could not believe that the Government would do such a thing; and they asked whether this had ever been known, to be done in years past. This had never been known to occur before; and this instance only served to show that this law ought to be amended. He would certainly vote for the motion of the hon. member for Beauce.

MR. CASGRAIN: Was not this tax, of which the hon. gentleman complains,

imposed in 1867 or 1868 by the late Government?

MR. LANGEVIN said that the hon. gentleman ought to remember this, that if a duty was then imposed on tobacco, it was increased by the Government which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Casgrain) supported, and even doubled, and more. The hon. gentleman had voted for this increase. The hon. gentleman would soon have occasion to explain to his electors why the duty on tobacco was doubled, why he had encouraged this policy, and why he had sustained the Government which proposed it. The position taken by the hon. the Minister of Inland Revenue was not logical. If tobacco could not be cultivated in Canada, no danger to the revenue need be feared from the passage of this motion.

It being Six o'clock the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

MR. LANGEVIN said that before the House rose for Recess, he was saying that the hon. Minister of Inland Revenue had stated that tobacco could not be grown to advantage in this country, that the climate was against it, that the early frosts would destroy it, therefore we could not expect that the plant would be cultivated to such an extent as to make it an article of consumption. If that was the case, then we should lose nothing by the abolition of the excise duties on tobacco. The hon. gentleman went further, and said that even the small quantity we could grow in this country was of such an inferior quality, it could not compete with the imported article. Therefore, what need was there to be alarmed at this motion. But he had shown the hon. gentleman that tobacco was grown in some countries in large quantities, and would be grown to a much larger extent if it was left untrammelled by excise duty. Since 1870 the duty on it had been increased by hon. gentlemen opposite to nearly double, the increase being much larger on Canadian grown tobacco than on that grown in foreign countries, while the latter was of much greater value than the product of