

views of those present as to the relative duties on flour and wheat.

Letters of regret at their inability to attend the meeting were read from Groves Bros. of Fergus, John Moody & Son, Dunville, Sadler, Dundas & Co., Lindsay, James Dunlop, Hamilton, Gould & Son, Montreal, J. Lee, Walkerton, J. E. Edmonson, Oshawa, MacMilling and Brewing Co., Carberry, Man., Todd Milling Co., Galt, Jas. Stark, Paisley, J. B. Renaud & Co., Quebec, Hunt Bros., London, J. A. Williams & Co., Zurich, Meldrum, Davidson & Co., Peterboro', Macfarlane Milling Co., Sherbrooke, Q; P. Quance, Delhi, R. G. Chapman, Teeswater, and James Fair, Clinton. Some of these letters are given in full at the conclusion of this report.

Mr. M. McLaughlin: "I wish to move a resolution in order to have this matter properly laid before this meeting for discussion. The cause that brings us together to-day, has brought us together a good many times before. We have discussed the unjustness of the flour duty as it is at present. In fact the question has been so much discussed, that almost every one present knows about as much about it as I do. It never was a subject for argument, for the word "argument" implies that there must be some reasonable argument on both sides. As I stated a short time ago in a letter to the press on the subject, I was one of a deputation to wait upon Sir Leonard Tilley and his colleagues, and then there was never any argument offered against our demands, and we were never told that our requests were unjust or unreasonable. The only thing that we were ever told was that as regards Manitoba, as that country was being fast opened up, there would be such quantities of wheat produced there that in the face of this, it would be impossible for Americans to import either flour or wheat, and that we wouldn't be able to import wheat at all. And yet, now we are in exactly the same position, and worse, as we were years ago before that country was opened up or developed at all. It is now ten years ago, and doubtless a good many of you who are present will remember the time, when the Government asked us to say what we thought would be the proper duty on flour. At the meeting we held to discuss that question, there was a mistake made. A great many of us, I among the number, thought the proper way to do was to ask the Government plainly for that measure of protection which we thought we would require. But it so happened that we had with us at that time a gentleman of very high standing and considerable political experience, who was an ex Finance Minister I refer to the late Hon. T. W. Gibbs. That gentleman, who was as I have said, a politician and an ex Finance Minister, told us if we asked too much we would probably be disappointed and not get it, whereas if we asked for a moderate measure of protection, say 50 cents per barrel, we would doubtless get just what we asked for without any modification. But there is just this thing to be remembered in this connection. At the time Mr. Gibbs wanted us to ask for only 50 cents per barrel duty on flour, we had no idea what the duty on wheat was going to be, and I am sure if we had known at that time what the duty on wheat would be fixed at, there was not one of us at that meeting who would have voted for asking 50 cents per barrel duty. Well, Mr. Gibbs was a gentleman who had the faculty of bringing those whom he was addressing into his way of thinking, and we asked for but 50 cents per barrel duty on flour, and we got it. Now once is often enough to make a mistake of this kind. Everybody will agree on this point. These petitions which have been circulated are pretty long ones, and have taken a good deal of time in the preparation of them, by Mr. Stark and Mr. Lawder, who are, you will all agree with me, very much entitled to our thanks." Applause. Mr. McLaughlin then read the petition, and moved that "It is the opinion of this meeting that the proper duty is \$1 per barrel, and that \$1 per barrel be asked for." Continuing his address he said, "Now if we can unite on that, and if we can show to the Government of the Dominion that we are united in our demands, we will be successful, for we have the power; and having the power and influence, we are going to get just that duty we ask for. (Applause.) But we are not going to get it by asking for one-third of what we want. (Hear, hear). We have the power; we have the influence; we have justice on our side; we want what we ask for, and we are going to get it, too. (Applause). There is no one here but will accord with me when I say, we have the power. (Hear, hear). If the present Government doesn't grant it—if the present session is brought to a close, without our knowing whether or not we are to be afforded protection under the National Policy as other manufacturing industries are—then I say we should not allow ten days to pass until we organize, and take such prompt and decisive

action as will ensure our getting what we have asked for. (Applause). The millers' interest is as important an industry as there is in Canada to-day. The millers are scattered all over the country. Their interests and those of the farmers are one and the same, for would not the farmers in every locality suffer if the Canadian millers were forced to go under? And let me say here, if we go Ottawa with our demands supported and backed up by the interests of the farmers, as we do, there can be no influence brought to bear upon the Government that will induce them to refuse our requests. It is proposed to send a deputation to Ottawa to press our claims on the Dominion Government, and let us send that deputation direct from this meeting. Then, if that deputation comes back to us with the same old story, let us organize and get some man to work the thing up for us, and make it an issue which must be settled, and settled at once. (Applause).

H. S. Howland: "I second this resolution asking for an increase in the duty on flour coming into Canada, because I feel that in the past the flour manufacturing industry of this country has not been properly dealt with. When the fiscal policy of the present Government, called the N.P., was adopted, we were told that it was a policy adopted for the purpose of encouraging and fostering Canadian manufacturing industries. To-day all other manufacturers are protected to the extent of 25 to 40 per cent. but the milling industry, one of the most important, can hardly be said to be protected at all. Our country is made a slaughter market for our opponents, and you all know very well that the object of the N. P. was to prevent this, and this was not to be permitted at all. Even if we get a duty imposed on American flour coming into Canada, it will not be a protection of 25 per cent., nor anything like it. If we send a barrel of flour to the other side, we must pay over \$1 per barrel duty, and I, for my part, can't see why we should not be protected to the same extent. If the policy of the Government is, and that's just what it is, a policy intended to protect manufacturers, I don't see why the flour millers of the country are not put in a different position as regards duty on American flour coming into Canada. I think that this millers' meeting ought to send a good strong deputation down to Ottawa, and have this deputation insist on our rights, and that we be put on an equal footing with other Canadian manufacturers, as is our due. (Applause).

Mr. James Hamilton, of Glen Huron: "As an old miller, and probably as old a miller as there is here, having built my own mill and afterwards run it myself, and having had a great deal of experience, I can understand a little of what the feelings of millers are, who have been so unjustly treated by the Government of this country of ours. There is no class of men in Ontario to-day that has so benefitted the country, and benefitted the farmers, as the millers have done. They are not found altogether in one or more large cities. They are not all in Toronto, or Montreal, or London, or Ottawa, or Guelph, or in any other place, but they are scattered all over the country wherever there is wheat to be ground, and water power to be had. Every man in the country is benefitted by the millers, and I don't see why the Government of the country has taken such a stand against us. But I believe if the millers have been badly treated in the past, it has been to a great extent their own fault. They should know what they want, and be a solid body when they ask for it, and then they will get it. When at St. Johns, N. B., a few years ago, I saw a cargo of Ontario flour arrive there for sale, but hardly had it been unloaded before three or four cars of American flour was thrown right on top of it, and had to be sold before the Ontario flour could have any show at all. What we want now to do, is to place our grievance before the Government, and tell them just what we want, and then we will get it, for the millers of Canada are a power and carry a weight with them—not only the big millers, but also the small mill owners. One dollar per barrel duty is not enough to compensate us for the way we have been treated in the past. I feel that millers ought to get their just rights, and I am sure they will, too, if they ask for what they want and are entitled to have. There are, of course, a few Quebec millers and flour men who may not see things as we see them; notwithstanding this fact, we ought to, and I am sure we will, carry weight with the Government, and will get our equal rights along with every other Canadian manufacturer. (Applause).

Mayor Peplow, of Port Hope, said: "This is the first meeting of this kind I have ever attended. I may state I am heartily in accord with the sentiments as expressed by previous speakers at this meeting. Before any duty was put on at all, we were able to compete, favorably, with the American millers. I am a free trader, and would like to have the same market again,

but as the Americans have put up a fence in the shape of a duty to keep us out of their market, I think we ought to put up just such a fence of the same height on our side, to keep them out of our market. We have a right to go on this principle, that if we can't have part of their loaf, we have no right to allow them to have the whole of ours. To-day we come into competition with the Americans' flour in Canada at almost every turn, and more especially in this true of low grade flours. As for our high grades, we have not so much difficulty in disposing of them, but they bother us a good deal with their low grades. (Applause).

Mr. Plewes, of Brantford: "At the time we accepted 50 cents per barrel duty on flour, we were given to understand we could not get \$1 per barrel duty if we asked for it, and it would be better to ask for what we were likely to get, than for what we had no chance of getting. Well, we thought that with 50 cents per barrel duty we could manage very well in competition with American millers, and so we did for a while; but now, circumstances have changed, and, as you all know, American flour is coming into pretty close competition with our article, and we must confess, is getting the better of us. I have no hopes whatever that even the Americans will lower the duty they have imposed on our flour going into the States, or that they will give us Commercial Union, or free trade, or whatever else you've a mind to call it, so long as it means access to their market of sixty millions, of which we would be very glad. Therefore, the thing for us to consider is, what is the best thing for us to do at the present time. I have no doubt but that the Government is convinced we are right. When the Government has anything to do, it is not a question with them whether it is right or wrong, but it is merely a question of votes. No Government is open to conviction of right or wrong. They are only open to votes (laughter). I have been on previous deputations to Ottawa, and have every time tried to put the question in as good and strong a light to them as possible. First I tried to convince them, but it was no go. Then I told them we were British subjects and Canadians, and wished to remain so. I told them we paid our taxes and ought to be protected against Americans and foreigners who didn't pay taxes. But all in vain. Then I begged them to allow us to bring in the 4,750 bushels of wheat necessary to make 1000 barrels of flour, and to allow us to grind it in bond. Then we would have 1,000 barrels of flour in bond. Let the American send along his 1,000 barrels of flour in bond also. When we both had 1,000 barrels of flour in bond let us take it out of bond and pay our 50 cents per barrel duty, and then we would be satisfied to compete with the American millers every time. The answer I got then, from Sir Leonard Tilley was one I shall never forget. It was, "Plewes, no Government on earth could deny you that privilege." (Applause). In my innocence, (laughter) I came away happy and contented (laughter), but I afterward found out by experience that nothing but votes will influence any Government. (Renewed laughter). We waited in vain. We never got what we asked for. Now, I just want to say something to you about the way we must go about it, if we want to get this increase of duty. You will not get it unless by some other means than that of convincing the Government (laughter), and you will not get it unless you convince the Government that it is simply a question of votes, and a pretty serious question of votes too, (applause and laughter). There is nothing that will touch the feelings of the Government like votes. (Renewed applause and laughter). Circumstances have changed since ten years ago. Then we had sufficient cheap wheat to enable us to compete with the Americans every time, and we didn't feel our injustice so much as we do now. Let us now ask for either one thing or the other. We want the duty we ask for, or none. (Applause). \$1 per barrel duty is what we want. If they will give it to us, well and good, but if they don't, I for one am quite prepared to change my politics at once, and ask for the free trade we had before ten years ago. (Applause). It is no use mincing the matter. There is no use mincing anything with a Government. If they are going to adopt this protection which is due us, and which we ought by rights to have had long ago, then all right, but if they are not, I for one, am quite prepared to take the stump and show them, as we did the Mackenzie Government, that if they can't give us what we are entitled to, we put them there, and we will turn them out, and put in men who will either give us proper protection or free trade. (Applause).

Mr. John Brown, of the Citizens Milling Co., said: "I have listened with a great deal of interest to what has been said, and I almost think it is unnecessary for me to say anything further about this duty we want to ask for, of \$1 per barrel. But there is one aspect of the