

the trade with the United States has fallen off. And here let me for one moment refer to a trade which I believe as firmly as I stand here might be laid hold of by the people of this country. I refer to the West India trade. (Hear.) In those Islands we might find a profitable market for most of the surplus products of Canada. The recent report of the Commissioners called attention to the important fact, that the British and Spanish West Indies received from the United States products which we can just as well send, such as lumber, flour, butter, cheese, staves, shooks, boots and shoes, hardware, &c. The British West India Islands alone received of these articles to the extent of ten millions of dollars a year; the Spanish West Indies to the figure of eight millions of dollars; and if we add Hayti and St. Domingo, we find an aggregate trade of nearly twenty-five millions of dollars with the United States, in articles which we produce and might supply. (Hear, hear.) Without trespassing on the House further to explain the motives and policy of the Government, I may say, in brief, that our desire is to make as few changes in the tariff as possible. We desire that these should be in the direction of conciliating our friends in the Maritime Provinces, and, further, we desire not to restrict our intercourse with the United States at the present moment. (Hear, hear.) I will now proceed to point out in what respect we propose to reduce the present taxation, a portion of the statement which I am sure will be received with satisfaction. (Hear, hear.) We propose to take the duty off flour, meal, grain, and breadstuffs of all kinds. (Hear, hear, from Nova Scotia members.) We propose also to make a change in regard to another matter in which I know my hon. friend opposite (Hon. Mr. Savary) feels interested. We propose to follow up the course, the liberal and enlightened course which Canada some years ago adopted, by taking off the tonnage dues for the support of light houses. (Cheers.) We propose also to make a change in the duty on molasses, in the shape of a reduction. I shall mention presently the details of the amounts of these reductions. We propose also to revise a class of duties which has given us some little anxiety, and in regard to which there has been considerable investigation and a good deal of minute calculation. I mean the sugar duties, a very difficult subject to deal with. The proposed changes then are, the removal of the duties on breadstuffs, of the tonnage dues, a further reduction on molasses, and a revision of the sugar duties with a special view of stimulating the direct West India trade with this country. (Hear, hear.) Sir, I do not think I over estimate the difficulty which the Government have experienced in dealing with this question. It is one which the Government of England have felt for many years has had in it more elements of discord than were met with in dealing with any other item of the tariff. Many years ago a Parliamentary Committee sat for nearly two months taking evidence of the most experienced men of all classes with reference to the sugar duties. The result of the deliberations of that Committee was a Return to Parliament, and the subsequent adoption of a revised scale of duties. That scale was subjected to the test of international experiments, which were carried on till late last year, under the direction of the French, English and Dutch Gov-