

(APPENDIX L.) See Journal page 84.

JOINT REPORT ON COLONIAL TRADE.

The joint Committee to whom was referred the resolutions of the two houses of the Legislature on the subject of Colonial Trade, respectfully report

That having considered the resolutions referred to them in relation to the commerce of this Province, and prepared addresses in pursuance of the order of the two houses, they deem it proper to submit the following report, explanatory of the several objects comprehended in the address to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor.

The great importance to this province of such a relaxation in the British Corn laws, as will admit of the importation of our bread stuffs into the United Kingdom, upon payment of a moderate duty, has been sufficiently explained on former occasions, and His Majesty's Government are evidently fully impressed with the conviction of the benefits which we should derive from such a measure. It must, in truth, very much depend upon our being able to find a steady market for this staple article of production, whether we can or cannot, supply ourselves with the manufactures of Great Britain, in proportion to our wants. But it is needless to insist further upon so obvious a truth. We trust that the short experience which may be had under the act of last year, will induce the Imperial Parliament to render the measure permanent, and at the same time, more available to this colony, by admitting our flour as well as wheat, for the reasons stated in the address. The evident certainty, that the surplus corn which can be exported from Upper Canada for many years to come, can produce no considerable effect in the English Market, could scarcely fail to obviate any apprehensions of the English Agriculturalists, unless, indeed, it may be feared that the corn of the United States would be introduced in great quantities through the same channel.—But, besides, that the limitation of the privilege to a reasonable quantity, for instance, two hundred thousand quarters, would effectually preclude any danger of that kind, it can scarcely be supposed but that the vigilance of the Government and of the Legislature of the Province, might prevent such an abuse occurring to any very considerable extent. When the bulk of an article is great in proportion to its value, the temptation to smuggle it is the less, and the difficulties are not so easily surmounted, and it has indeed been found that notwithstanding the facilities presented by a long line of contiguous frontier, the duties heretofore imposed by the Legislature upon flour and wheat produced in the United States, which were intended to be prohibitory, have been seldom evaded.

Upon that part of the address, which respects the duties to be paid in England on Tobacco grown in this province, your Committee have to observe, that it is but too certain that the abatement of three pence per pound, upon the English import duties of four shillings, is not sufficient to enable us to compete with the foreign grower. The Legislature in their former application, desired to be as moderate as possible in their request: and from the imperfect knowledge which they had acquired of the course of trade in a production then very recently introduced into this Province, they erroneously imagined that the abatement they asked for, would give a sufficient protection. It has been since made apparent that the difference of cost in producing Tobacco and preparing it for shipments, in countries fully peopled, where the labor attending the different processes, is performed by slaves and their children, and in this province where no labour can be procured which is not paid for at a high rate, is much greater than was supposed, and the effect of this disadvantage is the more decisive from the necessity, of which the Legislature was not at first aware, of sending it to market in a more prepared state, than would appear necessary to persons unacquainted with the course of the trade in that article. The committee are sanguine in their hope, that the Imperial parliament will admit of the statement prayed for, of nine pence per pound on Canadian Tobacco, in which case there is reason to believe, that it will be cultivated to an extent which will very materially advance the prosperity of the Western Districts of the Province.

With respect to the Resolution which relates to the expediency of being allowed to admit, free of duty, the following articles from the United States of America, to wit;—Ashes, raw Hides, Tallow, Plants, Shrubs, and Trees alive, garden and other Seeds, Gypsum, Paper used for printing, and the travelling Carriages of persons removing into, or passing through this Province, your committee consider that it may be useful to offer the following remarks as explanatory of the several objects.

ASHES.—By the late British statute for regulating duties on importations, Pot and Pearl Ashes manufactured in foreign countries, are charged with a duty of £6 per ton, on their admission into the ports of the United Kingdom, while colonial Ashes are admitted free of duty. In the statutes regulating the colonial trade, Ashes are neither among the articles enumerated as prohibited, nor as admissible free of duty, nor among those to which any specific duty is affixed. They are, therefore, only admissible into these colonies from the United States, on payment of the general ad valorem duty of fifteen per cent. But as it is clear that the discrimination in the British act, does not regard the country from whence Ashes are imported, but the country of which they are the manufacture, it follows that American Ashes imported into Canada, and paying, as they must do on such importation, the ad valorem duty of fifteen per cent, would, nevertheless, be subject on their arrival in England, to the foreign duty of £6 per ton; and the consequence of course must be, that the Ashes of the United States, will not be imported into Canada for exportation to England. The same quantity will nevertheless find its way there; and the inhabitants of this province, will lose the advantage of its