

others to the culture of the plant; if so, what need had the Canadian producer of greater protection than he enjoyed at present?

MR. BABY: Is not the leaf of foreign tobacco admitted free?

MR. LAFLAMME: Yes; but the moment it was manufactured it paid the duty. He contended that tobacco was not a natural, legitimate, product of Canada, and those who had entered into its cultivation on a large scale had, with rare exceptions, found it to be a ruinous production. The revenue on tobacco was indispensable to the Administration, and could not be replaced in any other manner. In fact the duty ought to be raised, as this weed was injurious to the health of those who indulged in it. A more legitimate or less onerous tax could not be raised, and were it to be removed it would have to be imposed on the prime necessities of life. The law should be put in force so as to hinder frauds on the revenue, and no exemptions from seizure should be allowed where there was a manifest infraction of the law. When a cultivator of the plant would know that the law would be rigidly enforced, he would bring it to the licensed manufacturer and obtain the highest price. The hon. member for Charlevoix endeavoured, to day, to raise prejudices, by means of this cry of taxation, in face of his own course in 1868, among a population which had not occasion to understand the real merits of the question.

MR. CARON said, evidently, the hon. the Minister of Justice was not *au fait* on this question. Were he to state in Quebec that the use of tobacco was injurious, he would be told that he knew nothing about it, or that he had not taken the trouble to examine it in all its details. As a representative of an agricultural county, he would state that the culture of tobacco was yearly extending. It had been said the tax originated under the Conservative Administration. He thought that when hon. gentlemen opposite succeeded to power, they would have removed all those abuses. The former Government had imposed a tax on Canadian tobacco of 7 c. per lb.; under the present Government, it had been raised

40 per cent. If the tax were abolished, a great development would be given to a national industry in the production of an article which was, in fact, a necessity. He could understand that to the people of the town, whose habits were mainly sedentary, the use of the weed might be injurious; but not to the agricultural population, whose work was done in the open air, and whose only luxury was their pipe. The hon. Minister had said this tax was an indispensable one. He would ask the hon. Minister how much this tax produced? If it were lowered, would the revenue suffer to any serious extent? It was an insignificant tax, which only brought in some hundreds of dollars, and which hindered the development of an industry which would otherwise assume considerable proportions. He was willing to leave this question to be considered by the people of the Province of Quebec, who understood it perfectly, and who would understand that the reasons given by the hon. the Minister of Justice would not weigh against those advanced in favour of the motion of his hon. friend from Beauce.

MR. DESJARDINS said he had been disappointed by the remarks of the hon. the Minister of Inland Revenue. Knowing that in the Province of Quebec there existed great political men in close relations with the hon. members opposite who claimed to have discovered a system by which they could administer public affairs without taxes, only by means of economy and retrenchment, he would have expected that the Government would have borrowed the secret of such a system, and benefitted by the occasion offered to them by his friend for Beauce to adopt it to the Federal policy. According to the views expressed by the hon. the Minister of Justice, the removal of the tax imposed on Canadian tobacco was not, in itself, a very important question, as a matter of revenue to the Government, it was true, and the affirmation of the hon. gentleman had only confirmed this view. The report of the Minister of Inland Revenue stated as follows: "The quantity of Canadian leaf taken for consumption as such,