to come in and get a share of the preferential trade." (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. W. M. Jarvis, St. John, said he had much pleasure in seconding the resolution. "It is a question of vast importance," he declared. "And it is

A HAPPY OMEN

when you find such a strong public opinion as now exists among all people in Canada for a continuance of the present preferential tariff with Great Britain." (Hear, hear.)

Without further discussion the motion was put and carried unanimously.

TRADE WITH THE WEST INDIES.

The subject of the West Indian trade was introduced by Mr. I. C. Stewart, of Halifax, who, early in the year, spent three months in the Leeward Islands. He said it was a subject which indirectly interests every merchant and every manufacturer in the Province of Nova Scotia, because "it involves one of our most, if not the most, important of our industries, namely, that of fish. It concerns the counties of Lunenburg, Queens, Shelburne and Yarmouth directly, and it concerns the supply houses and exporters of Halifax almost, if not quite, as seriously."

Continuing, Mr. Stewart spoke in part as follows: "The West Indian trade of Nova Scotia is

ONE OF THE OLDEST SURVIVING INDUSTRIES

of our people. I am not as familiar with the early history of the trade as the majority of those present, but anyone who has lived in Halifax for any length of time during the past 10 years cannot fail to have heard of the

GOOD OLD DAYS

when the docks were alive with small shipping and money was easily made by Halifax exporters. We are not doing as large a business to day with the British West Indies as we did some years ago, and further along in my argument I shall have occasion to show why this is so. At present, however, our exports of dried fish to the British West Indies and British Guiana are worth about $1,250,000 a year. I estimate this from the statistics given in the Trade Returns, which show direct exports of $811,827. The balance I estimate to be sent to New York, as our exports to New York show a total of $540,000, much of which, I am informed, is resold to the West Indies. The total value of Canada's dried fish exports in 1899 was $2,737,000, of which the Province of Nova Scotia supplied $2,345,000; and of this a little more than two-fifths went directly and indirectly to the British West Indies and British Guiana.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

"I had not been longer among the business people of the West Indies than a few weeks when I made up my mind that the successful extension of trade between Canada and the West Indies, particularly as regards fish, depends upon the prosperity of the sugar industry; but when I came to consider what Canada could do alone towards assisting the West Indies to put that industry on a sounder basis, I came to the conclusion that we could do but very little. The market for sugar and other West Indian products in Canada is,

UNFORTUNATELY, RESTRICTED,

and it will be many years before Canada is large enough and wealthy enough to consume all that the British West Indies can produce; so it became apparent to me that it was useless to hope for a speedy development of a large trade between Canada and the West Indies. But, as I thought more carefully, more deeply on the matter, it occurred to me that we might

HELP TO DEVELOP THIS TRADE

by assisting the West Indies to find a larger market, if we could not give them the larger market ourselves. And, recalling the important place that Canada now holds in the councils of the Empire, it began to impress itself upon my mind that Canada might be able to bring to bear some influence upon the Mother Country to induce her to take the necessary steps to provide a market among her consumers for the sugar which the West Indies can produce, and would be producing, were it not for the unfair competition of the bounty countries.

PREFERENTIAL TRADE

within the Empire would settle this difficulty at once, and if I could have my way I would make an arrangement whereby England would give the West Indies such a preference for her products as would insure them a market. In return for this the British West Indies would give a preference for the products of both Britain and her colonies. This would secure Canada the foodstuffs trade of the British West Indies. And, of course, as Canada should not expect to get something for nothing, she in turn would give a special preference to Great Britain."

Mr. Stewart dealt exhaustively with the history of the sugar in the West Indies during the last 200 years, and showed that out of a total of 8,321,733 tons of sugar (5,608,000 tons of beet and 2,700,000 tons of cane sugar) produced in the world in 1898-99, the British West Indies only contributed one thirty-fifth. "The cause of this," he declared, "is the iniquitous policy of the bounty system, which the British Government, whom we are all taught to regard with the utmost reverence, seems disposed to treat with indifference. Were it not for the United States, which

CAME TO THE RESCUE

in 1896 by enforcing countervailing duties on bounty fed sugars, the British West Indies would to day be hovering on the brink, if not already in the pit, of bankruptcy. Is it a position we should view with equanimity that one of the oldest and most loyal colonies of the Empire is now dependent upon the United States, and is asking the Mother Country in vain for that justice which it has from the hands of a foreign nation?

"We have practically lost our market in Porto Rico for our fish, and that of Cuba will soon follow. These, in themselves, mean $800,000 of a deduction from our fish sales. *The British West Indies should have* fair play, and Canada, as the strongest colony in the Empire, should see that they get it."

TRADE OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS.

Mr. Stewart pointed out that the Leeward Islands annually exported about 20,000 tons of sugar and 4,250 puncheons of molasses, of the total value of $925,000, equal to a total value per head of $13.26. The total area under cultivation in the Islands he estimated at about 35,000 acres, less than 1-13th of the total acreage of the Islands. The present method of sugar manufacture in the Leeward Islands is

MOST PRIMITIVE

and he had been informed that, with the vacuum process of manufacture, 15 to 20 per cent. more juice would be obtained from the cane.

The consumption of flour by the Leeward Islands is 37,000 barrels annually; of fish, 21,000 quintals; of lumber, 1,500,000 feet; of cheese, 40,000 lb., and of butter, 100,000 lb. He held that by increasing the production of the sugar crop the purchasing power of the Islands would be increased proportionately.

In Barbadoes, he said, the sugar production during the past 10 years had averaged 60,000 tons. The best year was in 1890 when 85,000 tons were produced. "I have been told by the planters," he added "that although 90 per cent. of the cultivable land in Barbadoes is now under cultivation, that with the introduction of capital and new machinery, which will immediately follow a settlement of the sugar bounties, the Island can easily produce from 110,000 to 120,000 tons per year. So on through the different colonies of St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trinidad, British Guiana and Jamaica, there is a possible output of 1,000,000 tons; and the same argument which I have made with regard to increasing the consumptive capacity of the Leeward Islands will, to a greater or less extent, hold good elsewhere."