

right and so would others—(hear, hear)—of having the fullest discussion on a subject so important to the country.

Mr. Bodwell was clearly of opinion that American corn did come into competition with our coarse grains, and that our farmers felt that competition too. We were asked to favour the Maritime Provinces in a great many things, in almost everything in fact, and it was time that the agricultural interests of the West received some slight consideration. It was well known that while we exported live stock to a large extent, and males were not imported here from the other side unless for breeding purposes and the improvement of stock, which object should not be impeded by any duty. The duty proposed would be a mere nothing compared to an improved stock, and we wanted to import no other. He thought it bad policy to take the duty off American corn, which really came into strong competition with our own coarse grains. We were making a heavy investment mostly for the benefit of the Lower Provinces, and they ought to consider all this. Not to put duty on American hops was favouring the Americans and doing injustice to ourselves.

Mr. Oliver then altered his amendment so as to provide exemption merely for the importation of valuable animals, for the improvement of stock, by agricultural societies.

Mr. Scatcherd said the people of the Maritime Provinces, who were largely interested in the fisheries, were strongly opposed to opening the fisheries to foreign competition. They should consider that the agricultural interests of the West had as good a right as the fishery interests of the East to be consulted. They wanted protection for themselves, but would deny it to others.

Mr. Jones (Leeds) wished to reply to a statement by the member for South Oxford that we could not raise corn here, and that, therefore, American corn did not compete with our own production. American corn did come directly into competition with our own rye, oats and other products. The interests of two millions and a half of people in the West were to be counted as nothing compared with the interests of a little over half a million in the Lower Provinces. England had attained to her manufacturing greatness principally by long continued protection of her manufactures. When Peel conceded free trade in corn, he legislated for the majority, because there

[**Mr. Mackenzie (Lambton).**]

were thirteen millions who lived by manufactures, while only five millions lived by agriculture. Here the position was reversed—the millions being the agriculturists, and the minority engaged in other occupations. Peel's principle, if consistently followed here would forbid legislation for the small minority to the injury of the great majority.

Dr. Parker thought the argument that our farmers could not be injured by foreign competition in articles of which they had a large surplus for exportation an unsound one. The country adjoining raised corn cheaper than we could, and there was a direct competition with Canadian coarse grain, highly injurious to our farmers. We might stand some compromise of interests for the sake of Confederation, but this should not be carried too far.

Mr. Gibbs said we should drop the continual compromising and arrangement of interests, and try to frame a policy on broad and liberal principles. He believed the discontent existing in the Maritime Provinces had been greatly over-estimated and exaggerated. It had too much influence over the Government which had in this case been led into error through an imaginary pressure. The duties on American produce had been wisely imposed in 1866 as a consequence of the end of reciprocity. Legislation in the United States had great influence over the course of the produce trade here, and this extraneous influence and operation ought to be counteracted. No one knew the power of this influence on our trade better than did the Minister of Excise. He approved the export duties now put upon saw logs, which would show the Americans that they could not by their legislation control all our trade operations. Americans protect their own interests by discriminating against Canadian flour and wheat. On wheat they charged 20¢ per bushel, but on flour 20 per cent *ad valorem*, which was from \$1.40 to \$1.60 in gold on a barrel. They were wise enough to favour the importation of the grain, but the grinding they would do for themselves. He believed Americans had seen their folly and would now meet us with a new treaty. He repeated that discontent in the Maritime Provinces had been greatly exaggerated and his opinion was that Government had made a mistake in dropping the duty on flour "to conciliate," as was supposed. Last night they had been told by gentlemen representing the Anti-Union side that the discontent was on no question of tariff, but had another basis altogether. The Government erred in attempting to subsidize. It would do no good.