

	Great Britain.	France.	Other Ports.	Totals of Flour.
	brls.	brls.	brls.	brls 196 lb. ea.
New York	387,291	77,995	79,635	544,921
Houston	51,413
Philadelphia	65,974	5,990	6,434	64,398
New Orleans	142,063
Total flour	803,794			

These shipments include the whole quantities sent to Great Britain, France, other parts of Europe, the West Indies, South America, and the other markets at all times less or more dependent upon the United States. And this leads us to the incontrovertible fact, that the importing countries of Europe have been chiefly supplied from the other parts of Europe, partly from old stocks in the warehouses of the sea-ports, and partly by the great efforts which high prices have induced the growers to make in every country to bring their produce early to market; and partly, too, there can be no doubt, by the richer countries outbidding the population of the poorer countries, for those supplies destined for their own use; for it is a fact that, at this moment, in some of the finest grain-producing countries, not only are prices extravagantly high, but the stocks are already so much exhausted, that the population is bordering upon actual starvation. This refers to large districts in Germany, and more particularly in Poland. If Great Britain and France are to require a similar extent of supplies, from this time till the next harvest, that they have taken during the last three months, it is difficult to see from whence they can be furnished. From the month of May forwards America will furnish considerable quantities, but not near the extent generally anticipated.

The following very important table shows the quantities of grain, flour, &c., imported into the United Kingdom, from all parts of the world, in 1846, compared with the two preceding years, and also the quantity entered for consumption:—

	IMPORTED.			DUTY PAID.		
	1844.	1845.	1846.	1844.	1845.	1846.
	qrs.	qrs.	qrs.	qrs.	qrs.	qrs.
Wheat	1,099,077	871,443	1,437,944	832,182	135,670	1,995,869
Barley	1,019,345	371,130	373,040	1,029,001	299,314	400,413
Oats	299,601	592,630	786,632	262,357	685,293	772,634
Rye	26,632	435	1,775	20,779	23	1,636
Peas	108,001	84,830	214,662	122,064	82,566	181,800
Beans	154,424	185,034	225,993	197,919	197,919	209,874
Maize or Indian corn	37,064	56,378	714,861	38,711	42,295	720,681
Buckwheat	3,907	1,773	22,860	3,937	1,105	22,445
Malt	—	1	—	—	—	—
Total of all kinds of grain Imported	2,747,951 cwt.	2,102,644 cwt.	3,814,666 cwt.	2,533,631 cwt.	1,344,675 cwt.	4,305,185 cwt.
Wheatmeal or flour	980,645	950,105	3,198,876	719,963	630,235	3,284,434
Oatmeal and barley meal	3,951	3,063	25,671	3,922	2,924	25,223
Indian meal	105	—	131,910	—	—	136,954
Rye and buckwheat meal	—	—	335	—	—	335
Total flour & meal	984,701	953,258	3,356,812	719,886	632,479	3,536,971

The entire quantity of foreign grain entered for consumption in 1846 was no less than 4,305,185 qrs.; and of flour meal, &c., 3,536,971 cwt.,—quantities so much larger than in any former year, that no comparison whatever with the past can be suggested. It may, however, be very useful to examine in what part of the year these extraordinary quantities of grain and flour were entered for consumption, and they will appear even more remarkable when we find that nearly the whole quantity has been consumed during the last six months of the year. By the Official Tables which we published up to the 5th of June, the following quantities had been taken for consumption:—

Grain of all kinds	qrs 254,277
Flour, &c.	cwt. 181,932

Towards the end of June the new Corn Bill was passed, and by the accounts up to the 5th of July, we find the quantities entered for consumption:—

Grain of all kinds	qrs. 2,301,950
Flour, &c.	cwt. 2,193,554

At the end of the next three months, by the accounts brought down to the 10th of October, we find the quantities taken for consumption were:—

Grain of all kinds	qrs. 3,287,797
Flour, &c.	cwt. 3,081,791

And, finally, at the close of the year, the quantities were:—

Grain of all kinds	qrs. 4,305,185
Flour, &c.	cwt. 3,536,971

So that the proportions in which the deliveries for consumption in those periods have been as follows:—

	Delivered for Consumption.	Flour.
	Grain of all kinds.	cwt.
Five months—Jan 5 to June 5	252,277	181,932
One month—June 5 to July 5	2,047,673	2,015,572
Three months—July 5 to Oct. 10	985,847	894,237
Three months—Oct. 10 to Jan. 5	1,917,383	455,180
Total	4,305,185	3,536,971

It may be said, therefore, that practically the whole of these huge supplies have been taken into consumption in the last six months of the year; about one-half, however, having been imported during

the first six months of the year, and kept until the new Corn Bill had passed. The large importations into France, of the past year, were even more crowded into the latter part of the year; the greatest bulk having been imported in the last three months. We fear, therefore, when we see the enormous drain which has been on the stocks of every part of Europe during the last half of 1846, we cannot look forward to any very considerable further supplies from those quarters, during the six months which have yet to elapse before the next harvest.

We do not propose now to enter into any calculation of the extent to which our own home supplies of food of all kinds is deficient in present year, but we must draw the attention of our readers to a very important table, printed in this supplement, in the correspondence relating to Ireland, containing an official estimate of the quantities of Indian corn which would be required to replace the loss of the potato crop in Ireland, exclusive of the usual reserve for seed, the portion given to cattle, and the quantity usually exported to Great Britain. It is as follows:—

Tons Indian corn.	equivalent to	Tons potatoes.
1,438,324	8,142,599

That being the quantity of potatoes which, according to the best estimate, is required for the support of those classes which consume potatoes chiefly. The value of the Indian corn, computed only at 1d. per lb., is £13,424,357, while the value of the equivalent in potatoes, computed only at 2½d. per stone of 14 lbs., is £13,570,999. When we look at this fact, and consider that the Government has determined to expend £8,000,000 in the next six months in advances under various heads to Ireland, for the purpose of feeding the people, it would be difficult to estimate at this moment the effect which these two considerations are calculated to exercise upon the grain markets of the world during the period in question.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, TUESDAY, FEB. 9.

Mr. RICARDO moved for a select committee on the navigation laws. If the appointment of this committee was to be opposed, he would show that there was so much injury and oppression to the manufacturing interests of the country, and also to its colonial interests, in the operation of the navigation laws, as to justify him in his motion. It was obvious that the cost of our own productions, when exported, was not the price which they cost upon leaving the factory, but the cost on their arrival at the foreign market. It was also obvious that, for every ton of foreign shipping which we drove from our ports, we deprived the British manufacturer of a sale to the value of the commodity which he produced, and the revenue of the profit to be derived from the sale of that commodity. He then urged upon the house the complaints of our colonies, that our navigation laws were upheld against their interests for the mere advantage of the mother country. He showed that such laws had lost Brazil to Portugal, and the United States to this country, and had left Holland with no other foreign settlement than Java, and Spain with no other than Cuba and the Philippine Islands. He insisted that no adequate political advantage counterbalanced the mischief of the disadvantages which he had pointed out. But then it was said that the commercial navy was the nucleus of our defensive navy, and that the navigation laws were necessary to uphold our commercial navy. Now he denied that the way to encourage our commercial navy was by prohibition, restriction, or protection; for restriction meant scarcity, and scarcity meant inferiority. Our protection gave us nothing but our own carrying trade, and deprived us of the carrying trade of other countries. Commerce was the nursery of our commercial marine; if you promoted commerce, you would promote that marine.

Mr. HUME seconded the motion.

Mr. M. GIBSON observed, that Mr. Ricardo had brought under the notice of the house a motion of much interest. He pointed out various anomalies in the working of that law, but he did not call upon the house to assent to the measures which he thought calculated to remove them, but merely to an enquiry into their existence. If, then, Government gave its assent to such an enquiry, it would only be acting in accordance with the recommendation contained in the report of the committee of 1845, to which Mr. Ricardo had referred. He therefore thought, that if the house should agree to the proposition of Mr. Ricardo it would be but continuing a train of useful inquiry which had been already commenced. On the part of the Government, then, he acceded to the motion.

Mr. LIDDELL could not assent to the appointment of the committee. The object of the appointment of the last committee on this subject was very different from that now sought to be attained by the granting of the committee required. What object could be obtained by granting the committee at this time? The honourable gentleman then entered into numerous details, with a view of refuting the statements of Mr. Ricardo as to the injurious effects of the Navigation Laws, after which he proceeded to show, from the increase of foreign tonnage which had taken place in the port of Hull, during the last two or three years, the extent to which the British shipowner would be injured by the free and unrestricted competition to which it was sought to expose him. If the Government granted the committee, he would call upon the Government to remove, in the first place, the numerous restrictions with which the shipowner had to contend. He hoped that the house would refuse the committee, and thus put a stop, as far as possible, to the current of free trade.

Mr. MURPHY commenced by shewing that, if the British shipowner was unable to compete with foreign vessels in the foreign trade of other nations, it was because the expenses of ship building, from the duties on timber and other disabilities under which he laboured, were fifty per cent against him as compared with his foreign rivals. The bearing of the