

no.") In addition to this, it is known that coal is a prime necessity for our great railways, thereby facilitating and cheapening the transport of the productions of the country from the interior to the seaboard, and it would, therefore, in this case, be one of the most serious mistakes that could be made to tax this mineral product. No, sir, it is not contended that it would benefit the country, and no Ministry that ever lives will dare to impose a tax upon one of the first necessities of life. (Great cheering.) Another principal item is that of salt. Of that article we imported last year three millions of bushels. Now we have vast deposits of salt in Canada, and it would no doubt be beneficial to the Ontario salt producers to prohibit the importation of salt, which comes to the Maritime Provinces almost entirely from England. But, on the other hand, to do this would be to deprive our fishermen of the means of cheaply preserving the product of their industry; and when I say that our exports of fish last year amounted to \$5,874,360, you will see that to impose such a duty as would prevent the import of salt would only be ruining one interest by promoting another interest. Salt, with our fishermen and meat curers, is a raw material. Of products of the forest there were imported into Canada last year \$1,326,078 worth, and we exported to the amount of \$22,665,587. Does anyone believe—can anyone in his senses believe—that we could raise the price of lumber to the lumber dealer by imposing a duty upon an article that we practically do not import at all? (what is imported is in special qualities, such as walnut and mahogany to Mr. Robert Hay, and some common lumber for the convenience of localities near the frontier having none of their own.) The thing would be impossible. Then let us take animals and their produce. Of those we imported last year, to the amount, altogether, of about six millions and a-half in round numbers, while we exported fifteen and a-half millions, showing that we were able to export two and a-half times the amount we imported, and showing also that almost our whole imports of animals and their products were merely brought into the country for the sake of re-exportation at the other end of the country; and to let you see how ludicrous is the proposal to put a protective duty on animals and their products, I have but to mention that while there were exported 159,573 sheep last year from Ontario to the United States, we only imported seven sheep altogether from that country. (Laughter.) And yet the protectionist wants to tax these seven sheep to as great an extent as the Americans tax our 150 and odd thousands. (Laughter.) This is the way they propose that we should enrich ourselves. Of agricultural products, that is, grain and breadstuffs generally, we imported last year—and everyone will remember that was a very bad year, that it was one of the worst years we ever had—sixteen millions and a-half in round numbers of dollars worth. But then we exported of them, even in that bad year, 19,000,000 dollars worth in round numbers, showing that it would be impossible by any tax to give the farmer a larger price for his produce than he now receives. Let us assume for a moment that by taxing foreign grain or flour we could keep it out of this country, is it possible that the workmen of Toronto would ask us to tax the bread they eat? ("No, no.") Yet, sir, that is exactly what the leaders of the Conservative party are asking us to do. They say that if flour was taxed it would raise the price to the miller, but if it did raise the price it would be done at the expense of the poor man who has to purchase it. (Hear, hear.) Sir John Macdonald stated in his speech in the Eastern Townships that if we happened to have a deficient harvest our own producers should reap the advantage of such prices as could be imposed by the levying of a duty on foreign breadstuffs. That is, that our buyers of bread should be compelled to pay high prices or starve. Let us shut out these foreign products and get as much as we can, by consuming our own, and that is equivalent to saying that as a matter of public policy it is right to tax the very bread which the poor man eats, the coal he burns, and the oil he consumes. (Hear, hear.) I now give you an extract from a return which was not published to show what the result of last year's harvest was—the first good harvest we have had for some years, though not so productive a one as we expected to reap. For the nine months ending the 31st of March we imported altogether \$11,074,465 worth of the products of the farm—that is of grain and flour—and we exported during the same period \$20,857,017 worth, or very nearly \$10,000,000 more than we imported. Now, sir, what was this used for? We imported it as a matter of trade, and that trade gives employment to our vessels and steamships. We have five distinct lines of steamships sailing from the port of Montreal to the European ports, while the United States, with forty-eight millions of people, are able to maintain only one line consisting of but four steamships. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers; A Voice—"Would a duty stop that trade?") I hear a gentleman enquire if a duty would stop that trade. Undoubtedly it would. The placing of a duty on grain and flour is much like a man who has made a road to facilitate travel between the place where he lives and the town where he does his marketing, and then, for fear he should get there too easily, after the road is graded and levelled, he goes to work and cuts three or four ditches across it. (Hear, hear.) These people are afraid that our capitalists who establish the steamship lines which take the products of the Western States through Canada to the ocean, should be able to take these products, as well as our own, too easily; and they would have us to