

## REPORT

Of the Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into the operation of the Tariff on the Agricultural Interests of the Dominion.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS,

COMMITTEE ROOM, 4th May, 1882.

The Committee appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into the operation of the present Customs Tariff upon the Agricultural Interests of the Dominion, beg leave to report as follows:—

In order to obtain as wide and reliable evidence as possible, they sent a list of questions, as herewith annexed, to leading and representative agriculturists throughout the country; and in order to obtain impartial as well as correct information from this source, the Clerk of the Committee was instructed to send a copy to the reeves of the various municipalities and presidents of agricultural societies. It was only found possible to obtain the addresses of the reeves of Ontario, to each of whom he sent a copy, and these were supplemented by seven copies sent to each member of the House of Commons with instructions to forward them to the presidents of agricultural societies and other leading and intelligent farmers in their several constituencies. In the other Provinces the whole of the lists of questions were sent through members of the Commons to similar leading farmers. Your Committee further secured the personal or *viva voce* evidence of numerous witnesses engaged largely in agricultural pursuits, and of those engaged in supplying the farmer with farm implements and other manufactured goods in common use amongst them.

In order to ascertain by comparison the relative extent of the Canadian home market under the present protective Tariff and the Tariff in existence previous to 1879, carefully prepared tables were compiled from the Trade and Navigation Returns, of the years 1876-77 and 1877-78, and of 1879-80 and 1880-81; and in order to test effect of the Tariff on the value of farm products in the same years, a comparison was carefully made between our domestic markets and those foreign markets to which any surplus farm products are usually sent. Market prices were obtained from Corn Exchanges and Boards of Trade for two days in each month, viz., 10th and 25th, in the years 1877, 1878, 1880 and 1881, in Liverpool, Chicago, New York, Toronto and Montreal; also the water and railway freights between Chicago and Montreal, Chicago and New York, and the ocean freights between New York and Liverpool.

It will be seen from the subjoined summary carefully taken from the Trade and Navigation Returns of the years 1876-77, 1877-78, 1879-80, and 1880-81 (1st) that a very large additional domestic market has been secured to the Canadian farmer as the result of the exclusion of American agricultural products from consumption in Canada; (2nd) that the carrying trade of foreign agricultural products in transit to Europe has been increased very largely in 1880 and 1881, as compared with 1877 and 1878; and (3rd) that though the consumption of United States farm products in Canada has decreased to the extent of over \$12,000,000 worth, the revenues collected on imported American farm produce was, for the years 1880 and 1881, \$1,347,967, as against \$514,679 collected in 1877 and 1878, being an increase of \$833,288.