

a duty of 75 cents per hundred pounds on an article that cost \$1 cents per hundred pounds.

I would like to hear the Controller of Customs (Mr. Paterson) or the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) justify such an extraordinary imposition of duty upon an article which is the food of the people. The result of it will be without doubt, that not only will the rice not be cheaper, but that it will be dearer, because under this tariff it cannot be cleaned in this country and will have to be imported. Most of the rice importations consumed in British Columbia comes direct from China, but for the greater portion of the eastern provinces the rice is cleaned or manufactured in Canada, and they sell it cheaper than it can be imported, or else they would not be able to sell it at all. Henceforth the rice will have to be imported, and the result is, that the people will not have that superior article which is produced in our Canadian factories to-day. We never had a satisfactory article of rice produced in this country until we adopted the plan of cleaning the rice ourselves. Another disadvantage of this increased tariff on the raw material of rice, is, that British ships will not in the future be employed in carrying the uncleaned rice to Canada.

Now, Sir, this Government have adopted a policy of giving free corn in this country. In my opinion that is a disastrous move. In 1878 when corn was free of duty, there were about 7,300,000 bushels imported from the United States; while last year, there were only 2,750,000 bushels imported, and I am told that most of that corn was either used by the distillers or by the starch and glucose factories, and that while a little was imported for human food, a very small quantity was imported for cattle feeding. What will be the result under this new tariff? The result will be, that instead of having 7,300,000 bushels imported as we had in 1878, the importations will very largely exceed that amount, and will correspondingly displace the production of coarse grains by the Canadian farmers. To-day we are exporting large quantities of these coarse grains. Last year we exported nearly a million bushels of barley, nearly a million bushels of oats, and the product of another million bushels of oats in the shape of oatmeal. We also exported 1,500,000 bushels of pease, 139,000 cwt. of bran, 400,000 bushels of buckwheat, and 214,600 tons of hay. The prices of all these products will be lowered to the Canadian farmer by the free importation of Indian corn. The total value of these articles of which we produced a surplus for export was over \$4,500,000. Yet I venture to say that next year the Canadian market for these products will be lost to the Canadian farmer, and will be supplied by the American farmer in the shape of free corn. So that I do not apprehend anything but

loss to the Canadian farmer from the free admission of corn. The proposition made by the late Government was, I think, the fairest one this country could adopt; that was, that we would permit the free importation of corn into Canada if in return the Americans would give us the free importation of barley into their country. But the Government of the United States declined that proposition, and to-day we find the Government of Canada giving them this advantage without obtaining any reciprocal advantage in return.

Now, Sir, we have heard a good deal in the last two days about preferential trade with Great Britain. For myself, I may say that I would be most strongly in favour of any proposal of that nature that would be satisfactory to both countries. But as the discussion proceeds, and as questions are asked across the floor of the House, the question becomes still more confused, and the course the Government has taken becomes more unsatisfactory. I was much pleased myself to hear a general proposal to give preferential treatment to Great Britain; but that proposal should have been carefully considered, and should have been one that could have been strongly justified, and one that would not leave the business with loose ends, as the proposal of the Government undoubtedly does. If, in giving preferential trade to Great Britain we are also giving preferential trade to Belgium and Germany, as appears somewhat probable, we Canadians will be committing a very great mistake in giving trade advantages to both Belgium and Germany without getting any corresponding advantages from them in return. And, from what we heard from the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), we have some reason to believe that such a proposal would delight him and delight the members of the Government; and if that preferential trade could be extended to the United States as well, that would please them still more. While I would give preferential trade to Great Britain, I would not give it to any other country unless we got substantial and equivalent advantages in return. We have been told that the Government are not very certain what the outcome may be. I think they should have ascertained exactly the position in which this preferential arrangement with Great Britain would place Canada. We heard an hon. member to-day read an advertisement which has been inserted in the press by the Consul General of Belgium to Canada, in which he announces that he is going to enter a protest at once, and demand from the British Government that the same advantages be given to Belgian goods coming into Canada as are given to British goods. So that we shall be at once confronted with that question; and if it is decided that Belgium is to receive the same privilege as Great Britain, it follows, I am told, that Germany will get it as well; and then the people of this country will find that