

United States out of a list of twenty-one countries sending sugar there. Cuba exported in 1896 \$24,000,000 worth of sugar to the United States; Germany, \$12,500,000; Dutch East Indies, \$11,388,000; Hawaii, \$11,336,000; British West Indies, \$4,700,000. Our imports of sugar from the British West Indies last year were only \$475,753, upon which a duty of \$111,614 is collected, showing a tax of nearly twenty-five per cent on a prime necessary. The United States are now trying to effect a reciprocity treaty with the British West Indies which will still more effectually check our trade. What we ought to do promptly, without regard to reciprocal favours, is to admit the sugar from the West Indies upon the same terms that Hawaiian sugar is admitted into the United States, namely, free. By doing that we will make a valuable trade, where it is now dwindling away, and we will give every industry dependent upon cheap sugar the benefit of that trade. It is a sound principle to keep in view in our home or foreign trade, to encourage that production only which is natural to the country in which it is produced, and that can flourish without an artificial stimulant such as the export bounty, the maintenance of which has now grown to be such a national burden on the continent of Europe, and which statesmen have so far failed to grapple with. A conference in Brussels a month ago was unsuccessful, and now the British government has invited the nations to a conference in London. The fact that Egypt is now becoming a rival in the production of sugar without an export bounty is a lever which will have the effect of forcing the stronghold of protection in continental sugar. Admit British West India sugar free and we take a step in the right direction.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I do not see that the speech of the hon. gentleman has much relevancy to the motion before the chair, but I might be allowed to say a word in reply to what he said. The hon. gentleman is under a misapprehension if he thinks a duty on raw sugar would interfere with the importations from the West Indies. We have not imported raw sugar from the West Indies. We have imported grocery sugar, and as the hon. leader of the House has stated, the importation of grocery sugar from the West Indies has been very much diminished; in fact, those grocery sugars

have given place largely to the refined sugar coming from Germany, and other bounty sugars. So that the hon. gentleman is mistaken with respect to the raw sugar. For some considerable time the importers have been importing the raw sugar from the East Indies and places other than the West Indies. This is not the time to discuss the question of our trade with the West Indies, but I hope some means will be found to improve the condition of that trade, which is not what it ought to be at all. Our exports from the West Indies have fallen off and our imports have also fallen. The comparative failure of the fisheries in the maritime provinces, I think, has something to do with it. But there is no question about the depressed condition of the sugar business in the West Indies, and it has led to action being taken or proposed, at any rate, in the Imperial Parliament. The hon. gentleman made some reference to the desirability of supplying cold storage facilities in steamers going to the West Indies. I wish to tell the hon. gentleman that those facilities have already been supplied by one steamship line running from Halifax, largely through the efforts of the Minister of Agriculture.

WINTER COMMUNICATION WITH PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

MOTION.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON moved

That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General, praying that His Excellency may cause to be laid on the Table of the House copies of all the reports made to the Department of Marine and Fisheries by the officers in charge of the steamer "Petrel" having reference to the service performed by that steamer during the winter of 1896-97, and also detailed statements of the expenditure incurred for that service, and receipts for freight and passengers.

He said: Hon. gentlemen have heard quite often about steam communication with Prince Edward Island, and I do not propose to discuss the subject at very great length, because it is perfectly familiar to most hon. gentlemen in this House. It will be remembered that this communication has been attempted to be carried out in two ways, by ice boats at the narrowest parts of the strait, between Cape Tormentine and Cape Traverse, pulled by men; and steam communication at the eastern end of the island, more especially between the ports of Georgetown, P. E. I., and Pictou, Nova Scotia. They are the two nearest points at that place. In the