

compliance with the quarantine regulations of that country. This practically rules out an American port, because it would be impracticable to comply with such regulations, involving, as I believe they do at the present time, the quarantining of Canadian cattle in American territory for ninety days before they are allowed to be shipped abroad. So that, being limited to the St. Lawrence route, economy of shipment necessitates the cattle being put on board at the head of ocean navigation. That for the present is the city of Montreal, so that Montreal is the only point from which cattle leave Canada for the United Kingdom. Several lines of vessels come to that port equipped with appliances for the trade, but in consequence of there being but one port it is extremely easy for the agents of these lines to create a monopoly in freights. I have been told by shippers that so arbitrary have the ship-owners become that now they refuse even to quote freights up to the time the cattle are put on board, so that the cattle men have to go into the country to purchase their supplies, uncertain as to what freights may be imposed upon them. I find from figures furnished me that the freight charged per head on cattle leaving Montreal fluctuates from a few shillings up to as much as 75 shillings per head, and it is no unusual thing for quotations of freights to change 10 shillings between the sailings of one vessel and another. That element of uncertainty renders it impossible for the cattle dealers to promote their trade with any degree of satisfaction to themselves or justice to the farmers. The result has been in some cases to ruin the shippers. There is scarcely a shipper to-day who has been able to survive the dangers connected with the cattle trade. I am not going to attribute all their misfortunes to the vessel-owners or those interested in the carrying trade, but we can certainly attribute part of the misfortunes to the practices to which I refer. The result has been not only disastrous to the middlemen, but to the producers of cattle. To-day if a cattle buyer desires to purchase for export to the United Kingdom, he has to bear in mind that he knows not what the freight is to be. It may be 25 shillings or 75 shillings. And, of course, being a prudent man he reckons on being charged as much as can be extorted from him. This depreciates the value of the cattle which he is buying, so that the farmer is really the sufferer under the existing system. I invite the attention of the House to the removal of this evil. It is an evil most intimately connected with the welfare of the country. I am assured by cattle men that when there is a large quantity of cattle waiting shipment at Montreal or about to arrive, the vessel-owners take advantage of the situation and put up freights to the very highest point. They also keep themselves posted on the state of the market in England, and if any improvement is shown in prices, they take advantage of the occasion

and hence the profit which ought to go to the producer and the purchaser of the cattle goes into the hands of the vessel-owners. Everything is taken advantage of by them. They have practically a combine in Canada to-day for the purpose of obtaining excessive rates. I am aware that the vessel-owners say they cannot make money at present rates. I was present at an interview between cattle dealers and the Government a year ago, and I there heard a controversy between the cattle men and the vessel-owners. The latter said they could not declare dividends out of existing rates, but the reply was made that whether they made money or not the rates were so excessive that at times the cattle men were obliged to charter vessels from the United States and bring them all round from Boston to Montreal, and in this way got rates from Montreal to Liverpool cheaper than asked by the Canadian vessels, which were in receipt of large sums from the Canadian Government. If vessels can be brought from Boston to Montreal which will take cattle to Liverpool cheaper than our own Canadian vessels, it is time for Parliament to interfere and put a stop to the evil. I am told that now freights from American ports to Liverpool are much cheaper than from Canadian ports, so that our cattle trade is hampered in the markets of Great Britain by reason of high rates here as compared with those in the United States. That state of affairs calls for our attention, and I hope will be remedied in time for the spring trade. I do not know if my Bill meets the case. I am not going to say whether it does or not. At all events it represents my idea, and I would ask that the Government either adopt the measure or press through one of their own to remedy the evil. I am told, indeed, that no cattle men will go through the country to purchase, the trade is so greatly depressed because of the embargo in Great Britain, and adding this monopoly makes trade almost impossible. I therefore earnestly beg the Government to take charge of this matter, which is of such great importance to the farming industry, and provide a solution in time for the spring business. If you will look at the Trade and Navigation Returns you will find that this industry reached its highest point some three years ago, and now appears on the decline. The number of cattle shipped in 1891 was 107,000. This has fallen off to 99,000 for the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1893, and I am told that the returns for the year, which began the 30th June last, will show a further decline.

Mr. FOSTER. Did you compare the value each year ?

Mr. MULOCK. Of course, you cannot compare values from the Trade and Navigation Returns satisfactorily, because we have only the number of the cattle, and the value depends upon the weight ; but if you wish for