

English Government. Both were interested in a commercial connection which left us nothing to envy in the lot of our neighbors. In the Canadian Parliament the question of commercial reciprocity with the United States was taken up. The Imperial Government approved of the steps taken by the Canadian Government, which tended to place their agriculturists on a footing of equality with the Americans on their markets. On the 16th March, 1855, the Reciprocity treaty entered into by the United States and England, came into force, after having been ratified by the Canadian Parliament. Lengthy debates took place in the American Congress upon the question, but southern influence carried the measure through. The Reciprocity treaty was to continue for ten years, from the 16th March, 1855, without its being possible to repeal it; but if one or the other of the contracting parties should think fit, after the expiration of the ten years, they might demand the abrogation of the treaty, by giving the other party one year's notice. The question of the repeal of that treaty has, therefore, for two or three years, been agitated in the American Congress with some warmth, by those who found their interests to suffer by it. The opponents of the Reciprocity treaty succeeded in Congress for two reasons: first, on account of a feeling of indignation raised up against Canada, by a part of our press, which displayed hostility to the Northern States; and second, because the rebellious Southern States were not represented in the American Government. On the 16th March next, the President is to give that notice, and on the 16th March, 1866, the markets of the United States will be closed to us. (Hear, hear.) We have seen that at the time the American Government, which was then in the hands of politicians from the Southern States, was not favorable to the annexation of Canada to the United States, because those statesmen dreaded the influence which two new free states in the union would bring to bear in relation to slavery. The ten years of the treaty consequently terminate on the 16th March in the present year, and thanks to the behavior of a very large portion of the Canadian press in relation to the Government of the United States, since the beginning of the war which now desolates the American Republic, the notice of the final abrogation of that treaty within a year is to be given to us. It will have

existed for eleven years, and its abrogation will certainly be a great misfortune to our country. It may be said that the treaty is as advantageous to the United States as it is to ourselves, and that its abrogation will do as much harm to them as to us; but the ill they will undergo in consequence will not remedy our evil, and will not prevent the United States markets from being closed to us, and our being subsequently compelled to pay a considerable duty for the privilege of carrying our produce thither, such as our oats, our horses, our horned cattle, our sheep, our wool, our butter, &c. The 16th March, 1865, will be a day of mourning for Canada, but the 16th March, 1866, will be a day of much deeper mourning, for it will mark the commencement of a commercial crisis such as we have never perhaps undergone, and the disastrous results of which to the future of the country are beyond calculation. (Hear, hear.) In order to understand the whole importance of this treaty to the prosperity of the country, it is necessary to know what passes in the country parts, as I myself am in a position to know through my constant relations with those parts. All the oats produced in the country from Trois Pistoles to the upper extremity of the province are exported to the United States, where they find a ready market, because they are wanted there. This year persons went as far as Three Rivers for them by way of the Arthabaska Railway. This branch of trade is now very considerable; but the very moment we have to pay an export duty of 25 per cent. upon our produce on entering the United States, we shall have a commercial crisis which will derange all business operations throughout the land. When the Reciprocity treaty is declared at an end, our oats will be worth no more than 1s. or 1s. 3d., as in former times, instead of 1s. 8d. or 2s., as at present; and it is clear to all that the farmer can derive no profit from growing them at that price. Formerly, before the treaty was made, the farmer could make something by selling his oats at that price, because food was cheaper and taxes less than they now are. The latter were no more than 2½ per cent. and 5 per cent., whereas they are now 20 per cent., and will be increased rather than diminished, under Confederation, as certain members of this House have alleged. (Hear, hear.) I am thoroughly acquainted with all that passes in the country parts; and when I think of the consequences of the repeal