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THE COLONIAL QUESTION—CANADA.

In the month of November we offered remarks on emigration, bearing chiefly on the causes which necessitated the very extensive recent deportations from the agricultural, as well as from certain manufacturing districts, both in Great Britain and Ireland. We then showed that the alleged causes of the recent emigration were inadequate and disproportioned to the actual results. We fearlessly pointed to the monopoly of land, the cruel restriction under which the natives of Scotland and of England, but especially the former, were placed by entails—a system by which land is locked up, and doomed to sterility, while the public at large is deprived of the use of that land, upon which the nation's food ought to be raised abundantly, and with an exportable surplus, as at the close of last century. We asserted that in England entails are by no means the crying evil; that they are in the northern portion of the island; and for Ireland, we ventured to recommend order and industry—because order and submission to law are the fundamental requisites of society in all countries, and in all circumstances.

We asserted then, what we repeat now, that England wants room, that Scotland wants emancipation from the strict entail law, and that Ireland wants industry.

We also noticed the attempts of English proprietors in the Highlands to go back to the exploded middle-age plan of extensive hunting grounds; we denounced all extirpations of the people, in order to make way for deer, as a barbarous policy, and hinted that enthusiastic sportsmen should now and then take a run across the Atlantic, to the immense natural forests of our North American colonies, where they could enjoy their sports, in accordance with the majestic, solitary grandeur of primeval nature, repudiating for ever the city fashion of battues and slaughter in the vicinity of artificial plantations. Such was the gist of our paper; and we directed attention to the struggle now going on between the aristocratic or feudal system, and the commercial or monied interest. We hinted our suspicion that the feudal would be found the weaker, and more squeezable of the two, but that, as neither were friends of ours, they might fight out their quarrel, and we ought to gain whatever is lost, either by the feudal system or by the overgrown

monied interest. In short, we hope we made it plain that—while admitting, feeling deeply that emigration was a melancholy necessity—a great deal might be done, and ought to be done, to obviate the necessity of expatriating, of banishing us or our door neighbours merely because the lords of the soil, the cotton lords, or the “Merchants of Venice,” considered us as intruders in the land of our birth, and wanted us out of their way.

We do not like to do anything in a hurry, and we had made sure of being able to give our readers a few useful hints about emigration in sufficient time for the shipping season, for the North American colonies, because the money for the other place, the pet colony of Australia, is all done—the £100,000 voted by Parliament has been expended—so that Canada is likely to be more talked of this spring as the field for enterprise.

We have been rather unexpectedly pulled up, taken aback, by certain grumblings and murmurs about the colonies in general, about doubts expressed as to our being allowed to retain them, or to consider them British territory. It is said that the Americans have no objections to annex Canada, in fact are rather inclined that way. It is notorious that the Colonial office had all but jobbed away Vancouver's Island; that the worthies in that office have lately granted *a million of the nation's acres in Australia* to some clique or company, no doubt composed of individuals very respectable, and very well known to the Colonial office people. Singular transactions these! We wonder whether the clever Mr. Hawes, or his long-letter superior, Earl Grey, are allowed a commission, a “*little per centage*,” on these sales. Certainly we should say, that if the national property requires to be pawned, or sold privately for what it will bring, the men who are employed to make these humiliating and suspicious transfers ought to be “paid extra” for their trouble. It must go to their hearts to see the old family estates, so to speak—the choicest properties of the nation—parted with at such a sacrifice; why, it would have broken the heart of the late George Robins himself, and, for an auctioneer, he could stand a good deal, to see such “magnificent domains actually thrown away.”

Perhaps these sales, or gifts of colonial territory, are connected with some sort of perquisites; and

really they would require to be so, for they look very suspicious, and startle the prejudices of plain-sailing folks like ourselves.

Sir William Molesworth, just at the close of last session, made a long speech against the expenses of the colonies; but he did not argue that they should be given away either to Yankees, or Ellices, or to friends of Colonial-office clerks. Sir William contended that, by certain "reforms, the resources of the colonies would be developed, they would become more useful, and their inhabitants more attached to the British empire." Many severe things have been said about this speech of Sir William's, and we admit that it is rather rambling, and contains some errors in statistical calculation. Yet, as the words just quoted are from the third of the positions with which his speech commences, we are bound to believe that the baronet really *meant* what he said, and that although contending for financial reform, he does not advocate the giving away of the colonies in *présents*, either to select cliques, poor relations of the "family government," Yankees, Canadians, or even to Mr. Ellice and his Hudson Bay Company; for, after exposing the mismanagement, the imbecility, and reckless extravagance of the colonial administration, he says, "If the colonies were properly planted, and self-governed according to the old fashion, then our kinsmen and friends, instead of overstocking the liberal professions—instead of overcrowding the army and navy, where no career is open to them—would seek their fortunes in the colonies, and prosper; for we are by nature a colonising people. The same destiny that led our forefathers from their homes in the farthest east still urges onwards to occupy the uninhabited regions of the west and the south; and America, and Australia, and New Zealand, anxiously expect our arrival to convert their wastes into happy abodes of the Anglo-Saxon race."

Mr. Hutt, who seconded Sir William, after making similar animadversions upon the Colonial office, took notice of the "great desire amongst the working classes to emigrate to the colonies—men inferior in no high quality to those colonists who had laid the foundations of our colonial empire—men whose presence amongst the emigrants would be an incalculable blessing, both to them and any settlement to which they might proceed, but who would not hear of the colonies on the terms on which they were now offered to them. They ought to make a strong endeavour to remedy this state of things, and to improve the condition of the colonists."

Such being the sentiments of those eminent men in the reforming party of the House of Commons, we are justified in holding that it is not revolution, nor alienation, nor fraudulent transfer of colonial territory, that is sought after by the reformers, but a just and honourable, though economical administration of colonial affairs. If Mr. Cobden has been represented as saying that a logical carrying out of free trade principles would cut off our connection with the colonies, we take leave to deny the inference, and to affirm that *practical* free trade may be most easily, and most certainly obtained with our own colonies. If the colonists are dissatisfied—and we

know that they are, and that they have had too much cause—we also know that they are discontented, not because they are under the British crown, and governed by the British Parliament, but they are discontented because they are under the rule of stupid governors, and have no appeal to the British Parliament; because they are under the despotism of Earl Grey, an anomalous *imperium in imperio*, a government within a government, lording it over many lands and many climes. The Colonial office is an antiquated, neglected closet of the monarchy, in which has taken refuge that ghost or dogma of a dark age, "the king can do no wrong." It has, like Pius IX., slipped on the livery of a servant, and impudently proclaims, "The Colonial office can do no wrong." Earl Grey is the visible head of this mysterious office; his ordinances give law to millions of people whom the united power of Queen, Lords, and Commons *cannot* rescue, or *will not* rescue, out of his hands. The Houses of Parliament waste a great part of their time every spring, in talking about the colonial possessions. Earl Grey hears them in dignified silence; he knows that *his* empire is safe, and that no act of the Imperial Parliament, touching colonies, can become law until it has regularly passed through his office.

George Canning boasted of having called a new world into existence, when he acknowledged the independence of the revolted Spanish colonies; but Earl Grey can make constitutions, and practical independencies for colonies in the east or in the west, and no man intermeddles with his manufactures. Nay more; when the British Parliament presume to legislate for the Earl's dominions, he is above contradicting Parliament in words, because he can thwart and counterwork, both the Parliament and the nation, by the unseen machinery of his more than imperial office.

But, while admitting and deprecating the unconstitutional powers of this office—unconstitutional from long neglect and from prescription, rather than from design—and while we deplore the unhappy blunders of the Colonial office, we are not prepared to charge the head of that office with any deep-laid plan for alienating our colonial possessions. Indeed, although we know the Earl to be a somewhat strange-tempered person, we would be loath to accuse him, or to believe him guilty, of anything deep-laid—such as a plot—or indeed of anything deeper than one of his own interminable essays, facetiously called a despatch, so long and so obscure as to give rise to a tedious newspaper controversy as to its true meaning.* Neither do we think that he would *knowingly* permit his second in command, Mr. Hawes, to contrive arrangements for handing over the colonies to our great rivals—the Americans.

We think Earl Grey has a measure of integrity sufficient to place him above such suspicions. Of Mr. Hawes we cannot form a clear estimate. We have some faint recollections of his wondrously

* Vide his despatch to the Governor of New Brunswick, on "Responsible Governments," in which the Earl darkly hints at retiring pensions; but so darkly, as to give rise to a controversy as to whether the pension system was deprecated or recommended.

clear insight into reforms, that were much wanted in the colonial department prior to his elevation to office. We know of none that he has proposed or effected since, but we have some uneasy misgivings about the dates, and the receptions, and the final answers to certain memorials which were presented to the colonial secretary last spring, from merchants and manufacturers interested in the Canada trade; and we have a most uneasy feeling as to whether the royal assent had been given to an obnoxious tariff, at the date assigned in one of Mr. Hawes's letters, for errors occur even in Downing Street.

The merchants and manufacturers of this country know the amounts of capital and industry represented by their transactions, and we are not surprised that they should feel indignant at seeing such an important branch of British commerce as the Canada trade lopped off by a few strokes of the pen; avowed in a curt, and scarcely civil notice, from Downing Street, that the royal assent has been given to a colonial tariff, which has closed a large outlet for British labour, and all this without the benefit of appeal to Parliament, which is afforded to an insignificant turnpike act.

But to resume our subject, and leave the merchants and capitalists to themselves; if they submit to the petty tyranny and obstinate stupidity of the Colonial office, it is a pity, and they have themselves to blame; for the capitalists and factory owners have representatives in parliament. It is a pity that the working people of this country should suffer, should lose employment, and perhaps, too, lose their chance, small though it be, of acquiring a home and a settlement on easy terms in the American colonies. It is as an outlet for population and labour—depreciated labour—that we chiefly value the colonies. With that section of the community who look to the colonies as fallow ground, for army appointments, for civil appointments, for governorships, and jobs of all sorts, we have no sympathy—we have no ideas in common. But we contend that the colonial possessions are a British inheritance, and that no servants of the crown, not even the crown itself, has power to alienate the national property, or authority to make gifts of national territory.

"They are for us and for our children." "England wants room," and we have no wish to be driven into the workhouse, nor into the penitentiary, nor into the sea. If we cannot make a living in the land of our birth, we would wish to emigrate to a country where our language, our laws, our religion, and our habits of thought have been adopted. We wish the northern colonies preserved to us for a place of refuge, if the hardness of the times, if a continued depreciation of our labour shall compel us to emigrate; and we hope God will raise up men to declare that the British colonies are not fraudulently or recklessly to be taken from the British people, to be given away to court favourites, to ministerial partisans, to speculating New Englanders, or to the persons who got up the last Canadian insurrection.

We hope there is no good foundation for the intimation in the *North British Daily Mail*, of 3d August, that "Mr. Wilson (of the Board of Control, we presume,) says, that Mr. Hawes is prepar-

ing the gradual abolition of the colonial system." We trust that this, like one of Mr. Wilson's prophecies, touching the price of corn for 1847, will not be realised. Besides, had the suspicion been well grounded, viz., that Mr. Hawes was preparing the dismemberment of the empire, it is not likely to have escaped the sharp look-out kept on him by his great opponents, the late Lord George Bentinck, Mr. D'Israeli, and their friends.

We hold that if any one proposition is clearer than another, it is abundantly clear that these colonies are British property, and that the wild lands—crown lands—ought, as in Australia, to be rendered available by the proceeds of their sales being applied, as a great emigration fund, to British purposes. The crown lands of Canada were formerly amenable; and if they are not still available for British and colonial interests, in this particular, we promise to search out the reason.

The great expense incurred by the present colonial system is the excuse for the cowardly and anti-British suggestion, to give away the colonies themselves. Of all State reasons brought forward in an age of economical twaddle and "statistical imposture," we deem this the most childish, or the most idiotic. To the narrow capacities and morbid imaginations of official hangers-on, it may appear weighty, because in the mental calculations of such persons, it is of little moment from what sources their incomes may be derived. England is a great and rich country; she is able to provide sinecures without end, and the Whigs have a genius for contrivance of new jobs, subordinate offices, and convenient commissions. Even although a dozen persons were to be dismissed from the Colonial office, on account of that office giving up business, still there would be pensions and half-pay going, and there would be something done for Whig retainers, by manufacturing new commissions, or new embassies. In the ordinary course of Whig policy it must appear a slight affair after all, this apprehension of Great Britain retiring from the colonial business, and paying off the officials. But although a light matter to the sinecurists, it is a concern of vital importance to the industrial classes of this country. We require all our present markets—all our outlets for labour in every description of manufactures. We cannot afford to lose those we possess, nor to have them diminished.

It is essential to our system that we go forward: any perceptible tendency to retrograde movement of a great nation like England is ominous. It ought not only to be met with the most anxious promptitude, but all signs and risks of retrograde movement and decay ought to suggest anticipations of worse things befalling us.

Adam Smith, who was deeply read in the history of the great nations of antiquity, has remarked, that nations have their periods of rise and progress, their stationary periods, and then their periods of decline. We have had a very long stationary period. We are like all people who are losing ground—very unwilling to believe it. And yet the railway losses, the loss of crops in Ireland, the loss of industrious and peaceful habits in that island, the fearful increase of pauperism all over this country, and the

undeniable inability, or reluctance, of the agricultural party (chiefly of the landowner section), to raise as much food as will save us the enormous money payments every year made to foreigners for the deficiency—these are circumstances which ought to be pondered over. We are slow to believe that our national resources are declining, as compared with those of other nations; but we have been so long accustomed to traditionary tales of England's greatness, that we will listen to nothing else.

We know that it is no longer true that "Britannia rules the waves;" but we cannot resolve to cut the dear delusion. We have not courage to admit that the Americans are taking possession of the carrying-trade of the western hemisphere, and rapidly dispossessing us of the carrying-trade of Europe. We look at British riches and progress through magnifying glasses, and shut our eyes to what our neighbours and our rivals are doing.

Certainly these are not the times to propose trifling or gambling with the great interests or vital prospects of the country. A small-minded official may, like the unjust steward of old, proffer his aid to his friends of Mammon, by offering to write down his master's property at four-fifths or one-half of its true value. A colonial secretary may aspire at the magnanimity of giving away what is not his own, but the nation must look to it. Forewarned is forearmed. The decay of our colonial trade has caused greater loss to all classes than is generally supposed. We speak not of the large fortunes of West India proprietors, which have been gradually absorbed during the last dozen years; but we lament the loss of markets for British goods, of everything in the shape of clothing for the colonists, both white and black, as well as of the various luxuries in hardware, hosiery, drapery, trinkets; and wines and spirits of foreign growth, on which we had freights and commissions.

We do not stay to look into the West India question; we believe the planters have not been fairly treated in being prevented from supplying themselves with free labour wherever they could get it. If the underlings in office who planned these things are still living, they may now see the fruits of their obstinacy and ill-will, and be ashamed.

The expense of the colonies is a matter that only requires to be accurately known to find its remedy. Molesworth's estimates are vague, and sweeping, and exaggerated. In Canada, a governor who does nothing, because his hands are tied up by the colonial office, receives £7,000 a-year, which is taken out of the high duties levied on goods imported into the colony; the tenth part of that sum would be too much for the value of the work done—but he is a nobleman, and one of the "family government."

The Canadians, or rather the commercial class in Canada, are compelled to pay Lord Elgin and his staff of military and civil assistants. The people who do pay are mostly British merchants. They see cheap government across the frontier, yet they retain their loyalty, and continue to petition this country to be treated as our countrymen and brothers. They only ask for such arrangements as may place them upon an equality, in this market, with the foreigners to whom we concede so much.

They only demand to be treated as British subjects have a right to expect.

In Jamaica, owing to the decay of trade, there was no revenue to pay the officials. The Assembly asked for certain retrenchments; the governor took high ground, and attempted to dictate to the Assembly, who, in turn, refused to vote the supplies, and so put an end to revenue for a time. It is most likely that this island-governor will expect to be paid in full by the over-taxed people of this country, as soon as he is sent home; his friends in office will help him to smother inquiry, and to get hold of the dollars.

In Trinidad, the governor offered to give up one-third of his salary to the colonists. *Earl Grey would not allow this*, although the island is nearly ruined.

In Demerara, the governor quarrelled with the Assembly, who refused to vote the former large sums as taxes. The consequence was, that, for a number of months, goods went in *duty free*, broke down the prices, and destroyed the remuneration on goods previously imported.

In Australia, the people have been kept in hot water by arbitrary inflictions of new constitutions. To New Zealand, that industrious letter-writer and constitution spinner, Earl Grey, sent a fine new constitution, packed in a new box, which the governor there perceived to be so absurd and unworkable that he repacked it, and sent it back to the consigner. Things looked still worse in Sydney, N. S. W. Meetings were held of the leading men of every shade of opinions, very able and determined speeches were made, long passages were quoted from the old constitutions of the American colonies, Judge Story and other modern American lawyers were cited. These meetings have prepared that new and flourishing colony for any contingency which the tyranny of the Colonial office, or rather which the apathy and ignorance of the British people, may ultimately render inevitable.

Such details of grievances are endless—they are sickening; but they would lead none but fools or madmen to the conclusion that the colonies should therefore be abandoned.

There are many similar cases, on a small scale, in Scotland, in England, and in Ireland—many fine properties in the hands of blundering or swindling stewards; but no reasonable man would recommend that such estates should be handed over as a present to the blundering or dishonest stewards, or settled upon the tenants. Yet this is what some persons have insinuated should be done with those magnificent estates for which the Colonial office acts as steward.

No Manchester manufacturer would think of abandoning his mills, as a free gift, to a manager whose incompetency, or whose rascality, had rendered the mills unprofitable. No man of sound mind would contemplate the giving over of a good shop and stock to a shopman whose dishonesty or stupidity had spoiled the business of that shop. But really we have not patience to give more illustrations of this kind. We may briefly affirm that all the recent speculations, and new doctrines in political economy, as it is called, agree in this, that they attempt to explain away, to arrange, and to

distate in a nation's affairs—not from extensive information, not from the actual fitness of things, nor from experience—but by dogmas, and technical terms, and new phrases, so that any smart lad, just fresh from Cambridge, Oxford, or Manchester College, may go up to London to a government situation, to a sinecure, or into the House of Commons, and, without further knowledge of details, or experience of any kind, assume the management of the most extensive and complicated national affairs that the world ever saw!

We may now turn to the case of Canada; though complicated, and more difficult to understand than all the other colonies put together, we shall endeavour to give a view of its affairs and of our relative position to that most valuable colony.

The north-western part of the American coast still acknowledges the rule of its early British discoverers and conquerors. The forty-fifth degree of latitude is the general boundary between the United States and the British territory, except in certain portions which the Americans, by reason of British weakness in the persons of their diplomatic agents, have, from time to time, "chiselled" out of the land. There have been treaties and conventions, many; but through them all the Americans have driven "their team." They encroached and squatted on New Brunswick, discovered that it contained the finest timber in the world, laid claim to it—and the British Government sent out Lord Ashburton to make a present of the best part of the province to the Americans, giving them at the same time Roques Point and a few* miles of an important military position at the head of Lake Champlain.

Our claims on California or on Spain were conceded by the peaceable Lord Aberdeen. Cuba, a valuable Spanish island, worth all the rest of the West India islands, is said to be under terms of sale to the Americans, though Spain owes to British subjects forty millions of money.

Lord Palmerston has not found courage to protest against any such sale of Spanish territory until the debt due to England be provided for. These instances prove the value attached by other countries to territorial possessions and outlets for population; but they also prove that little co-operation is to be expected from our own Government, either in the colonial or foreign departments. There is a confusion, an apathy, or a want of integrity among the men composing the Ministry, for which no remedy can be suggested. It would be easy to suggest useful measures, but men rather than measures are wanted. There are "*parties*" enough, such as they are; but we want an *honest party*, men who can be trusted to work out their own promises. If there were but truth and honesty in the Cabinet, come from what side of the house it might, there would still be hope for the country.

We have said that Canada is an intricate study. We can only sketch the points for inquiry. Space does not admit of our doing justice to the subject, but our facts will be unassailable.

Adam Smith left upon record his objections to

* Some thirty or thirty-five square miles, commanding both Lake Champlain and the eastern townships.

the restrictions on colonial trade—those restrictions which the great (as he has been called) Earl Chatham insisted on maintaining, when he said that the colonies ought not to make so much as a nail for a horse shoe if it could be sent from hence. The writings of Edwards, the West Indian, followed up Smith; and practical restrictions on colonial trade have ceased for half a century. In fact, generally speaking, the trade of the colonies is a less-restricted trade than our home trade. Smith's objection, so long obsolete, has been repeated by M'Culloch in his voluminous, but ill-digested dictionary. From him the anti-colonial spirit and its allegations have been copied without examination, so that there exists a vague prejudice against colonial trade, the public know not very clearly on what grounds. Smith declared, more than seventy years ago, that, notwithstanding the objections (since obviated), the colonies had been of the "*very greatest advantage*" to England.

The principle on which we traded with them seems to have been this—to treat them as part of the empire, giving them certain preferences or protections in this market, while we enjoyed as compensation for the expenses of defence, and partly of government, an *exclusive* trade with the colonies. The advantages and disadvantages were mutual. The colonists saw their position clearly, and found it their interest to co-operate with the mother country. Upon the whole, to whatever evils of misgovernment they might occasionally be subjected, it is admitted, and it is demonstrable, that they had fewer causes of complaint than their fellow-subjects in Britain; the recent treatment of the West Indies being a remarkable exception. Colonial-built shipping has all the privileges of British, and has at times competed to the great detriment of the latter. It was at one period quite well understood, and fully assented to by the colonists, that, in lieu of taxation to defray the expenses of defence, we should have their market for our manufactures, to the exclusion, if need were, of foreigners; but this exclusion has long ago been compromised, or commuted into differential duties in favour of British goods. The fairness of these terms, and the full consent of both parties, have been again and again declared by the Canadian merchants, in their recent and present agitation to obtain the opening of the St. Lawrence to foreign shipping, and to place Quebec and Montreal on the footing of free ports, like Bombay or Gibraltar. The Canadians merely protest against the breach of contract on the part of the mother country, and long for a return of the prosperity and resources developed by the old system. The reason why Quebec and Montreal have not equal privileges with other sea-ports in the colonies is this: Quebec is nearly eight hundred miles within the British waters, reckoning from Cape Race. Foreign ships bringing foreign produce are admitted to discharge, but not to load with Canadian produce. Thus, German or Prussian ships may take emigrants to Quebec, but at present they cannot return with cargoes of Canadian flour or timber. The Canadians deem this a hardship, because freights are at times scarce, and always dearer than at New York

or Boston. Prussian vessels can fetch cargoes of grain into London or Liverpool, and load out with coals, iron, or other produce of this country, because there exist reciprocity treaties, as they are called, between Prussia and England, in virtue of which Baltic vessels enter British ports on the same terms that English ships are permitted to enter Prussian and other Baltic ports. By this means freights are kept down, and foreigners are encouraged to trade with us, and we are setting a disinterested example to other nations, and even giving up our own advantages in order to promote free trade all the world over.

This restriction of colonial trade to British and colonial shipping is not peculiar to England: it is the regulation of every great maritime power in the world. Two hundred years ago it was as well understood, or, indeed, rather better than at present, that "Freight is not only the most politic, but the most national and the most certain profit a country can possibly make by trade."* By steadily acting on this maxim the Dutch, from very obscure beginnings, became the monopolist carriers of the world, until Cromwell having studied the Dutch policy, adopted it, and in the end defeated his rivals with their own weapons. We talk of Navigation-laws as modern class interests! Navigation-laws are the results of more than two thousand years' experience. M'Culloch refers in his "Literature of Political Economy" to the Rhodian laws, in force *three centuries prior to the Christian era*, as laws adopted in the Roman code, and thence diffused over the jurisprudence of Europe and of the civilised world! Canada has been treated on the same *general principles* on which British, French, or Spanish colonies are treated by their respective governments. The reservation of the export trade of the North American colonies, for colonial and British shipping, is perfectly just, and originates or coincides with the proverb, that "Charity begins at home." If we do not take care of the colonial shipbuilders they will take care of themselves, and of the colonies too; and as for British shipbuilders, they are, or ought to be, represented in Parliament. We are more jealous of the safety of *national* than of class interests, and must beg a patient reading of the following dry, yet really interesting details.

Ours is an age of "general principles." The commercial policy of the country is now to be worked by a few rules. The government, and the multiform businesses of this great empire, in fact, are worked, not by practical men who have devoted their time to details, and to practice, but by anybody who can just remember Mr. M'Culloch's simple rules, such as—"That the whole world, as to trade, is but as one nation or people, and that therein nations are as persons"—"that there can be no trade unprofitable to the public"—"that money exported in trade is an increase to the wealth of the nation,"† and such like short and easy rules, which, if true, must greatly facilitate the trade of legislation, and enable very ordinary persons to govern the country. Still, there is an *if* at the foundation of

these beautiful theories, and that *if* leaves us in suspense. Hazlitt attributed Edmund Burke's political sagacity to the careful attention he paid to specialities and exceptions from general rules.

Now Canada is just an exception to a general rule; it is an inland country, but we treat it as a maritime one. Canada is only approachable by sea during five months in the year; ships cannot winter there; and during the other months it can only be entered through the United States, a rival, and possibly, at some time or other, a hostile power. Our territory, it is true, is bounded by the Atlantic, but the shorter, and ordinary route to Canada in winter is by New York or Boston. The difficulties and dangers of the voyage to British America have been much under-estimated in the recent discussions, and official reports in England, as well as in Montreal and Toronto. The north Atlantic is proverbially stormy; within the Gulph of St. Lawrence the weather does not improve; while the river itself is full of small islands, and groups of rocks and shoals; there are few light-houses; the pilots are French Canadians, who, by the extraordinary forbearance of the English shipowners and merchants, are allowed an incorporated monopoly of the care of English property. The majority of these pilots are notoriously incompetent, and the rates of insurances are the highest paid for foreign voyages, ranging from 2½ to 3 per cent. in summer, and on the winter voyage home, from 5 to 7 or even 10 per cent. The average rate for the West Indian and other long tropical voyages is only 1½ per cent.

These risks, therefore, are an element of expense; towage above Quebec is inevitably high for a distance of 180 miles, in a current running four or five miles an hour. Lighterage going up is not unusual, and an almost regular item of charge in going down from Montreal. We believe that three hundred pounds is a moderate estimate of additional expense incurred by a ship going beyond Quebec to discharge and load at Montreal.

The Montreal and Toronto men know all this, but they are dissatisfied. They look to New York freights, forget their inland position, and grumble at the British Government, because there is not a sharper competition for freights at their wharves.

Having witnessed and experienced the evils of accumulation of produce in Montreal, and inadequate shipping to remove it, we dare not make light of the complaints of the Upper Canada people, though we doubt much whether the opening of the St. Lawrence to the United States would secure a regular and cheap supply of shipping. While talking over this matter in Scotland, we have been met with the reply—"Let the Canadians build more ships"—and there is something in this. Ship-building is not only a British, it is a large colonial interest, and we have no wish to see deserted the dock-yards of Quebec, or Three Rivers, or of the lower ports, merely to gratify the jealousy of "Young Toronto" at her elder sister. Some real advantage must be procured in exchange. Freights ought always to be 2s. 6d. to 2s. 9d. sterling per barrel of flour cheaper at New York than at Montreal—that is if we can rely upon an average of

* Davenant on Balance of Trade, page 155. London, 1699.

† *Vide*—Principles of Political Economy. Ed. 1825, page 40.

statements by the Legislative Council of Canada, the Atlantic Railway Company, and the United States committee, who reported to Congress on this subject.

British shipowners say that they can compete with all the world, provided you give them fair play—that is, give them untaxed materials for ship-building; untaxed, cheap labour, such as the Prussians have; bring down wages to half the present rates; pay off British hands, and employ Germans, Spaniards, or Negroes. The wants of our revenue forbid the first of these reductions, at least so long as the interest of the national debt is to be paid; and there is just as much common sense left us as will secure a preference for British sailors, instead of Germans, Portuguese, or Negroes.

Nothing fluctuates so much and so suddenly as freight: it depends upon the supply and demand. The first ships that left Montreal last summer brought flour at 2s. 4d. to 2s. 6d. a barrel; the last that left in autumn obtained 6s. 6d. to 7s.

We think the Canadians committed a great error in harping too much on *freights alone*, as an element in the cost of bread stuffs to this country. The extreme agricultural protectionists in England quoted the low prices of the far west, added the freights, and then got up an alarm about being ruined by Canadian competition. Actual observations prove that there is such a thing as a *geographical price*. Wheat is dear at 75 cents., 3s. a bushel, or 24s. a quarter, in Cleveland, yet freights ever so low. The same grain is worth double the money in Liverpool, in fact, is cheap at 48s. a quarter; and after all there may be loss to the speculator. The way to cheapen freight is to invite shipping, as formerly, with cargoes of British productions, instead of banishing trade by hasty and anti-British legislation. If the Canadians would only encourage their own agriculture in the Valley of the St. Lawrence, and, duly considering the natural and artificial advantages of their country, labour to develop its resources, clear the country, increase population, and increase production, we should soon hear less of the shipping monopoly, and more of Canadian exports and Canadian shipping. The anti-British and anti-

colonial policy of the present ministers, both in London and in Montreal, has irritated, but we hope not alienated, the Canadians. We are therefore not surprised at the Montreal people running into the opposite extreme, neglecting agriculture and navigation, and adopting the Manchester and Boston mania for manufactures. Let the Canadians beware: abundance of food is the only sure test and foundation of public wealth. The people of England have not made up their minds to cast off the colonies: they are only awaking to a sense of their importance; and it is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when the colonies, despite of mere theories, will be "treated as integral parts of the empire," as the provinces of that magnificent British Union, on whose empire the sun never sets.

The colonies must, however, co-operate with the advocates of British and colonial industry in Great Britain, and assist us to defeat the alienation of the only property that really belongs to the people.

Why should not Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward's Island, and Canada, be as closely allied to each other as each of them is, or ought to be, to the mother country? Why, but because official jobbery must have five governors where one would be enough. In India, one governor-general rules ninety-five millions. But the northern colonies, with a population under two millions, have five Colonial office proteges to maintain. India is not under the Colonial office; let us emancipate the American colonies from official tyranny, and elevate them to the rank of British provinces. Let us consolidate their interests, redress their wrongs, and protect their industry. The silent oppression of the colonies was the work, not of this nation, but of a clique whose days are numbered, whose power is even now tottering.

There is yet hope for the working people of Great Britain in their colonial connections, and hope for the colonists, that the industrial and social distresses of this country have convinced the masses of our city populations that the colonies are still British territory, and that the colonists may still sympathise with us as fellow-citizens of one great nation.

TO ELLEN'S EYE.

I.

Kiss'd by a pearly sea
A sapphire isle,
With sunlit smile,
Rags o'er the deep to me;
Toes'd on the wave
That threatens a grave,
With nose to save—
Speed, speed, my bark to thee.

II.

A cerulean sphere
Rolling on high
In an albine sky,
Dewed with a glistening tear;

Bright and serene,
'Bove the terrene,
Life's stormy scene—
Rest, rest, my spirit here.

III.

That sapphire isle
And its pearly sea,
With sunlit smile
Raying on me—
That azure sphere
In an albine sky,
Dewed with a tear,
Is Ellen's eye
Of welkin dye,
Where calm I'll rest,
For ever blest,
Till Nature sends her last behest.

J. B. D

TAIT'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1849.

COLONIAL QUESTION—CANADA.—II.

LAST month, we entered upon a general view of the colonial question, endeavouring to grasp at those great facts and considerations in colonial history and policy, in which men of all parties, and in various ages, have agreed; avoiding those minute, obscure, theoretical details on which opinions are continually fluctuating, prejudices and hypotheses regulated rather by fashion than by the careful study of "things as they are."

We wish to deal with facts and circumstances as we find them. For us to follow in the beaten track of popular prejudices and pedantic dogmas, would be a penance rather than a pleasure—a mechanical task, void of all charm, either of novelty or of excitement. If we cannot keep a position in the front rank of journalists, let us retire from the field.

We know well the labour and the annoyances incident to our position. The pioneers of opinion must hew their way "through bush, and brake, and scur;" often misunderstood, sometimes deemed eccentric, yet always hopeful and persevering, being confident in the surveys, and levels, and gradings, which deep study have made theirs, but which lie unperceived by the general eye. In a word, if we would confess a fault, it is this—to be in the minority in certain questions in political economy has been our habit. Anybody may run with a crowd, adding to its bulk and its noise another atom—anybody can do that. We give an eccentric preference to being up a little earlier, quietly walking out at sunrise, and, in due time, having the satisfaction of seeing the tender plants of original ideas, of our own peculiar opinions, at last enjoying a full tide of light, and imperceptibly settling down among those convictions to which men assent, without further question.

Notwithstanding the jargon and the glitter of statistical statements, there remain in the public mind, in the common sense of mankind, certain broad and deep foundations of truths and convictions, which endure from age to age, as sure and settled as universal observation and the historical experience of mankind can make them; and although upon these foundations of great first truths in political knowledge, hasty fabrics are frequently and suddenly raised, to be as suddenly swept away, yet this same common sense and historical experi-

ence of mankind is the only foundation on which a public writer can build with safety and confidence.

The opinions we now publish are the result of careful and long-continued observation and inquiry, made during a commercial residence, correspondence, and periodical supplies of authentic information; a personal acquaintance with colonists of high standing and influence, and of various shades of opinion. Our readers need not be surprised if we exhibit less of the servile cockney than of the gruff and uncompromising colonist; our language regarding Mr. Hawes and Earl Grey may savour more of the democratic British North American, than of the Downing Street suppliant; but we can't help it: if you do not wish to hear our story, turn over a leaf or two, and plunge into the first portion of poetry or romance that turns up: we have our duty to attend to—it may be arduous, "but it must be done."

We are not surprised that our colonial reflections last month should have given offence to a solitary expectant of some petty appointment, or to some lonely hanger-on of the "family government," who has read in the pages of *Tait* a protest against the jobbing in public lands, the manufacture of colonial sinecures, or the denunciation of a system of extortion upon British industry and enterprise, so long practised in the colonies, for the purpose of maintaining the poor relations of a feeble ministry, by governorships, judgeships, bishoprics, and other civil and military appointments without end, or use, or profit.

When we complained that the Colonial Office had gradually acquired powers and functions, inconsistent with the due proportions of the British constitution—when we said that that office now laid claim to the exploded dogma that "the king can do no wrong," and imprudently contends that the Colonial Office can do no wrong—we expected to offend, and should have been disappointed had it been otherwise. When we hinted our want of confidence in the good intentions of that office, and indicated several circumstances which appeared to call for investigation, we hoped to excite curiosity, if not indignation; but "*laissez faire*" is the order of the day, or, in the more expressive free translation of the Maclarty school, "we canna be fashed." The apathy of the public to their vested interests

in the colonies is truly disheartening; the infatuation which tolerates the suicidal neglect, or wilful damage and alienation, of the British colonial empire, is altogether incomprehensible. We need not blame the stewards of England's colonial estates with carelessness, or faithlessness, or stupidity, when the proprietors, the nation, look on with indifference. Soothed by the strains of such stereotyped music as teaches that "Britannia rules the waves," and such traditions of former greatness as proclaim that "Britons never shall be slaves," the nation, intoxicated with dreams of a commercial "empire on which the sun never sets," slumbers on, till the hour when its vast colonial empire totters, and crumbles into dust. Opiates are often given, with a scientific refinement of cruelty, to conceal the approach of dissolution. So our political doctors have drugged us with theories, and we go gaily down to—

"A pleasing land of drowsihood it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky."

Ungracious though the task be, we dare not hang back, nor refuse to arouse the people of England from their visions of political wealth and power, traditions of thirty years ago.

The changes common to human affairs, accelerated by a dreamy, theoretical legislation, a succession of corrupt administrations; "the cankers of a calm world and a long peace;" the incredible advances made by rival nations in the arts of peace, in the resources both of peace and war; the resolute self-complacency of the English people, and their utter blindness to what other nations are doing—all these circumstances impress the minds of mercantile men, who mix much with foreigners, that the commercial greatness of England has reached its meridian, and may now be expected to undergo that decline which has long ago overtaken Venice, Spain, Portugal, and Holland. Why, does England expect to escape the common lot of nations?

Our arguments for retaining the colonies can be put in few words. We have little of that superstitious veneration for dogmas and theories, charms and amulets, of which many people whom we meet, and many writers who ought to know better, are possessed. Of theoretical crotchets, we say, with the Americans, "That they are but playthings, which people who have nothing to do may amuse themselves with, while their neighbours are better employed. *Whatever assumes to be a science must submit to the test question, 'Of what use is it?'*" *All scientific, all economical dogmas, must be tested by their results.* If the results, the historical experience, be different from the dogma or theory, we reject the theory. Experience is our only guide, and to it, sage and fool must equally submit. Our arguments, then, for colonies are these. "England wants room." As Sir William Molesworth remarked, "We are a colonising people. The same destiny that led our forefathers from their homes in the east still urges us onwards to occupy the uninhabited regions of the west and the south."

In our November number, we showed that our feudal system in Scotland, cheap labour in Eng-

land, and idleness and neglect of natural resources in Ireland, are likely to keep up a tide of emigration for many years to come. There are thousands, nay millions, of acres at our own doors, or within a few hours' sail or ride of where we sit, yet it is not the pleasure of the lords of the soil to permit these acres to be applied to the purposes for which poor people imagine the earth to have been given to man—viz., to "till the ground"—"to be fruitful, to multiply, and replenish the earth."

The proprietors of the lands say that deer-forests must be made, that preserves must be constructed; and that, come what may of the human race, the partridges must be taken care of, the hares preserved, and the deer held sacred.

Seeing that these things are so, and cannot be gainsaid, we confess we felt somewhat impatient when Mr. Cobden announced, as the result of his logic, that free-trade implied the cutting off of colonies, and the treatment of our friends across the Atlantic as foreigners and aliens.

We denied this inference. We think Mr. Cobden rushed too hastily at a conclusion. We hope to show that, if we are to have free-trade at all, we must begin with our colonies; for trade is exchange of commodities, and the benefits and inducements to continue it between nations, as between individuals, must be mutual. We attach less importance to Mr. Cobden's conclusions against the colonies than we would have done had he continued to labour in the same tract in which he commenced his political life—we mean in advocating the grand idea of cheap food. It is of little avail that we have wrung from the aristocracy a reluctant permission to buy corn in America, carry it 3,000 or 4,000 miles, and fetch it into our towns free of the old corn-law penalties. To have food cheap and abundant we must have free-trade in land, as so often demonstrated in the league.

We are not satisfied with Mr. Cobden's abandonment of his former advocacy of free-trade in land as a sequence of free-trade in corn. We do not say that his having become a landowner has had anything to do with this change of tactics; we only hope that Mr. Cobden is not fickle, or elated with his elevation; for really it is a grievous fault to lose sight of the first grand object of one's mission, and to be drawn aside from that noble line of action in which he had so signally succeeded. If we had the slightest influence with him or his friends, we would whisper, "Do not stop short of *free-trade in land*, and the vast expansion of a home market and native industry, consequent upon increased tillage." National arbitration and financial reform are worthy objects, but Mr. Cobden's mission was one still higher and more difficult; besides, there are numerous ordinary minds ready to labour at the minor reforms. We feel assured that he will yet reconsider his anti-colonial conclusion. Really, England cannot afford to lose much more of her trade—cannot afford to see one market after another shut up against her manufactures. This "war of tariffs" is indeed severe. We need no aggravation of our industrial embarrassments by a commercial revolution, or custom-house rebellion of our colonies.

We have had enough of annoyance from the Zollverein, and from the cross purposes of French bounties, on woollen goods competing with our own labour in our home markets; we have had enough of American *hauteur* in the matter of the 30 per cent duties, in the gradual exclusion of wrought iron, and in the violation of the reciprocity shipping treaties, by both France and America, without any fresh annoyances or insults from the colonies. Still less can we be patient under such assurances as that of Mr. Milner Gibson, telling the world that we may as well send troops to the United States as to Canada. We know the strength of the Canadians quite as well as Mr. Gibson does, but we tell him that the colonists do not wish to break off the connection with this country.

Mere parliamentary speakers may cast about fire-brands, and say it is done only for sport; but if Messrs. Gibson, Hawes, Molesworth, and Hume, will only visit the Eastern Townships, Prescott, and the Toronto and Niagara districts, and make personal inquiry, they will find that neither the agricultural nor the commercial portions of the community have any desire for insurrections, civil war, or annexation. The miseries of civil war are happily unknown in England, and English statesmen ought to have some humane consideration for their fellow-subjects in the colonies, and avoid all suggestions and provocations to murder, and robbery, and incendiarism at a distance, among a people claiming kindred with ourselves, cultivating mercantile connections, and upholding the same constitution.

Things are said in Parliament, and in public, in the flush of recklessness, *soon forgotten here*, but remembered and acted upon abroad, which have been followed by deep and extensive calamity. The party in Canada to whom this flashy orator seems inclined to cringe, have been, in their various official documents (petitions, memorials, &c.), most careful to deprecate the breaking up of the British connection as a "calamity."

With similar feelings of impatience and contempt have we read the Under-Colonial Secretary's disavowal of all knowledge of the unconstitutional, or revolutionary movements now going on in Canada, by the Papineau party, the anti-British, anti-commercial clique, into whose hands our feeble Home Government have allowed the management of affairs to fall. If things are to be put right in Canada, as we hope they will, the Russell Cabinet will have no hand in it, unless it be by secretly retarding a settlement. If Mr. Hawes be really ignorant of Lafontaine's resolution to appropriate colonial funds, as "indemnification," or "spoils," Mr. Hawes is simply unfit for any office of importance; his information is two packets behind that of the mercantile community; by his own showing, he ought not to be trusted with the letters of Quilp's little office on the deserted wharf.

But we do complain of Whig political and official weakness and cowardice. Why not at once grapple with the difficulties and the complications of the colonial question. Suppression of documents, evasion of inquiries in public, and official tyranny in secret, will not lessen their difficulties, but may

greatly aggravate them, or rather make an inexplicable mass of confusion for their successors; for it would appear as if the "family government" have resolved to go on provoking the colonists, in the hope that, by the time they are put out of office, an irreconcilable quarrel between this country and her colonies may cover all their faults, just as a wilful fire occasionally winds up a badly managed huckster business—the insurance paying the loss in the one case, and the nation in the other.

We admit that there are difficulties in this question; but what great political subjects are free from difficulty? The whole financial and commercial system of the country has been put into a process of change—revolutionised, in fact.

If the men who began this commercial revolution were inadequate to complete it *beneficially*, they should not have been allowed to go on, or they should be interrupted now.

The Manchester school under-estimated the extent and magnitude of the changes they proposed. Mr. Cobden says, "*Cut off the colonies.*" We say, "*No;*" and for many reasons already assigned, the leading ones being—1st, Our felt want of space for our population—a want of space artificially aggravated by our feudal laws, and an unsympathising aristocracy. 2d, The want of additional markets for manufacturing labour; with an export trade, declining at the rate of five millions per annum, we cannot afford to throw away our chances, even in small markets. 3d, We hold that the regions explored by our forefathers, and slowly and painfully rescued from a state of nature, may justly be deemed national property: the peaceful conquests in the forest, by the axe and the plough of the settlers, are certainly not less legitimate than those of the sword and the howitzer in a populous eastern clime. 4th, We shed much blood, and incurred heavy debts, to obtain these possessions, at a period when wars, for the sake of colonies, were the fashion in Europe. We cannot shake off these debts. William Pitt bought them at the rate of fourteen or fifteen shillings in the pound; Sir Robert Peel contrived to sell them for twenty shillings, payable in gold at a fixed price; ourselves, our neighbours, our banks, insurance offices, &c., are now the holders of the debt, and we cannot apply the sponge if we would. 5th, We think that our possessions are just as well in our hands as in the hands of any other power. "Independence of the colonies" is a day-dream; they *must* range themselves under some maritime state powerful enough to protect them. To the political Quixotes who rave about independence of the colonies, we would say, just look at home, and make some effort to elevate the masses of town populations, and even of rural populations, who are not half so well off as the colonists, and who cannot hope for comfort in the present state and prospects of trade and industry. No senatorial Quixote, nor official Sancho Panza, has any authority to make offer of England's transatlantic properties to Elliots, Ellices, Hudson Bay Companies, to Toronto lawyers, or Americans, until the people of England are pleased to say, that "the colonies are worthless, and may be given away to any one who will have them." An indolent, imbecile

Ministry may hold such language, but the people of England never did.

6th, We believe that Great Britain is an island, and of very small size as compared with the great powers of the Continent of Europe. Our soil is not of the very best; nature has indicated to us maritime pursuits, maritime defences, and maritime resources. The genius of our constitution is partial to "ships, colonies, and commerce." The English character, national or individual, has a taste and smell of salt water all the world over.

Even a London citizen would laugh at the proposal to square down our naval greatness to the shape and dimensions of the Midland Counties Canal navigation. Even a Frenchman, who had never got beyond Boulogne, would go into fits at the idea of testing our navigation laws by the capabilities of the muddy Irwell, now rendered classic by its proximity to the school of Mr. Cobden and his disciples. There have been wars on the continent within the memory of men still living, not to speak of almanacs and histories. Indeed, the newspapers still report a number of "little wars." We fear that fleets and armies may still be needed—we know not how soon; so that, after all, we had as well look to ourselves. The French have still a few ships of war; so have the Russians and the Americans; and though, of course, these are all very civil, well-meaning neighbours, still there is no harm in being provided for accidents. In the event of war, we need naval armies—a population of "sea-leopards," as Napoleon called them—afloat on their own element, and ready to "meet all comers."

To keep up "the breed of seamen," as the old writers say, we require a large trade, colonial and foreign—not "foreign and colonial"—for we can only send ships to foreigners *with* their consent, and by paying such "tribute" as they are pleased to impose on our ships and cargoes. To the colonies British ships may go as freely as into our own harbours. The traffic is with our countrymen, not with envious rivals and commercial enemies. The prosperity of the mother-country is a guarantee for that of the colonies. The strong connection of interests and sympathies between England and her distant settlements affords the only rational illustration of the attempt to rule the waves, of which the throwing of chains into the sea by Xerxes was only a poetic emblem. There is no extravagance in the lines—

"Britannia needs no bulwarks, no towers along her steep,
Her march is o'er the mountain wave, her home is on the deep."

7th, We need a few West India islands, if it were for nothing more than to keep up a traditional sample of free negro labour. In a generation that is now half gone by, we decreed "freedom to the slave" of every proprietor at that time in our power. We could not force freedom in the Brazils, nor in Cuba, nor in the United States; but we did so where the planters could not resist us. It is true that industry has well nigh ceased in many places—the planters are ruined, and the islands impoverished; but then we set "a great example." And if there is any chance of freedom for the negro, that chance is not lessened by the free labour of the British West Indies. We ought, however, to see

what can be done in the way of promoting industry and increasing the produce of these islands.

8th, But the great bugbear of modern politicians is the word "protection." Let us look this Cock-lane ghost in the face. The Whigs and Peelites have a superstitious dread of certain names and sounds—

"Throw but a stone, the giant dies."

We have got over our fit of protectio-phobia, and feel strong enough to talk about it now, and talk plainly too. The "Edinburgh Review" not long ago delivered a most edifying and learned homily against revolutions, with many valuable quotations, a few of which we devotedly jotted down in our breviary, and felt that we were "stringing pearls," and laying up coins that may be useful, aye, seven years hence.

The tenor of the "Review" was deprecatory of organic changes in the constitution, and with many cautions against rash alterations in the franchise, in the structure and adjustment of ranks. The learned writer did not seem to be aware that he was putting on record a series of protests against rash changes in our commercial constitution; for of all parts of the fabric of government in a commercial country, that which concerns its trading and financial relations must ever be deemed of vital importance.

We have attempted to change rapidly, suddenly, from an *artificial* system—a system of penalties and compensations—to a model of ideal simplicity.

We were told that the old system robbed Peter to pay Paul; we were overpersuaded, and began hewing down a very bulky, and complicated, and rather tough old fabric. The materials now lie scattered around us; but there is no great mind adequate to the reconstruction of a new commercial system.

English industry—manufacturing labour—ought not to have been exposed to the competition of Swiss, German, French, and Belgian *untaxed* labour, at half the prices of English labour, *until* the burdens on English labour had been so far lightened that the Englishman might be enabled to meet the foreigner on equal terms.

Abolish the Excise, says Mr. Cobden, and remove the obstacles to cheap labour. Abolish Custom-houses, say others. *Relieve me, and tax my neighbour*, say most people. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets up, and ends this clamour by saying that he cannot do without revenue, and a revenue he must have.

Of course we recommend that there should be free trade with the colonies; that, as both Peel and Russell promised, the colonies should, as to trade, be treated as integral parts of the empire. That, with a due regard to the present home and colonial tariffs, a uniformity be aimed at in custom's duties, a broad, substantial system of reciprocity, and interchange of benefits with our countrymen abroad. *One Empire*, one language, one general plan of laws and finance; the children of Britain, in their distant settlements, whether in the Pacific, in the Carribean, or Indian seas, or on the American continent, to be recognised and encouraged by their common parent. England cannot afford to retire

from her colonial business, but we all ardently desire to see it better managed and made more profitable. None are so great sufferers by misgovernment and erroneous legislation as the colonists themselves, and none are more loyal—strange to say, colonial loyalty is in the exact ratio of the harshness and injustice with which they have been treated; but let us not presume on their forbearance. Let us ponder over the preamble of the Carolinian Constitution; it is safer to *anticipate*, than meanly to *follow*, reasonable claims and opinions.

RECIPROCITY, after all, is nothing more than the carrying out of the original and proper idea of free trade, as announced by the *Westminster Review*, and the celebrated *Corn Law Catechism*, many years ago. To solicit, to canvass, to insist upon reciprocal concessions from foreign states, similar to those we have yielded, no doubt implies a little additional labour on the part of officials; it is asking *value* for the emoluments given, and that does appear strange to men in office, yet nothing is more reasonable. We would not ask them to quarrel with the Germans, or the Belgians, or French, but we certainly do expect that the foreign office shall now and then take a little healthy exercise in agitating foreign courts for an interchange and extension of the blessings of free trade. We have made great efforts, great sacrifices, to obtain a better system, and do not wish that all that has been done should prove totally useless or hurtful to ourselves.

Ten years ago, Colonel Thompson remarked, in his catechism, that "if the path for manufacturing industry was open, half their (the manufacturers') children would live by manufactures, instead of being starved as now;" and that, "if our manufactures are not bought now, it is because we refuse what our customers have to pay in;" "that reciprocity is having two good things instead of one." We no longer refuse to take payment in foreign corn, and yet foreigners are taking fewer of our manufactures. This is very hard; for, as the Colonel says, "the power of increasing our wealth and population, by exchanging manufactures for food, is what God has given us to hold our ground with." And these ideas formed the text of many a tract and pamphlet distributed by the League; so that it is too bad of our officials to say that they will not take the trouble to negotiate for the exchange of our goods abroad for the food which we now receive here free of all duties.

That the Government of this country really had, at one time, a deep and practical conviction of the propriety and justice of reciprocal free trade with foreign states, is evident from negotiations carried on at Washington on behalf of Canada.

Earl Grey's dispatch to the Earl of Elgin, of date 22d June, 1847, says:—"On the 11th August, 1846, her Majesty's Government directed her Majesty's Minister at Washington to submit a proposal to the Government of the United States, for the establishment of an equality of trade between that country and Canada." The noble writer goes on to regret that the application had not been successful, but promises that no opportunity will be lost of bringing the subject before the American

Government, "with the view of meeting the wishes of the House of Assembly of Canada." This dispatch enclosed copies, and referred to previous documents, from which we find that Lord Aberdeen had, on the 18th June, 1846, written to the Hon. Mr. Pakenham, our representative to the United States of America, in consequence of an address to the Queen from the Canadian Legislative Assembly of 12th May, 1846. Persevering and strenuous exertions were made by the British Minister at Washington, with varying success. The Americans, in cases of this kind, consult their own interests only, and cannot be influenced to do anything merely because it is urged upon them by a foreign government, or because it is recommended and accompanied by novel ideas in legislation.

The inequality of trade was investigated, and kept before the Canadian public, through the press. We must do the Colonial Office the justice to say, that they fully co-operated with the colonists in writing letters and instructing the ambassador. The negotiations do not appear to have had the slightest effect on the Americans until after two years' careful investigation into all the bearings of the question, elaborate reports, and repeated discussions, both in their state and general legislatures. We hinted at a silent system of persecution, unknown and unappreciated by the people of England, adopted by the Americans against the northern colonies, with the view of aggravating the inconveniences and privations of their geographical situation, and engendering such an amount of discontent as might, in no great length of time, induce the Canadians to wish for annexation.

This persecution consists in the maintenance of very high duties on colonial produce: the Americans impose duties ranging from 22½ to 30 per cent. on all produce crossing the frontier. Such an amount of duty against an inland country, shut up from all access to the sea, during half the year, is equal to prohibition. The doctors in political economy try to coax the Americans, by saying that they rob or punish themselves by taxing Canadian produce so exorbitantly. The Americans look a little further than the various advisers, and avow that by continuing this line of action they hope, in course of time, to force the colonists into subjection or annexation to the States. They say, also, that they can afford to wait for a time, to overtax themselves, and even to put up with a short supply of timber (having long ago exhausted their own), with the prospect of ultimately acquiring the magnificent provinces on the St. Lawrence—provinces of which the people of Great Britain do not appear to have the slightest conception of their value. Besides, the Americans calculate upon the inefficiency of our Colonial-office system, and, perhaps, they presume upon incidental aid in their projects, from members of our Government. We have much to learn from the Americans; they do many things worthy of imitation; in particular, the cautious, *practical* mode of reasoning and investigation adopted by their public men and public bodies, in all matters of commerce, finance, and industrial and agricultural resources. Nothing is done in a hurry, nothing is trusted to paid officials, nothing is adopted on the untried

theories of literary speculators. This measure of equality of trade, or reciprocity with Canada, has been in agitation for nearly three years. The Canadian population have been roused; it formed the leading topic in their parliament this session; yet still the Americans keep them in suspense, having political ends in view, subject to which their financial and commercial interests are kept in abeyance.

In the meantime, the Americans have obtained the inland freight, through their canals, of a large portion of the Canadian products. The American canals, though greatly inferior in capacity to those on the St. Lawrence, are so well managed, that their funds are in a prosperous condition. The Canadian canals were constructed to avoid the cataracts and rapids, and admit of average-sized ships, 350 to 400 tons, proceeding from the great western lakes to the Atlantic or to Europe. These canals were made with British money, a debt of upwards of £3,000,000 sterling having been guaranteed by Government. They were expected to secure a large portion of the trade which now flows through the Erie Canal and the Hudson to New York. They ought to have been opened last summer; but, when just completed, it was discovered that one of the canals (the Williamsburg) has a depth of only four and a half feet, instead of the nine feet contracted for. On inquiry, it is found that an American contractor had been entrusted with the work by a Cabinet calling itself "a responsible Government." To re-construct this canal would cost £50,000. In the meantime, the St. Lawrence trade is postponed, strangled, while the American canals have more business than they can overtake. We may well ask whether the present Government of Canada are or are not acting in subservience to the views of the United States, by creating discontent and damage, instead of promoting the interests of the colonists, and realising the just expectations of the British people at home?

Upon the preservation of British and Colonial supremacy in the St. Lawrence, and other waters of British North America, depends the prosperity of the Canadas, and the other provinces. Upon prosperity and contentment, loyalty and allegiance very much depend; and upon the consequent con-

nection between this country and the northern colonies, depend our free access to the best harbours, the most improvable markets, the greater part of the coast of North America, her magnificent rivers, and immense inland seas. At present, the British flag is acknowledged in the best and most numerous harbours, and on the best fishing stations of the North Atlantic. Let us not undervalue our advantages from apathy or ignorance, nor be deceived and blindfolded into a voluntary deed of gift to our commercial rivals and opponents, the Americans, of possessions which may be rendered of incalculable value to ourselves and to succeeding generations of Englishmen.

There are a few politicians in London, perhaps one or two of them connected with the Ministry, whose imaginations, heated by recent changes and revolutions on the continent, have led them to believe that colonists in general, and the Canadians in particular, have a desire to be separated from this country; or that, if they have not that desire already, it should be suggested and stimulated among them. We can sincerely assure all such romantic philosophers, that the people of Canada do not want another rebellion, and that they will repel another invasion from the States, if need be. Although the commercial and financial affairs of Canada are in a deplorable state of confusion, they are not hopeless.

The Canadians depend very much upon the success of the St. Lawrence route, as an outlet for the produce of the far west. Their profits, as *carriers and canal owners*, are looked forward to as sources of indefinite prosperity, and the extension of every kind of industry in the colonies. Here, then, is a great physical advantage; if the British do not avail themselves of it, and help their colonists to retain the trade of the St. Lawrence, and to afford it that expansion of which it is susceptible, the Americans will obtain it, and shut us out for ever from the inexhaustible trade of the North American States and provinces. If the Americans ever get possession of this river, the British will as assuredly be excluded from all right to navigate it, as they are at this moment void of all right to navigate the Hudson or the Mississippi.

PROPHECIES.

BY E. H. BURRINGTON,

Author of "Revelations of the Beautiful," &c.

Ouz spirits grow in love and strength
Whene'er we search a present truth,
And see a grand result at length,
Like manhood springing out of youth.

The first bird singing in the dell
May sing so exquisitely well,
That man may think, to hear its tone,
He loves it for itself alone :

And yet his love will grow more strong,
And break upon him unaware,
Whene'er that lonely bird of song
Suggests a thousand singers there !

The first word from an infant heard,
The weak attempt to utter "mother,"

Has deeper meaning in the word,
Because it intimates another.

A noble deed—where such is rare,
And friendly thoughts—when such are few,
Should bring us *Hope*, because they bear
A faithful image to the view

What truth can dare, and kindness do.

And like the singing of a bird,
And like the infant's earliest word,
They come, as prophets, single-handed,
To tell of beauties more expanded.

For kindly thoughts and noble deeds,
However rare and few their powers,
Should give us faith in what succeeds;
For Nature, like a conqueror, leads,
And all her fruits come after flowers.

COLONIAL QUESTION—CANADA.—III.

THE progress of events, in developing the magnitude and bearings of the colonial question, is more rapid than a monthly article of the ordinary limits can by any means keep pace with. In the proofs and illustrations of our opinions, elicited by colonial dispatches, and by parliamentary revelations, nothing has transpired that does not confirm our statements, and increase our confidence in the opinions laid down in the outset of this inquiry. We have also the gratification of observing that the sentiments expressed by us in November, as to the inadequacy, or want of reality in the causes assigned for the excessive emigration of 1847, are becoming pretty general; in other words, that the "*Waste land, and law of entail question*," is beginning to claim its place in the public mind, and obtaining a much larger share of attention from the press, within the last few weeks, than our most sanguine hopes had anticipated.

Strongly attached as we are to the idea of Englishmen being at liberty to claim a home and effect a settlement in every clime, we never forget that emigration is an alternative which it is the duty of an honest and judicious legislature to render an alternative, *only* in bad times—in seasons of inevitable depression in our industrial interests; and that it is the duty of the nation to exhaust her own territorial resources, before expatriating her children to seek a subsistence in less hospitable regions.

These considerations cannot be too often repeated; they lie at the foundation of our colonial policy, and (permit us to introduce a neglected idea) our agrarian policy. Yes, agrarian policy is a neglected, not a new idea; it is the most ancient idea in the history of civilisation; it is the first in all good systems of political philosophy—philosophy, we say, not the logerdomain and slang which a few charlatans have attempted to pawn upon us for practical wisdom and common sense. Mr. Cobden stopped short in the agitation for "*free trade in land*;" Mr. McCulloch, the Dictionary man, has written against it; so that one leading free trader has become an advocate for monopoly in land.

We don't believe in political economy as a science, but we do believe that "the final view of all rational politics is, to produce the greatest quantities of happiness in a given tract of country," and that, all that history records and celebrates is worthless, unless it contribute to the happiness of our country. We do believe in patriotism, but are sceptical of cosmopolitanism. We hold that "charity begins at home," and that all schemes for promoting human happiness, by patronising the world at large, are visionary—as much so as attempts at increasing the volume of the ocean by homoeopathic doses, or glassfuls, or bucketfuls of fresh water from the Thames or the Irwell.

In order to secure free trade, we require the freedom not only to purchase, but *liberty to sell*. To sell our labour in a foreign market, after paying a tribute, or penalty, or customs tax of 40 per cent., is not freedom of trade; it is restriction, extortion, or suppression. Trade is exchange, and must be

free on both sides; hence our earnestness in insisting upon the earlier definitions of "free trade," showing that they were based upon that reciprocal desire of intercourse, and of enterprise, common to civilised nations, which forms so important an element in the process of humanising and ameliorating the condition of men of every tongue and of every clime.

We cannot at present allude to the "Reciprocity question" more particularly than to assert our adherence to the original and obvious idea, conveyed in the quotations from the *Corn-law Catechism*, and to protest against the spurious definitions and forced meanings put upon plain English words. We will not

"To party give up what was meant for mankind."

The objections of the official clique to reciprocity are too frivolous to bear discussion. They are the objections of hirelings, and can all be comprised in two sentences. 1st, "*We won't work making treaties*;" 2d, "*We in office are all right, and don't care for anybody else.*" These two sentences contain the substance of all that can be said or written against "reciprocity," by the friends of foreign and the opponents of British industry.

Our task now becomes narrative, rather than argumentative. We sketch the progress of events from the ample periodical information which, in the course of business, passed through our hands at the time.

CANADIAN DISCONTENT.—We have seen that the discontent of the Canadians arises partly from causes over which England has no control. Discontent has arisen from the machinations of the United States, from the blunders of the Provincial Government, as well as from seditious practices of certain members of that legislature. Passing over, for the present, the political aspect of affairs, let us take up the commercial and financial causes of discontent and injury to the colony, for which the British Government are in a great measure answerable. We allude to the frequent and reckless alterations of the Canadian tariff, *sanctioned* by the Colonial Office in London. We cannot avoid noticing the prettexts for these alterations and augmentations of duties, which, on many descriptions of British manufactures, now amount to prohibitions.

The protective principle has been shown to be an element in the old colonial connection.* Right or wrong, it is a great historical fact. We need not discuss it, but deal with the difficulties arising out of it. The discussions in England, especially in Parliament, in 1845, had caused much anxiety in Canada, as to the admission of Americans to equal privileges with the colonists in the home market;

* The present republican constitution of North Carolina, of date 1776, begins thus:—"Whereas, allegiance and protection are in their nature reciprocal, and the one should of right be refused when the other is withdrawn; and whereas George the Third, King of Great Britain, and late Sovereign of the British American colonies, hath not only withdrawn from them his protection, but by an act," &c. &c.

and on the 28th January, 1846, Lord Cathcart wrote to Mr. Gladstone, setting forth the necessity of continuing to receive colonial wheat and flour on the same favourable terms, which existed at the date of contracting the heavy debts for the construction of canals, and showing that if New York flour were landed in Britain at the same duty as Canadian, the latter could not compete because of the higher freights of the St. Lawrence route; showing, in short, that the effect would be to drive the Canada trade into the hands of the United States, and ruin the St. Lawrence traffic and that of its canals. This dispatch was not published in Canada. Mr. Gladstone replied, 3d March, 1846. The reply created a great sensation in the colony. Fearing that the Government measure would be hurried through Parliament, and that remonstrance was now too late, the colonists, in sullen silence, began to prepare for the worst. Had they hoped for time to make themselves heard in Parliament, every locality, great and small, would have risen to petition for other treatment, and demanded indulgences in competing with their foreign rivals.

This desponding silence was, by a perverse Ministry at home, construed into a consent. The address of the Assembly, on 25th March, 1846, confirmed Lord Cathcart's assertions and warnings, and would have done so much more emphatically, had his dispatch been laid before them along with Mr. Gladstone's. The Assembly prayed that colonial flour should enter Britain at a penny, instead of a shilling a barrel duty.

A second address of Assembly, dated 12th May, 1846, reached London, *was suppressed*, and brought to light by Bentinck. It was of a similar tenor with the first, but much stronger, detailing the probable injury to be inflicted on the colony by Peel's measure, and expressing a "doubt whether remaining a portion of the British empire will be of that paramount importance which they have hitherto found it to be." Public meetings were held in the large towns in the summer of 1846. At these meetings, the prospects of the colony, in the event of a disadvantageous competition with the United States, were discussed, and resolutions adopted to prepare the colony for the change. The abandonment of the principle of protection was deplored; a free trade party was organised, who began the agitation for opening the St. Lawrence to flags of all nations, and increasing import duties, so as to raise nearly all the revenue, and restrict the importation of such articles as might interfere with the manufacturing industry of the colony. In 1846, Sir Robert Peel told the Canadians that in a short time they should be treated as foreigners in what most deeply concerned their interests, their resources, and their future prosperity. They were told that, notwithstanding their allegiance, and the peculiar disadvantages under which they laboured, they should, in 1849, be put upon the same footing in the home market with the "alien American." As a sort of compensation to the colonist for this hostile measure, the ministry carried through the British Possession Act—an act empowering the colonists to levy such import duties as they thought proper, subject *only* to the approval

of the Colonial Secretary—an absurd, invidious, impracticable qualification; because, after permitting the colonists to impose what import duties they please, the only check retained upon colonial errors, extortion, or exclusions, is the opposition of an official, who may be either incompetent or unwilling to place himself in collision with a colonial legislature. In Parliament it was shown that the bill "would overturn the colonial system of this country, which had consisted in defraying the expenses of the colonies, by the monopoly which her subjects had enjoyed with the colonies." In Canada the Possession Act was thus characterised by the press:—"*It emancipates the colonies, or puts it in their power to emancipate themselves, from all duties compelling them to buy dear in the home market when they could buy cheaper in a foreign.*" In the opening speech of Lord Elgin to the Assembly, June 2, 1847, as if afraid that the Assembly might still give some advantages to the mother country, or perhaps forget to damage British industry, the Governor says—"The Colonial legislature are empowered to repeal differential duties, heretofore imposed on the colonies in favour of British produce. It is probable that, by exercising this power, you may be enabled to benefit the consumer without injury to the revenue. *I commend the subject to your consideration.*" He inconsistently enough urges it upon them, and, towards the conclusion of his speech, with the genuine *cant*, recommends the Canadians to improve their natural advantages "as an integral part of an empire abounding in wealth and population." The tendencies and provisions of these acts were immediately appreciated and canvassed in Canada.

In the session of the Provincial Parliament, June, 1847, the anti-colonial language and acts of the home legislature formed the basis of new measures. Members on both sides of the house deplored the steps threatened by Sir R. Peel. The "liberal" members were perhaps the more British in their tone. A new tariff was made, avowedly protectionist, and for revenue. Its retaliatory character was exhibited in the abolition of the differential duties which had, till then, given the British merchant and manufacturer a footing in the Canadian market. Peel's Bill declared the colonists to be alien in 1849. The new Canadian tariff destroyed the protection given to British goods, and told the American, the German, and the Belgian, that their goods should be received in the colony on the same terms as those of the mother country, the "imperial" or differential duties being totally abolished.

Although an influential and oft-quoted meeting of Canadian members of Assembly, and merchants, took place in Montreal, in May, 1846, at which the free trade theory was, as a whole, favourably received, it must be borne in mind that, after explanations made regarding the increased consumpt of timber in this country, *coincident* with reduced duties on timber, yet when it was shown that the immense demand for new railways fully accounted for the large consumpt, that meeting, convened to promote free trade, adopted an amendment to the effect that, though willing to co-operate in the great experiments of the mother country, yet

the meeting was pledged to use its influence to insure the continuance of protective duties on colonial produce in England. And the documents carrying into effect this promise were the very documents suppressed by the Colonial Office, while members of the home government attempted to persuade the nation that the colonists wished for no preferences, privileges, or protection from the mother country!

Let no one imagine we are going to advocate the old system of excessive protections, the complex balance of penalties and compensations—but our exports of manufactured goods to Canada are now little more than one-half of their amount five years ago; and we shall see by and by, that the consumption of the colony has not diminished, but is increasing, the inhabitants being supplied by the Americans, and by their own prematurely created factories.

COLONIAL versus FOREIGN TRADE.—We sometimes hear shallow people say that we would do more business with the colonies if they were independent than we do at present. Well, let us watch what progress we make with Canada, as it has been shown to be in a transition state, and now rapidly verging into a practical independence, the Possessions Act having conferred that independence in commercial matters. Let us watch whether the exports of British goods to Canada are increasing or declining. If the dogma quoted be correct, our exports ought to increase; if the exports have diminished, we must find out the reason.

It is not true that colonies take less from us than independent states. Our exports to the United States have been as high as £12,000,000; they now average between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000, although we have been greatly increasing our imports from thence of bread stuffs and cotton. The Americans are wealthy, but take only about 5s. 8d. per head from us. France, from whom we import £250,000 of merinoes alone, besides much larger amounts of silks and wines, takes 1s. 6d. per head. Prussia, to whom we conceded great privileges in shipping, takes sixpence per head: Our northern colonies, the poorest of all, take 35s. per head; the West Indies, £2 17s. 6d.; the Cape of Good Hope, £3 2s.; the Australian settlements, £7 10s. These figures have been often repeated; we merely transcribe them from the *British Banner* of 18th October last, which adds, that *one-third* of our total exports goes to the colonies.

This large proportion of trade with our colonies is easily explained. The duties charged are from 2 to 4 per cent., with the exception of Canada, where, under the *free trade* experiment, the duties have advanced to 8½ and 30 per cent., the average being 12½ per cent., with prohibitions on many articles, as set forth in the Glasgow memorial to the Colonial Office. The average colonial duty of 3 per cent. contrasts favourably with those of our wealthy neighbours. France *prohibits* our staples of cotton and woollen goods; Belgium prohibits the staples, but admits certain things at from 8 to 15 per cent.

The United States levy 30 to 40 per cent.	Caracas,	25 to 33 per cent.
	Cuba,	37 to 40 "
Brazil levies 30 to 40 per cent.	Mexico,	70 to 75 "

We call 30, 40, and 70 per cent, *penalties*, rather than duties. Political quacks "haver" about those countries punishing themselves in taxing the consumer. The British manufacturer knows too well that these penalties prevent his consignments from paying cost; in short, that such enormous penalties put a stop to trade.

RECIPROCIITY.—If ever we are to have even a beginning to free trade, it must be with our colonies; arrangements must be made on the basis of mutual benefits—reciprocity. Earl Grey proposed a colonial Zollverein some years ago, but wanted influence or energy to carry out his ideas. It did not occur to him to request that the Colonial Governments should admit England to a similar commercial union—to admit England to free trade, or to reciprocal trade, with her own colonies.†

By reciprocity, or equality of trade—using these words in their plain English meaning, avoiding all technical or party definitions—we mean *fair dealing*; fair exchanges of the produce of our own country for that of other countries; reasonable advantages, with mutual consent, being the result to all parties. If we cannot exact unfair terms from foreigners, if we do not even wish for any unfair advantage over the foreigner, but rather afford him every facility in trading with us, and relieve him from every possible burden and restriction, at a loss of revenue to ourselves, surely it follows, in reason and in common sense, that we ought to be not less liberal to our own colonies, and that our colonies ought to be as liberal to us as they are to foreigners. The Canadas ought not to levy higher duties upon British produce and manufactures than are imposed on Canadian produce in British ports.

WEST INDIES.—We ought not in justice to exact a higher duty on West Indian sugar than the *ad valorem* duty paid on our goods in the West Indian ports. We have no more right to levy excessive penalties on colonial sugar—"the corn of the tropics"—in 1849, than we had a right in 1765 to levy a stamp duty or a tea duty on the Boston people.

The vulgar excuse about revenue is really no excuse at all; it is that of the Italian brigand, "It is the custom of his country." It is an easy method of raising revenue, yet other nations may disapprove of it. Englishmen do not like to be plundered in crossing the Alps, or travelling in Italy; neither do the West Indian colonists approve of our seizing upon their produce, and demanding enormous penalties, *because* we want a revenue.

If we persist in this injustice, the day is coming, perhaps is not far distant, when the colonists may again remind us of doings in Boston Bay and at Bunker's Hill—doings which arose entirely out of ministerial ignorance and obstinacy in London.

Besides their claim to *common justice*, the West Indians have claims on us arising out of our harsh usage of them, in the matter of labour. Fifteen years ago, we compelled them to give up entirely, and to annihilate, that kind of labour which is too common in the tropics, we compelled them to set free their slaves. We gave them a composition of

* "Haver," Scotch for talking nonsense like a silly person.
† See his despatch to Lord Elgin, December 31, 1846.

8s. 4d. in the pound of the value of labour thus annihilated, or £20,000,000.* *We have tyrannically prevented them from getting free labour wherever they might find it; and we now ask these West India planters, who pay from 2s. to 3s. a day, or even more, to send us sugar as cheap as the Brazilian or Cuban, who pays about fourpence a day for labour. This petty tyranny of the strong over the weak cannot last for ever. There must be justice for the West Indies, as well as for other places. Otherwise, few years, perhaps not many months, may elapse before the striped and spotted flag, the meteor of the Western Republic, may be hoisted among the sugar islands. The colonial question is still one question. Whether as regards India, Australia, Canada, or the West Indies, we must submit to fair-dealing—to treat them decently—to treat them as decently as we do our foreign customers; and if not, our colonial customers must leave us. The Colonial Office can manage all this. The Russell and Groy government can, under existing acts of parliament, secretly cut off the colonial connection, and yet avoid open war such as that of the American revolution. But we cannot afford to lose our colonies at present; we require additional markets, and new fields for profitable labour and enterprise.*

THE COLONIAL TRANSITION STATE is well and fairly illustrated in the case of Canada. We have indicated, in a general way, the probable results of our new anti-colonial policy, improperly called free trade. We have recited the preamble to this policy, in the nature of the British Possessions Act. We have asserted the effect to be a virtual separation of the colonies from the mother country; and now for our evidence in detail.

We must bespeak the patience of the reader while we submit a brief, business-like account of the various steps by which our change of position with regard to Canada has been arrived at. As this is the colony in which, above all others, the political concessions and financial aids, and Colonial Office tuition, have been most abundantly bestowed, we may fairly fix upon Canada as affording the most complete illustration, and the surest test, of the success or failure of our recent legislation for the colonies. To those who think that our trade would be increased by declaring the colonies independent, the case of Canada affords all requisite data in forming a correct judgment. Free trade in the Canadas means the highest possible rate of duties for revenue, on goods, that do not interfere with colonial manufactures, and protective or prohibitory duties upon such goods as do interfere with colonial industry. Some of our Manchester friends may smile at the mention of manufactures in Canada. Compared with the colossal establishments of England, colonial factories are insignificant enough, but as compared with the resources of the country, and number of inhabitants, the enthusiasm for this description of industry is worthy of the "old country." It is in excess, for agriculture is certainly the legi-

mate pursuit of the inhabitants of the valley of the St. Lawrence, as well as of the more woodland districts. Let us hear what their representatives have got to say on the subject:—

RETALIATORY TARIFF.—The Canadian Parliament met in June, 1847. The Governor invited them to put an end to all the advantages then enjoyed by the British merchant and manufacturer in that market. We have quoted his words. His anti-British speech was followed up by a new budget of the Inspector-General (or Minister of Finance), Mr. Cayley. In introducing it, he said—"We are invited to do away with the protection on British products, and to substitute duties for revenue, without any distinction of the quarter from which the articles imported may be drawn." He explained, that this concession was made to enable the colonist to purchase in any market he thought proper, as compensation for the withdrawal, by the mother country, of the differential duties in favour of colonial produce; that so long as Britain and Canada reciprocally afforded advantages to each other's products, there were substantial reasons for retaining differential duties. "But when England tells you that it is no longer her policy to seek that protection for her products in this market, and that she is prepared to place the products of Canada on the same and on no better footing than the products of Europe and the United States, it appears to me that a corresponding change is rendered desirable in our customs tariff, and regulations, and that they should give the consumer every facility to purchase in the cheapest markets. To develop the capabilities of the soil, and to perfect the invaluable water communications of the country," he admitted that differential duties had fostered the trade with England, sustained colonial shipping, and enabled them to profit by the St. Lawrence. In that very budget speech, he explained that a colonial debt of £1,500,000, for public works (canals, locks, &c.), had been generously guaranteed by England, the scrip or debentures having been unsaleable; and, further, that the Home Government had consented to waive its claim of £70,000 per annum of interest for four years, on condition that, at the end of that time, the colony should resume payments. It did not seem to strike this official, nor the other Canadian legislators, that this gift of £70,000 per annum for four years was a thing to be at all grateful for, or that the overtaxed British artisan should have any consideration in the colonial market, to enable him to pay the additional £70,000 a year of colonial debt!

Mr. Aylwin, an opposition member, said that "he was incredulous as to the tendency of these schemes. He believed that, instead of doing good to the commerce of the country, they would have a directly contrary effect. They would diminish the commerce with Great Britain, and increase it with the United States—a change which he would consider something very serious indeed. Great Britain had changed her policy in a very excellent time for herself, but at the very worst possible time for the colonies;" and he deprecated that change of policy which gave the Americans great advantages over the British and the Canadian merchants. "As

* The total value of slaves liberated by the act of 1833, estimated by commissioners under that act, was £45,281,738 15s. 10d. sterling.

far as he could see, the result would be this, that American citizens would be allowed benefits which the people here themselves would not possess, and that the enterprising people on the other side of the line would take advantage of the favours Great Britain was extending. The connection between Great Britain and Canada was, in a great measure, a commercial one; but Great Britain now seemed disposed to do away with that tie. If the house wanted to do away with all duties, and give American vessels more privileges than their own, he could see no better way to promote annexation."

No admissions, from a leader of the party supposed to be most inclined to independence or annexation, could be more candid—no warning could be more specific, or more loud—yet this was spoken in Assembly, and reported in July, 1847; and in February, 1848, Mr. Hawes, in reply to the memorials or remonstrances of merchants and others against this new tariff, wrote, "*It has already received her Majesty's assent.*"

But lest it should be imagined that we have only dug up some stray expressions to suit a purpose, let us extract a little more from the debates in the Canadian Assembly. The Attorney-General, Sherwood, in support of his friend Cayley, remarked, among other things, "That whatever the political condition of Canada might be, it was absolutely necessary to repeal the differential duties."—"Hitherto Canadian produce went into the British market on payment of nominal duties, and in consideration of that privilege, they allowed goods to come in from Great Britain on better terms than from any other country, but while it was supposed that this was to continue, and while the belief was encouraged by the guaranteeing of the loan intended to complete the navigation, by which it was hoped to carry the produce of the vast countries of the West, Great Britain suddenly changed her policy, and Canada was told, on very short notice, that Sir R. Peel intended to give the people at home the right to trade with the cheapest market. *Sir R. Peel then severed the connexion between Canada and the mother country, so far as it depended upon commercial privileges.*" It was intended to allow him (the colonist) to go to France, Spain, England, or the United States, paying one duty alike on all. He was at a loss to understand why hon. gentlemen should desire to protect British manufactures, when Great Britain did not want the protection, and manifested that it would "be absurd on the part of Canada to grant it. What advantage could possibly be derived from protecting British over American manufactures?" Mr. Aylwin also objected to a copy-right restriction which prevented the circulation of British Reviews and Magazines, and increased the quantity of United States reprints, an anti-British clause which has a most pernicious effect on the colonial mind; it is gradually *Americanizing* it, merely to protect British publishers. Mr. Aylwin's sentiment was "to remonstrate with England" prior to enacting a retaliatory tariff. Mr. Moffat thought that in the circumstances of the colony, they were entitled to ask a *modification* of the Navigation-laws. Mr. Ermatinger, referring to the new system, "considered it founded on

erroneous principles, the carrying out of which, he undoubtedly thought, must lead to a separation between Great Britain and the colony."

The new tariff, though restrictive and retaliatory to British, was to be highly protective to Canadian industry.

This design was avowed by the liberal or republican party, who see in it a "means of getting the province free from England, by making it of no use to the mother country." If we suspected that treason could hide itself in the Colonial Office, we would expect it to assume this policy, of making the colonies unpopular, by making them useless and burdensome.

Free trade, in the United States and in Canada, means an incidental lowering of import duty, in order to suit a purpose, such as increasing revenue. The raising of import duty on British goods was first advocated by the Montreal free traders in their *Economist*, a paper after the London *Economist*. Canadian free trade means duties for revenue, the highest, usually, that can be enforced, short of stopping importations, or creating a smuggling trade, it also includes the most obnoxious form of protective or prohibitory penalties, those by which the inhabitants of towns are rendered dependent upon the farmers and land-owners of the province, and compelled to eat food at famine prices, to benefit the agricultural interest. This instinct of protection and prohibition was fully gratified by the Canadians in their new tariff. With their regulations against imports of American cattle and grain we have less to do at present than with their warfare against the manufacturer of the mother country, the artisan who is suffering privations, because taxes must be raised to be spent in Canada, and to pay the interest of capital invested in Canadian canals. A person named Hall, M.P.P., from Peterborough, Upper Canada, said "he would be very proud if the English manufacturer could be driven out of the market. It was our business to look to our country. Honourable gentlemen were legislating for the people, they were not legislating for the people of England, consequently it was not their business to protect the English manufacturer, but to protect their own." The probability is, that this very man owed his position, and his being able to appear in the Assembly, to the indulgence and liberality of the English manufacturer, in the person of his representative, the wholesale importer, the channel for many years, of large annual additions to Canadian capital.

Anti-British as these words of Hall's were, they found a practical response in those of the Finance Minister, Mr. Cayley, in the details of his budget. The leather manufactures had been tampered with in the preceding session; shippers here were afraid to send boots and shoes; they did not know what duties would be imposed. Thus, in 1845, duty on men's boots was 2s. 6d. per pair—8,299 pairs were imported; in 1846, the duty was 2s. 1d.—3,334 pairs imported. If the average value of men's boots, shipped in this trade, be 10s. 6d. per pair, it is no wonder that the export diminished. It has now, we believe, nearly ceased, the duty being equal to 26 per cent. Mr. Cayley merely congratulated

related himself on the increase of tanneries and leather manufactures!

We know that leather is one of the first articles made in a new country, where bark is plentiful; but, though dark be superabundant, hides are not; Canada is not a pastoral country like Australia, and it is too bad to compel the inhabitants to wear the very worst boots and shoes, because rural legislators will erect sheds every here and there, calling them tanneries, and change good hides into villainous bad leather—into something like a cross between brown paper and red sponge. Mr. Cayley is an imitator of Peel, with the usual success of imitators of faulty models. Peel's plausibility sunk, in Cayley's hands, to flippancy, and the Tamworth perspicuity degenerated to twaddle.

Mr. Cayley comforted himself on the loss of revenue from the decline of sea-borne spirits to the extent of 50 per cent., by observing that the home manufacture of spirits was on the increase!

Paper is the appropriate manufacture of comfortable, elderly communities, where they can afford to cast old clothes into the rag-bag pretty liberally. This is not a Canadian habit, yet they would set up as paper-makers, and actually buy rags from the United States to carry on the frolic—the inhabitants being restricted by penalties, or duties varying from 9 to 12 per cent. Two or three of the staple articles of demand in new countries, are all but prohibited, iron castings, and heavy agricultural and other implements, the reason being, that there are two or three foundries erected, and more to be built, on the paper foundation of this new tariff; nails are to be made, and forges and sledge hammers called into existence, in order to keep English goods out of the colony, and to squeeze out of the settler an extra bushel of grain or an extra dollar on his manufactured necessaries.

Cotton, woollen, and liven goods were raised from 5 to 7½ per cent., but in reality to 9½ per cent., by a Custom-house trick peculiar to Montreal, which the Colonial Office did not check, and which the people of this country are too indolent to rectify, or even to inquire into.*

But the most appropriate, and at the same time most authentic commentary on this tariff, is that of the "merchants, manufacturers, shipowners, and other inhabitants of Glasgow," as set forth in their memorial to Earl Grey, in February, 1848. They say, *inter alia*—

"That while the mother country admits the staple products of Canada either duty free, or at discriminating duties, that colony proposes to levy duties on British manufactures, varying from 5 to 30 per centum, *ad valorem*; and that the average rate of said duties is equivalent to 12½ per cent.—the complex character and numerous different rates in the 'table' rendering an exact estimate unattainable.

"That the other great colonies in the East and West Indies, and in Australia, have hitherto imposed low duties, averaging about 3½ per cent.

"That the act complained of proposes to place the mother country in a more unfavourable position than the very colonies under her dominion, namely, the 'other British North American colonies,' the native produce and manufactures of which are proposed to be admitted into Canada free of duty, provided said

colonies shall receive Canadian produce and manufactures on the same terms.

"That the said colonial act proposes to place the mother country in a more unfavourable position than the United States of America, in so far as it repeals the differential duties hitherto maintained in favour of British manufactures.

"We shall deem it a hardship if, as British subjects, paying taxes, of which a portion is expended in the government and defence of that colony, our goods shall be admitted on less favourable terms than those of the United States manufacturer, who contributes nothing to that expense, and who may thus, by unfair competition, be enabled ultimately to drive the British merchant and manufacturer out of that colonial market."

Pretty plain this, from Scotch merchants and manufacturers; but as Manchester, being rather above the colonial trade, did not co-operate with Glasgow, of course the Colonial Office took no further notice of it than the cavalier-like note alluded to above. We heard, indeed, that, along with the royal assent to this hateful tariff, Earl Grey had the meanness to send a note of errors, or objections, that he saw in the tariff, *begging*—when he ought to have *commanded*—that they should be rectified.

Of course, we never heard anything more of the Earl's feeble protest against this infraction of the "friendly relations subsisting between" *England and her colony*; his friend Lord Elgin continued to get £7,000 a-year out of the colony, and that was satisfaction enough for the British merchants.

RESULTS.—The ordinary results of an improperly augmented tariff of duties occurred in Canada—diminished imports, a diminished revenue, and a greatly impaired commerce. The commercial community of the colony did not profit by their extraordinary exports of grain and flour in 1847; in fact, they lost very severely, while all the profits of famine prices went to the farmers. The merchants who shipped from the St. Lawrence could not by any possibility get their cargoes into Britain in time to share in the high prices; they had *bought* at the high rates, but prices fell in May and June; they could not sell, even at cost, to save themselves, but came in for their share of the ruinous losses in grain of 1847.

The loss estimated to Canada *alone*, on the exports of that year, was £1,000,000 sterling, a very large sum for a new country, of about a million and a half of inhabitants, a heavy loss, of which scarcely any part fell on the producers. Yet Canada escaped the bad celebrity which old and rich countries acquired in that year in the annals of insolvency. With one or two exceptions, the Canadian importing merchants nobly stood their ground, and on them alone has since fallen the burden of maintaining the credit of the colony. The Government, even with the indulgence of £70,000 a year from England, has been unable to continue its payments, and has issued debentures, since the summer of 1848.

Since the change of tariff, the exports from Great Britain have greatly diminished. We beg the attention of those parties who assert that our trade would be improved by declaring all our colonies independent. We have demonstrated that, in so far as mere commercial relations are concerned, Canada is, practically, independent.

Yes, and Canada, in this transition state, affords

* These per centages were calculated by a committee of merchants, and made the subject of the leading article in the *Daily Mail* of 2d February, 1848.

the best opportunity that ever occurred, or ever will occur, for testing the truth or falsity of the assertion, that independent states are better customers than our own colonies. Canada is still in form, and politically, dependent, a colony; but in trade, in all her commercial relations, quite independent. We have already shown that the check of "royal assent," held by the Colonial Office, is, in the hands of the present Government, no check, but a snare and a delusion. The imports of manufactures at Montreal, from Great Britain, during the last five years, were as under:—

1844,	- - - - -	£1,808,926	sterling.
1845,	- - - - -	1,990,864	"
1846,	- - - - -	1,734,760	"
1847,	- - - - -	1,401,877	"
1848,	- - - - -	1,062,948	"

So that, the £1,734,760 of 1846, the year prior to the new tariff, sunk in 1848 to £1,062,948, a decline of 39 per cent., instead of the *increase* which some credulous people profess to expect as the result of independence of the colonies. We advise such to collect facts, and think for themselves, and not be duped by visionaries.

The decline of sea-borne goods, paying *ad valorem* duty to the colony, has been very great. Last year's exports from Britain are little more than half of the amount four years ago, but the amount of imports consumed in the colony has not diminished.* English goods are now superseded by American, and American ships and canal boats now divide the freights, which formerly went to the British and colonial shipowner. In heavy cotton fabrics and coarse woollens, the English maker is beaten by the American, who not only saves the freight and insurance across the Atlantic, but gets his goods passed at the same, on a lower rate of duty; besides, he may smuggle a little. Boston blue prints, and Lowell shirtings, colonial or States' heavy woollen cloths, are preferred to those of Yorkshire. Nearly all the groceries consumed in Canada West are bought, or carried from New York; the trade and the sympathies of the people are rapidly leaving the mother country, and, in course of transference, to the United States. Protectionist colonial meetings are now the fashion in Canada. Driven from the protection of England,

* Imports of goods paying *ad valorem* duty:—

1845,	- - - - -	£2,185,349
1846,	- - - - -	2,241,154
1847,	- - - - -	2,618,259

We have mislaid the returns for 1848, but remember distinctly that they are not less, but rather over those of 1847.

the colonists have resolved to take care of themselves, to foster—nay, to force—manufactures among themselves, by prohibitions on every article they can make for themselves, and by heavy duties on such as they cannot produce. They now talk of duties averaging 18 per cent. on manufactures; 11 per cent. may be the rate next season, although it is uncertain what rates must be paid on goods now at sea for spring trade. Hats, boots, shoes, some kinds of straw bonnets, coarse West of England tweeds, castings in iron, &c., are practically prohibited. So much for retaliation or *free trade*, as the Canadians facetiously call it.

POLITICAL.—We have been thus minute, but, we hope, not tedious, in our detail of the "difficulty," as the Yankees term a quarrel, between this country and Canada. It is one not of political feeling, but of business, or matter of interests; and although such "difficulties" are always complicated with political feeling and with party tactics, the case of Canada is singularly clear of all such complication in its origin, and in its gradual development up to this hour. The ordinary readers of newspapers will not now be able to trace the present confusions in Canada to their proper source. Politics, the dirty work of party, and the bias of preconceived opinions, will now render all explanations of Canadian affairs a difficult task to those who have not been in that country, and kept up regular correspondence with it. It was only by an effort that we suppressed our tendency to mix up reflections, on the political principles of the party who enacted this tariff, and our censure of the opposite party, who continued it and aggravated it.*

That part of the "difficulty," *the present disturbed state of the colony*, is to be ascribed solely to the proceedings of the Colonial Office in London. Whether these disturbances be agreeable to Mr. Hawes and his friends, we know not; whether these disturbances were anticipated by Mr. Hawes, and harmonize with the intentions attributed to him by his friend Mr. Wilson of the *Economist*, we know not.

We suspend our political portion of this investigation, and enforce self-denial in separating the purely economical from the purely political.

With tolerable management the Northern colonies would still have been, indeed may still be, good customers, but Sir R. Peel and the Colonial Office decided otherwise.

* Formerly, duties exceeding £50 were allowed six months' credit, bonds being given by the merchants. The *liberal* Ministry which took office in January, 1848, *cut off this credit*, and compel the importer to pay the duty before receiving his goods.

A VISION IN A DREAM.

"There is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine that never went astray."

It was a weeping willow,
Beside a pleasant stream;
It was a mossy pillow,
And a poet's evening dream.

A broken ring of hazy light
Was wound about the moon,
And in the sacred circle bright
A thousand stars were strewn.

No star but had a thousand rays,
To gild the world below;
No ray but cast a mournful gaze
On scenes of ain and woe.

But gliding on, those stars between,
Within that circle's bound,
A myriad angel forms were seen,
Treading the hallowed ground.

COLONIAL QUESTION—CANADA.—NO. IV.

NEARLY twelve years ago, that is to say, in August 1837, an article in *Tait's Magazine*, on the "Affairs of Canada and the Ministerial Bill," commenced in the following words:—"A struggle has commenced between the British Ministry and Canada, which, unless *conciliatory* measures be adopted, and some *rash steps* be retraced, can terminate only in one way—the separation of that colony, as well as all the other North American colonies, from this country." And so on, with a slight change of dates and circumstances, we might transcribe nearly the whole of those prophetic pages. The *superficial* characteristics of a long series of circumstances and events may vary their aspects from time to time, and yet retain and even develop more clearly the *essential* characteristics of that series of events. In this colonial question the same essential characters distinguish the British Ministerial policy of the present hour that marked the policy of 1837; to wit, excessive ignorance of the real circumstances of the distant settlements for which the home Government attempt to dictate, an overbearing obstinacy and persistence in errors arising out of that culpable ignorance. Party names may have changed, some of the men may have changed sides, but the essential features of the case remain the same—an official mania for forcing colonies to adopt measures originated or sanctioned in Downing Street, and consequently more suitable for the state of society in this country than for that of a new country, thinly peopled, and having all its energies directed by self-relying, resolute men, anxious to make the best and the most of a new country, and who reject with indignation the commands of a faction to surrender their property, to confess themselves defeated, humbled, and repudiated by that very European Government, which ten years ago they shed their blood to uphold.

We care little for party names; men in office change their language and their policy on being driven from power, the most arbitrary ministers become a democratic opposition, while the most noisy liberals, "in course of nature," become the most despotic of officials. Great changes in the character of parties work slowly in England, because the state machinery is old-fashioned, of immense bulk and influence, and because the higher tone of political morality in this country will not long tolerate gross contradictions and inconsistencies in public men. We say, will not long tolerate inconsistencies; because, although the people of England are *very* indulgent to their politicians, their inherent love of truth and honesty is sure to take effect in the long run, and to hurl from power *any* set of men whose stock in trade, whose ministerial resources are chiefly made up of large promises at long dates, puffing advertisements, and second-hand goods (or *obsolete ideas*) showily refinished and made to look like new; from Porter and Wilson to Russell—from Russell to Peel—from the "expediency" man to Stanley—and from him to Buckingham—there are no new ideas, there is neither practical nor philosophical originality to suggest a line

of policy, by which the paid managers of public affairs in London might meet with the recognised, though possibly unpaid representatives of colonial grievances; and, like business-men of ordinary capacity, arrange the differences between this country and the colony. We deplore a want of men in power, able or willing to investigate this subject, with the same care and impartiality that any two gentlemen, appointed by any sporting club in the kingdom, would bestow on the settlement of a trivial dispute on the turf.

It is a question on which party names do not throw any light whatever. The party names of Canada do not indicate the same ideas that are indicated here. There is a war of races which has been protracted and aggravated, if not by the injudicious conciliations to French petulance, has certainly been perpetuated and exasperated by that spirit of cold and haughty severity, and great assumption of power, with which Britain has long been accustomed to treat her colonial children. Party names, we repeat, go for nothing in this investigation. When in the colony, we enjoyed the acquaintance of one of the leaders of the Rebellion of '37; we enjoy his correspondence still; and yet this man, though he commanded the insurgents at ———, and *still* declares for an elective upper house, instead of one nominated by the Crown as heretofore, is opposed to the whole course of the recent anti-British and anti-commercial legislation of the colony. Though not a native of Britain, he is thoroughly British in principles and in feelings; but to say more of his intelligence and ability would be tantamount to naming him without his permission. No party name can satisfactorily indicate this gentleman's principles.

To another individual, a member of Assembly, we were once complaining of the obscurity and dubiety of party names. We remarked that there seemed to be only two parties, the "*ins*" and the "*outs*;" and that all political principle appeared to centre in the attainment of place and emolument. He laughed, and admitted the fact. He is now one of the present Government men; he played his votes as he would his cards, and now enjoys a lucrative appointment. The suggestion of Earl Grey for a commercial union of the British American provinces, in imitation of the German Zollverein, thrown out in 1846, seems to have been taken up by a high Tory of Upper Canada; and, if we mistake not, its present agitator is a gentleman to whom, in 1847, we put the question, "Have you never entertained the idea of having Canada acknowledged and treated as an integral portion of the British Empire, with similarity of laws and trade?"—a query which, at that time, merely elicited the reply, that he (this Tory M.P.P.) was not quite sure that such an intimate union would be for the interest of Canada. Yet the interested considerations of this cautious Tory have, since 1847, been warmed up to the welding heat of a provincial union with England. It is a great mistake to suppose that the Canadians of either Upper or Lower Canada are

very anxious for annexation; but it is a still greater mistake to suppose that they are blind to their own interests, or that the Home Government can either compel or cheat them into submission to French Canadian ascendancy. The wealth, the enterprise, the intelligence, and the *power* of the Canadas, are British, not French; and any attempt of Mr. Hawes, or of Earl Grey, or of Lord Elgin, to *conquer* the British in Canada, or to prostrate them under the dominion of the children of the 65,000 French Canadians whom Wolfe conquered in 1759—all such attempts must, like those of 1765, end in colonial revolution, disgrace to Britain, and the loss of the American colonies, followed by an overwhelming increase of the wealth and power of the United States, into whose hands these provinces must pass. Not very many years will be required to humble the pride of England, to level her peculiar social institutions in the dust, and to reduce her inhabitants to the scanty resources of her own island territory. The fame of her commerce, the bustle of her manufactures, and the glory of her marine, will pass away with the plans that created and upheld her once gigantic resources. The infatuation of British Ministers in almost every case of "difficulty," or quarrel with colonies, has been but too obvious. Chatham provoked the New England colonies, by declaring that they had no right to manufacture so much as a nail for a horse-shoe; and, in due time, changing his principles, he poured forth inflammatory speeches inciting the colonists to revolt, to perish on the battle-field sooner than yield to England. Fox's notorious India Bill proposed to deprive the East India Company of the management of their own affairs, by delivering over to commissioners, nominated by the Ministry, the entire population, resources, patronage and revenues of India!

A bill of this sort might pass in our day; but if the Whigs intend cutting off colonial patronage in the West, they will require more of it in the East. India cannot long escape their grasp; the trick of making an exception of India in their colonial discussions, and charging the total colonial outlay on colonies *in general*, is only done to keep the India interest quiet for a time. Hindostan and Australia must share the fate of the other colonies; they must pass through the ordeal of Whig ministerial oppression, anarchy, revolt, and disruption from the empire. All these changes are practicable, and that in the quietest and most rapid manner. We have a cabinet who imitate Peel in garbling and suppressing intelligence; the nation are contented even to apathy—

"Since ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise."

A new tale by Thackeray or Dickens is of more interest to the people than authentic information from Canada or the West Indies, and the catastrophe of the novel in your hand is more absorbing than the fate of the British empire. The people who, in 1687, would not permit a *Sovereign* to drive them, now crouch before a *Ministry*, and silently, though mournfully, adopt the maxim—

"That the Cabinet can do no wrong!"

There are certain curious resemblances between

the state of opinions in this country at present, and that of France prior to the Revolution of 1788. The popular cry then was—"Down with the colonies!" The aristocracy refused to sympathise with the people, or to yield ought of their superfluous wealth and feudal rights to the national burdens and exigencies; they clung to their Game-laws, their alodial privileges, and exemptions from taxes, till all were swept away.

The important business of legislation, instead of being treated as matter of the highest *practical* moment, had become a species of speculative amusement, having as little reference as possible to the actualities of men and things.

All religions were deemed equally meritorious; the punishment of death was to be abolished, as crime of the deepest dye appeared light and natural: from such coincidences men who presume to think for themselves make their own inferences.

We have been amused by observing it insinuated that *Tait* is more Conservative than formerly. What, then, is Conservatism? For an unreserved and ample confession of our political faith, we beg to refer our readers to the article "Emigration," in November last; if our advocacy of agrarian justice, then and since, be Conservatism—if the pleadings against exclusive privileges to landed proprietors—if an elaborate denunciation of the expatriation of our countrymen from the Highlands, for the small crime of being obstacles in the process of laying waste their paternal acres, in order that deer and other game may be nourished in a modern wilderness—if a protest against the entire plan of legislation by which the land of these kingdoms is held back from the use for which God gave it to the inhabitants—namely, that food may be raised thereupon; if an earnest protest against forcing emigration upon an unwilling people; if an advocacy of the rights of labour against the usurpations of power and of money; if these sentiments be Conservatism, then are we Conservatives, but Conservative in no other sense.

We ever aimed at being conservative of the rights of industry; hence our doubts, freely expressed from time to time, of the tendencies of the merely political economy school, or doctrine of *cheapness*, without regard to the privations and sacrifices which cheap labour, as a grand first object, is sure to entail upon the working-people.

Our conservatism of the rights of labour lead us to write in support of the reforms required to make the colonies more useful to this country; and, in opposition to the political economists, we still say, "Keep the colonies, the Yankees do not need them so much as we do, they have an unbounded territory; but England wants room;" and England wants markets for her manufactures—the British colonies take about one-third of all the goods we send abroad. Our countrymen and relatives in British America, in Australia, in the West Indies, in India, want our goods, and are willing to pay their full value in colonial produce. The great powers of Europe *prohibit* us from selling to them our cottons, woollens, linens, &c., and the American nations only permit us to sell our goods to them after bribing their governments with customs duties of from 30

to 60 per cent. Our colonial trade is a *free trade*, our foreign trade is a system of *finés and forfeitures*. Let us retain our free trade to the colonies; but let us reform those abuses which are driving them into revolt. Let us take courage, and although cowardice and corruption reign paramount in Downing Street, let us boldly declare that our own countrymen in Canada are not less worthy of the consideration and the conciliation of England and the English executive, than the disaffected descendants of the 65,000 French settlers who submitted to the arms of Wolfe.

Let us proclaim this great fact, which an imbecile Ministry are struggling to suppress, that the Five North American provinces have never been permitted to develop their immense capabilities; that they are rising in value and political importance more rapidly than the pen of the statist or historian can keep pace with; that their immense importance to all the interests of Britain have never been appreciated—their forests, their fields, their minerals, rivers, lakes, and inland seas, are each of them mines. Their water communications exceed 2,000 miles, embracing the entire length of the St. Lawrence and lakes, surmounting the rapids by the finest canals in the world, one of which rising above the mighty Niagara, opens up to the colonies and to England the trade and navigation of that "far west" which pours forth its supplies of produce to feed the pent-up populations of Europe. These boundless fields for industry and enterprise have never received the attention they merit from a nation once emulating all others in geographical discovery, political wisdom, and mercantile enterprise. Whether this immense "far west" trade shall be enjoyed by England and her colonies, or by the United States, is the question now to be settled, either by *conciliating* the British in Canada, or by exasperating them to union with our great republican rivals. But if there be "a crow to pluck" between us and any contemporary, we shall make a clean breast of it at once. We are *conservative of the rights of labour*; we do not understand the Manchester cry for "cheap food, cheap labour, and cheap manufactures." Permanently cheap food cannot be had without free trade in land, and abundance of it—such as would be, if the preserves, useless parks, and mortgaged estates, were immediately applied to *food-raising*, and to the claims of creditors. We think Mr. Cobden should have continued his agitation for *free-trade in land*, and not stopped short at free imports of everything, seeing that corn still enjoys a high natural protection in freight and charges, from its great bulk, and perishable nature; while the freight and charges on manufactures imported amount to a mere nothing. His line of action may be right, though we do not clearly perceive it. We are anxious to save the working man in every department, in manufactures *especially*, from the starvation, degradation, and *extinction*, with which our artisans are threatened, in consequence of the free-trade corrections beginning at the *bottom*, instead of the *top* of the social system. The free imports, the deluge of foreign industry, competing with and displacing our own labour, has produced deep and

extensive, though, it is to be hoped, temporary suffering. No doubt these corrections will work upward, and, in no great length of time, reach the upper strata of society. *We wished to save the labouring classes from the infliction of what is, perhaps, a necessary evil*; hence our anxiety to preserve our colonies for the masses, as fields for emigration to a few, with the prospect of an increasing market for those who remained.

Mr. Cobden may have thought it impossible to remodel the framework of society until after he had rendered such changes *inevitable*, by destroying, to a certain extent, or temporarily, the resources of the labouring classes, extinguishing revenue, and making financial and organic reform a moral and physical necessity. The question between us is one of expedients, rather than of ultimate objects. Perhaps we are too much afraid of doing evil that good may come, and Messrs. Peel and Cobden may have attained bolder and wider views. We admit that their measures are calculated to reduce the aristocracy to reason, and to lower the "Corinthian capitals," and their feudal trumpery, with a certainty and a rapidity of which they have not yet dreamed.

We wanted to save the labouring classes in large towns a little longer, from the ordeal through which all the systems in Europe are now passing.

Red Republicanism and Socialism have not been very advantageous to French industry. We were desirous that, come what might, the working man should be provided for by *wages* rather than by poor-rates; but the political economists do not think so; this is the difference between us, and our apology for differing from the economists is briefly this:—

Labour is all the poor man has to give in exchange for his necessaries and his comforts—his allowance of these is diminished just as his labour is cheapened—put his labour quite out of the market, and you reduce him to want, to idleness, to temptations, to crimes.

Can any benevolent mind, can any Christian, can any cautious politician contemplate such degradation and suffering without pain?—without a wish to prevent such a state of matters?

The Colonial question is dovetailed into this question of "native industry;" but the public do not perceive this dovetailing, while the Ministers will not perceive it. Of one thing only do we feel certain, and it is this, *whatever course of conduct is most likely to alienate the colonies, and to cripple Great Britain, that course will the Ministry adopt*. We have indicated the political forces, or reasons by which they are, perhaps unconsciously, set in motion. We shall deplore the dismemberment of the empire, and the revolution consequent on financial disorders. There is only one source, among the Whigs, from which opposition to the Cobden policy may be expected. A Whig Cabinet is eminently profuse of patronage. Not only its promotion, but its holding commission, is "by purchase." Can the Whigs afford to cut off colonial jobs, the younger sons, nephews, *et hoc gènus omne*? We think the Lords, even frightened as they are just now, will say "No." The trade of the empire is nothing to them; but the unwelcome return of poor

relations from the colonies may be resented and obviated. This is the only reason we can think of, for the Peel papers contradicting the Peel voters—writing against the Hawes and Cobden policy of dismemberment, while Peel votes for it. To what extent the Cobden-Peel policy is to cripple the empire, let the Tory papers show, as it is in their line. We have done our duty in drawing attention to its effect on the working-man. We are glad to see Mr. Roebuck again pleading for justice to Canada, that the colonies should be retained, and their management reformed. The changes above alluded to in men and parties render his advocacy of the same individuals who required his aid in 1837 unnecessary; more especially as Messrs. Hincks and Co., as Ministers, have been doing the very things they resisted in 1837. Let us now proceed to show why the

INDEMNITY BILL should not be forced upon the British Capadians. In our former articles we endeavoured to trace the commercial grievances of Canada. We showed that by placing the colonists on the same dead level with foreigners, we had reduced the "British connection" question to one of mere interest on their side. The Whigs still imagine, or affect to imagine, that they can force Lord Elgin and his "*Insurrection Premiums*" Bill upon the Anglo-Saxons of Canada. A few simpletous may think this possible: we know it to be visionary. Mr. Hawes knows this well, and already contemplates "the beginning of the end." Nothing that has recently occurred in Montreal has taken him by surprise. We remember his friend Mr. Wilson stating that he was preparing for the independence of the colonies.

We suspect that all the insults to the British, the oppression of British trade and enterprise in Canada, the proscriptions of officials of British extraction, to make room for appointments of French and Irish, the change of language from English to French in certain proceedings in Assembly, and the enormous expense incurred thereby are not surprising to Mr. Hawes.

The Anti-British tariffs passed in rapid succession, so as to render it quite uncertain at date of shipment what duties would be chargeable on goods sent out. The six months' credit on duties withdrawn at the very time that the Canadian Government suspended cash payments, and began to issue debentures; the prospect of resumption of payment of the £70,000 per annum of interest on loans from this country to Canada—payments which the colony had been indulged in *not making* for four years ending in 1850—the probable repudiation of this debt, in Yankee fashion—the increasing inclination for annexation to the States, or rather necessity for it under the present anti-colonial policy, are all well known in Downing Street, though never mentioned in St. Stephen's. So far from blaming the Colonial Office with entire ignorance of these provocations, and their results, we are willing to give them credit for much forethought and design in the arrangement and culmination of so many difficulties, to take effect all at once, to appear accidental complications, and to take England by surprise. Though we blame the

Colonial Office with ignorance or neglect of what is requisite to make the colonial connection beneficial, we do not blame them with ignorance or want of ingenuity in getting up pretexts for their separation. But we do blame them for taking, or permitting measures, to cut off the colonies without having first obtained the opinion and consent of the British nation. No steward has a right to give away his master's lands or property, no Cabinet has a right on its own responsibility to dismember the empire.

We have submitted reasons in this and in former papers why the commercial community of Canada should not be further oppressed; we have dwelt on these reasons, because now-a-days the commercial connections are the only effective ones between Britain and her colonies. Cut that, all else must follow. Besides these, there are other reasons why Lord Elgin's oppression, or passiveness in the oppression by the dominant faction, should not be followed up by Russell's Ministry. It is peculiarly unseemly to see the men who struggled to obtain the utmost leniency for French offenders, suddenly, and with almost insane fury, denounce the British in Canada merely because they are not of French extraction. This ministerial violence ought to open the eyes of Englishmen as to the passive obedience we are expected to yield during the reign of the Whigs. There are many other reasons for *not forcing* (even if that were possible) the British into a degrading state of servitude to the children of the 65,000 French whom Wolfe conquered.

The circumstances of the country are very different now from those of 1837. There were, as usual in such cases, faults on both sides at that time. The clumsy Government, or rather distributions of place and pay, in imitation of English patronage, or worse, was then in the hands of Tories, United Empire loyalists, and capitalists, who, in Upper Canada, combined as the "family Government" in London now do, to divide the good things among themselves; they had saved the colony in the American war, or they had vested capital in land, but were not entitled to an exclusive monopoly of good things. The Governors being all Episcopalians, their sycophants, called the "Family compact," persuaded them that Episcopacy was the only thing suitable for Upper Canada, or worthy to receive the benefit of lands set apart for the "Protestant religion." A renegade Scotchman hounded on one Governor after another, in this track. The Scots Presbyterians, though not a majority, are numerous in Upper Canada; besides, the Act of Union between Scotland and England stipulated for equal rights and immunities in the plantations to those of the Kirk of Scotland. English military governors connived at unequal divisions of Church lands, so unequal as to amount to virtual exclusions of the poor Scots. And the same policy was adopted with College funds originally intended for Protestants of both, or of all denominations.

These quarrels are still kept open. In the Lower Province, in 1837, the Governor's party divided the offices among themselves and friends, held pluralities, and year after year refused to produce the

details of their civil list; the supplies were stopped; the Governor and his minions persisted against the common sense of the country; a timely yielding up of an abuse might have obviated the rebellion. It is true that at present the Governor acts with, or rather *by orders* of, the majority of the Assembly, but the sense of the country is opposed to the Indemnity Bill. It does not resemble the great questions that have hitherto agitated Canada, and which have had ample time allowed for discussion. The Tariffs, Reciprocity, the College Bill, the Bankrupt law, are all comparatively old questions, though not yet settled; but this Money Bill was brought in suddenly—the Governor's opening speech did not hint at it—it was pushed through with the nervous haste of men conscious of evil-doing—conscious that delay would be defeat. The country, though taken by surprise, was aroused with a celerity, and to a pitch of earnestness that has had no parallel since 1837. Meetings were got up simultaneously all over the upper, and in the most thriving portion of the lower province, to protest against the introduction of the bill. This universal opposition to a new and obnoxious measure could scarcely be on record by the press of this country before the intelligence arrived of its having passed the legislature. For a time the Governor did not dare to sanction it, but on the evening of 25th April he slipped down to the house to sign it, and a new tariff imposing from 11 to 30 per cent. on British goods—these two bills which the people thought would not be authorised until after Lord Elgin had consulted the Home Government. It may be suspected it is a fair topic for investigation whether or not Elgin had instructions from the Colonial Office to pass this bill, even before the Assembly and the colony had passed judgment. This precipitancy of the Governor was unusual, if not illegal. So many petitions had been sent in for a dissolution of the Assembly that no British Ministry, still less their agent or representative in a distant province, could be justified in assuming so much responsibility. The vote is one for money not specially provided for in the supplies; the amount is *indefinite—unknown*; upwards of two thousand persons are claimants, real and fictitious; of these sixteen cases have been looked into, and are "*believed*" to be valid claims. The amount first proposed to be taken was £90,000, out of a provincial revenue of £400,000, but the sum of "*losses*" is variously estimated from £180,000 to £250,000. £200,000 is the average guess.

In the meantime all business in Montreal is at a stand, and 3 per cent. additional has been added to the duties on British goods, *since they were put on board* here. Confidence is destroyed; the quietness that prevailed was that arising from the hope that the Home Government would recall Elgin, and disallow the bill.

The only remedies for these evils are the recall of Elgin, disallowance of the bill, and a return to the colonial policy indicated by numerous petitions from the colonies, as well as by a growing conviction in this country of our absolute need of colonies to maintain our political, social, and commercial position. Mr. Isaac Buchanan has suggested, and Mr. Boulton, M.P.P., has repeated it, that the Island of Montreal and the Eastern townships should form part of Upper Canada, the two provinces to be under different Assemblies as before. That, as a partial reform in the Colonial Office, each large colony should have a separate apartment there, with two private secretaries—one to be in London, and one in the colony, alternately, for six months at a time. And, further, to grant to colonists a limited number of commissions in the Imperial army. Mr. Roebuck's plan of federal union is a plagiarism on Earl Grey's more workable Zollverein, proposed in 1846.

Before we again appear in print, great events may have passed over the colony. The men who, in 1837—8, *saved* that appendage of the crown, are the men who have been alienated by anti-colonial legislation here, and insulted by the threat of extortion, under the authority of the crown—insulted on their own broad acres. We cannot expect these men to turn out night and day, under arms, to prevent friendly annexation with a power which, though the concealed enemy of England, yet offers to the Canadian all the advantages, and even greater, than those lately withdrawn by Britain. We know the men of the Eastern townships. No stupid Governor can *drive* them. The majority are either Englishmen, or Americans from Vermont, recently settled; men who, like Nelson, "*never saw fear*;" who maintained a harassing border war in 1837, in defence of British institutions. We have read Lever, but have heard even him surpassed in descriptive narrative of the troubles, by the accomplished daughter of a gallant colonel, who has again been at his post, with his townsmen, protesting in public respectfully against the unconstitutional attempts to subvert their liberties, and appropriate their properties.

The French, if properly treated, need give no trouble. They are naturally pusillanimous—are in dread of the Americans coming among them—but, having been spoiled by the indulgence of England, they have "*waxed fat, and kicked*."

As you go further west, the difficulty of regaining the confidence of the colonists in British rule and British honour diminishes. The men who repulsed the Prescott and Navy Island pirates have been injured in their trade, in their prospects, by Britain. They look now to the United States for commercial relations, and will realise these, unless England use her influence to get the old low duties re-established in Canada on English goods, and restore the trade of the St. Lawrence.