

colony, on the broad ground that it was imposed at the request of the mother country, as a part of a great scheme which was intended for our benefit, but which has since been so materially altered as to exonerate us from continuing that part of the contract, leaving the duty to be re-imposed in a legitimate way, that is, on its own merits, if the agricultural party were strong enough to carry it against the better judgment of the other classes of the country? Has he attempted to remodel or entirely get rid of the Agricultural Duties Acts, as a monstrous injustice to the consumers of the Province, while they are too contemptible to speak of in point of revenue? No, he has been wanting in all these respects, showing either that he approves of things as they are, or that he is destitute of the ability or courage to attack them; in any case, warranting the conclusion, that he is not the man the Free-Trade party of this city want to represent them in Parliament.

The crisis demands, that some one of more comprehensive mind be found, to represent us within the walls of our local House of Commons; some one who thoroughly understands the question in all its bearings, and is capable of reasoning on it so as to carry conviction to other men's minds; writing or speaking with equal facility, and with reasonable eloquence. Such is the man the Free Trade party require to represent them in Parliament—and he must be found ere we can hold out to the country a well-grounded hope of seeing our cause triumphant. The Anti-Corn-law league returned its Cobden; the Free Trade Association must return its man, its Cobden; whoever that may be; a man without party ties, and who can afford to offend the leaders on either side of the House, provided he thereby is strengthening the cause which we are "pledged to carry by every lawful means which we can make available." One of these means, is agitation; agitation among the constituencies; and we give the Government and the country fair warning, that it shall be begun and persevered in till our purpose is perfectly accomplished.

We are aware that members of Parliament have to consult and represent the prejudices as well as the opinions of their constituents, and that their votes in Parliament must often be given to conciliate prejudice rather than carry out opinion: hence follows the necessity of agitating the Province, in order that the masses, those who return members to Parliament, may be imbued with clear and correct notions on the subject which must ere long engross the best attention of every individual in this Province.

SPEECH OF LORD LYTTELTON,

Delivered in the House of Lords, on the 11th of June, 1846.

LORD LYTTELTON, representing the colonial department in that house, was anxious to say a few words. On the subject generally he was satisfied with the argument that, in a matter of this kind, the colonies must needs follow in the wake of the mother country, and partake of the system adopted by her; indeed, unless by a bounty on colonial produce, which would find but few supporters, the colonies could not be exempt from the operation of this law, if adopted here. But there need be no apprehension entertained by our colonies interested in this question, namely, Canada and some of the Australian colonies; he said "some," because the leading one, New South Wales, imported wheat for its own consumption, and while it was a country of great and rapidly-increasing prosperity, it was one in which the capital and industry of the people were more and more taking the direction of pastoral occupation; it would be found a better market than this country for the produce of its neighbours (Hear! hear!). Then with reference to Van-Diemen's Land and South Australia, the average price of wheat in 1813 and 14 was 26s. a quarter in the one, and 28s. in the other, the freight thence to this country was never much over 20s. a quarter, bringing the price at which they could sell their corn here to 46s. or 48s., besides which they had a natural protection which would be but exceedingly low if stated at 10s. a quarter, in the incomparable quality of their produce; Australian wheat was the finest grown in the world (Hear! hear!). But by far the most prominent feature in these discussions was the Canadian question. Now, first, all that had been alleged on that head by the opponents of this bill had been alleged by every interest that had been affected by alterations in customs duties of late years, in 1842 there was hardly an interest affected by the reductions in the tariff of that year, the representatives of which did not visit the Board of Trade, in many instances with a case apparently irrefragable upon paper, showing the inevitable ruin which would befall them; but a pamphlet was published last year by Mr. Gladstone explaining how all these apprehensions and anticipations had been falsified, and the trade affected remained as it was, or improved. Were the Canadian interests backward in that year to make such representations? (Hear!) Far from it. Those interested in the Canadian timber trade, asserted that the diminution in the differential duty in favour of Canadian timber would bring total destruction upon that trade, and, as was now said, weaken the connection with that colony. The House had heard on a former night from the President of the Board of Trade (the Earl of Dalhousie) what was the present state of that trade. The price of Canadian timber, which for two or three years after that alteration had been lower, giving the consumer the whole benefit of the reduction, had of late, in consequence of the increase in the demand, entirely recovered its former amount. That a similar result would follow this measure as respected Canada he had every confidence. As to the feeling which prevailed in that colony on the subject, he did not wish to deny that he was now arguing the question at a disadvantage in consequence of the receipt of the address from the Canadian Legislature to which so much allusion had been made. But he laboured under another

disadvantage in consequence of the non-receipt of the last mail, which he felt confident would bring intelligence favourable to the policy of the Government. The whole tone and purport of the address was entirely inconsistent with what had taken place in the Canadian Legislature. That address, it was understood, was passed by the Legislative Assembly unexpectedly; and, if any of their Lordships had referred to the reports of the debate, or no debate, for there was really none, they would have seen that what was carried—and it was carried the very night before the mail went out—was simply a motion made by a gentleman named Robinson for a select committee to consider the address; and in the newspapers nothing was stated beyond the appointment of the select committee. It might be said that this proceeding showed the unanimity of the Legislative Assembly upon the subject. But if their Lordships had read the debates on the previous resolution, they would have participated in the surprise with which her Majesty's Government received the news that the address was adopted. The resolutions did not go to any definite approval of the policy of Her Majesty's Government; but the bare idea of any diminution of the spirit of loyalty in Canada was as wild and absurd as could possibly enter into any man's imagination. So far as an opinion had been expressed in Canada on the subject of the Ministerial measure, it had not taken a line of disapproval, but somewhat of alarm, unless the measure were accompanied by certain others. Mr. Merritt, a member of the Canadian Legislature, in a speech characterised by great ability, while so far he disapproved of the measure, concluded, after proposing a great number of measures which he conceived it was in the power of the Canadian Legislature to adopt of itself, by asking, "With these resources at command, why should we not avail ourselves of the accidental and natural advantages we possess, and promptly follow this great movement; which, happily, has been introduced under the sanction of the most eminent statesmen in the greatest nation of the present day?" He might also refer to the proceedings at the great public meeting held in Montreal. Though he admitted the resolution proposed at that meeting, to express entire approval of the Ministerial measure, was defeated by a very small majority, yet he should call the attention of their Lordships to the fact, that the resolution which was carried embodied an expression of opinion in favour of the ultimate establishment of free trade in Canada. The resolution was—"That, whilst this meeting has in view the ultimate establishment of free trade in this colony, it nevertheless, if hereafter found necessary, will use its influence to insure the continuance of such protective duties on our produce going into the markets of Great Britain and Ireland as the Imperial Parliament, in its wisdom and justice, may now or hereafter see fit to enact for the welfare and prosperity of this country. In the meantime, however, this meeting is of opinion that the dangers apprehended from the change of system may only be met by a wise and timely adjustment of depending interests to suit the altered circumstances of her relations with the mother country." Much stress had been laid upon the first despatch of the Governor-General of Canada on this subject. That despatch, it was obvious, was not intended to convey his own views, but to state the representations made to him in his official capacity. The Governor-General, in common with the Legislature of Canada, desiderated other measures to accompany the Corn Bill. So far with regard to the feeling which prevailed in Canada on the subject. He should endeavour to show from the facts of the case that the people of Canada need not be under any apprehensions as to the result of the Ministerial measure. Mr. Cayley, the Inspector-General, that was the Finance Minister of Canada, entered into the question how far Canada might be able to bear a share in the general trade of the world with England as regards corn, excluding any reference to the special competition with the United States. He stated the charges on grain imported from Quebec, and deduced from his calculations that it might be landed in Liverpool at or about 40s. One or two items in Mr. Cayley's calculations were too low; but he (Lord Lyttleton) had received a calculation from a Canadian merchant, the greatest indeed in this country (Mr. Gillespie), who stated that Canadian corn could be landed in this country at or about 46s. But the chief apprehensions which were entertained as to the effect of the Ministerial measure related to the presumed competition with the United States. He was at a loss to understand on what ground it was that it had been so strongly asserted that it was out of the question for the Canadians to compete with the Americans with respect to the corn trade in the English market. Why could not the people of Upper Canada compete with the Americans of the western states? Their soil was about the same, the wages of labour were about the same, and the quality of the best Canadian wheat was equal to the best grain in England. He believed that the difference of freight between New-York and England, as contracted with the freight between Quebec and England, was considerably in favour of the Americans, but that advantage was counterbalanced by other considerations; and could, it might be safely said, be overcome by the enterprise and energy of the Canadians. It had been stated in 1842, before the improvements in Canada had arrived at the maturity which they had now reached, that with respect to the export of wheat from the corn-growing districts of Canada, and the western states of America, the Canadians ought to be on an equality with the Americans. The report of a special committee of the Legislative Assembly of Canada on the subject of a free trade with Great Britain in the agricultural productions of British North America, and of a protection to those productions from the competition of foreigners in the colonial home markets, alluded to "the relative and nearly-balanced advantages possessed by the rival communications with the Atlantic, the St. Lawrence, and the Hudson Rivers." It is also stated, "After the enlargement of the Erie Canal shall have been completed, which is our most formidable rival, notwithstanding the reduction heretofore mentioned by the St. Lawrence, the cost of transportation through the two channels will be nearly equal." He had seen a calculation in figures, with which he would not now trouble their Lordships, in reference to the two routes,—one from Buffalo to New-York by the Erie Canal and Hudson river, and the other from the entrance of Welland canal on Lake Erie to Montreal—in reference to transhipment, &c; and in every one respect, except the length of canal, the advantage was in favour of the Canadians. He would read to