

my warehouse—whereas by smuggling, that is, defeating an odious law, I receive my teas in ten days or a fortnight after they are purchased, and have therefore five months and upwards to convert them into money and provide for my payment in New York!"

The force of these observations is obvious, and, in our opinion, they show conclusively that prohibitions defeat their own end,—that in fact, while they corrupt society to the core, they, at the same time, cripple commerce, and defraud the state!

The importations during this period of partial prohibition, and comparatively speaking high duties, were as follows:—

1839,	-	-	lbs.	971,797
1840,	-	-	"	736,556
1841,	-	-	"	1,057,455
				2,765,808

Average per year, - " 921,936

In the next period, that is from 1843 to 1845 inclusive, the duties were materially reduced by the act that came into force in 1842, and at the same time the prohibition was removed, and it became lawful to import teas across the frontier, and by inland navigation as well as by sea.

The duty was made 3d. stg. per pound Provincial, and 1d. stg. per pound Imperial or differential, that is to say, on Teas imported from the United Kingdom, or any British Possession, or from China direct, the duty levied was 3d. stg. per pound, and from *all other places* the duty was 2d. stg. per pound.

Under the tariff so modified and liberalized, the importations were as follows:—

1843,	-	-	lbs.	1,091,913
1844,	-	-	"	1,988,745
1845,	-	-	"	2,144,624
				5,535,312

Average per year, - " 1,845,104

Comparing the average of the two periods together, they stand thus:—

1839 to 1841, (duty high, and importation partially prohibited),	average per year,	-	lbs.	921,936
1843 to 1845, (duty reduced, and prohibition repealed),	average per year,	-	lbs.	1,845,104

Increase in latter period, per year, - " 923,168

Our readers will not fail to observe how striking is the increase of duty-paid teas under the comparatively free system of importation. Can a better example of the evils of a restrictive or prohibitive system be required? By allowing teas to be imported across the frontier,—in other words, by allowing merchants to go to the best and cheapest market,—behold, the legal importations are almost immediately doubled, and the revenue of course improved to the same extent! We have said the *legal* importation, because it must be manifest to every one that the quantity actually introduced into the country could not have been so suddenly doubled. It is not than probable that the quantity actually introduced in the prohibitory period, was nearly as great as it was during the three succeeding years; but, mark this difference: during the first or prohibitory period, a full half of the tea-traffic was manifestly in the hands of the smuggler, while, under the relaxed or modified state of the law, the importations were made by fair traders, and duly entered at the Custom-house. Can the Government want a stronger illustration of the bad effects of a prohibitory or restrictive tariff, or a better example to induce them at once to adopt a free-trade policy!

We intended to have compared the importations of Tobacco, Coffee, Molasses, and Salt, also in this article, but we find we must postpone doing so to a future number.

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

No. 8.

Should we, then, or should we not, look to Provincial legislation in Post-Office matters, as a necessary or desirable means to the effecting of the required reforms of the Department? This is our second question.

The Home Government practically answered it for us in the affirmative, in 1834; when, as we have seen, they authorized the several British North American Legislatures to repeal the Imperial Act of the 5th of Geo. III., under which the Colonial Post-Offices were organized, on condition of their all passing a certain form of Provincial enactment in its stead. The Houses of Assembly of that day, of Lower and Upper Canada, so far adopted that answer as to entertain favourably the project of legislating for the Post Office; though, naturally enough, they wholly demurred to the passing of the particular Bill sent out to them, and

were disposed (in case of their legislating at all) to pass only such form of Act for a Local Post Office, as should perfectly suit their own local views. The Assemblies of the Lower Provinces have at different times manifested a similar disposition.

The Post-Office Commission, on the other hand, met the question by a decided negative. The Home Government has never since renewed its offer of 1834, and must of course be understood to have withdrawn it altogether. And there has been no late demand for its renewal, or for the making of any other offer at all like it, on the part of any of the Provinces.

To place our own views upon this point in a clear light, we may as well divide the question, and first ask whether or not it is necessary, in order to the proper organisation of a Provincial Post Office, that it should be constituted by Provincial Legislation.

It must not be forgotten that since 1834 great changes have been wrought in the Imperial Post-Office Laws. The very imperfect Act of the 5th of Geo. III., which it was then proposed to repeal, has given place, along with all the rest of the Post-Office laws of that date, to new and carefully drawn up Acts of Parliament, to the Acts under authority of which (among other changes) the penny post revolution, as we may call it, was brought about. A leading feature of these Acts is the care with which they have made provision for the carrying out of future progressive reform in the Department, without the necessity of constant recourse to further legislation. The old laws, for example, enacted certain rates of postage; the present vest the power of fixing all such rates in the Lords of the Treasury. We question, indeed, whether there is a single change that can be pointed out as desirable in the Post-Office arrangements of any part of the empire, which the Imperial Government has not, as the law now stands, the power to bring about, without recourse had to Imperial, and much less to Provincial, legislation.

If, indeed, these Imperial Post-Office laws were objectionable or defective, the case would be quite otherwise. But, we repeat, there really is not one of the defects of our Provincial Post-Office Departments, that is fairly attributable to any fault in their provisions, or which, under those provisions as they stand, cannot easily be remedied by Executive authority.

Or again, if there were no way of acting upon that Executive authority, but by means of Provincial legislation, we might need to resort to it. But the fact is, as every body knows, that legislation is far enough from being in the present day the only means by which Parliamentary control is exercised. Suppose the detail of the Post-Office administration of each Province to be entrusted to the superintendence of its local Government, as we have shown it must be; each such local Government would be under the necessity of conducting it to the satisfaction of the Parliament and people of its own Province. The Imperial Government can delegate to the Provincial all the power really requisite to this end. The principle once conceded, will the Imperial Government fairly act it out, and meet the reasonable wishes of the Colonies, as from time to time they may be expressed through their local Governments? We have not a doubt it will.

To pass, then, to the second branch of the question. Is it desirable that the Provincial Post Office Department should be the creature of Provincial legislation?

We take it for granted that no one will fancy the project of 1834, of inducing a whole group of Colonies to concur in passing one and the same law, to be a feasible one. Every one, at a glance, must see that no two Provincial Legislatures, setting to work upon so long and complex an affair as a General Post Office Bill, can ever be brought to pass it all, clause by clause, each precisely as the other should. Nor is it less clear that such legislation, supposing it ever so possible, must be superlatively bad in its results. All having agreed to enact the law, all must wait till they shall have agreed again, before ever they can be suffered to amend any one clause of it; nay, all had need wait again and agree again at every step in their administration of it, or the diversity of their practices must soon be almost as great as though their laws had been different. The machine would be a practical discovery of the opposite of perpetual motion: its dead-lock would be perfect and everlasting.

Provincial Post Offices constituted under Provincial laws, can never all be alike in the essentials of their constitution. Some Legislatures will vest more, some less, power in their Executive. Some will try to raise a revenue from their Post Office, and others to make it pay its way; while others, again, will cheerfully assist it by grants from the general revenue. According as one or another of these views prevails, one or another scale of rates must follow—here higher, there lower, there lower still. A consequence will be, that letters and papers passing from one Province to another, must bear more than one rate, and may have to bear several. A letter from Montreal to Halifax would be first charged in Canada—say, 6d.; then in New Brunswick—perhaps 1d.; then in Nova Scotia—may be 3d. more. For Newfoundland, it would be charged a fourth rate still—perhaps different in amount from any of the rest. Unless each Province collected postage for every other, and accounted for such collections, a letter could not be sent at all from one Province across the