

from Canada. And in the succeeding year this was done. But important changes were looming upon the horizon. In 1841 the free-trade agitation in England began to take effect, and the first Canadian interest to suffer was the one most vital to the prosperity of the moment. Up to this time the duty imposed upon Baltic timber was fifty-five shillings per load, whilst Canadian was admitted at the nominal figure of ten shillings. But in this year the rates were lowered to thirty shillings and one shilling respectively. The result was a steady growth of unrest in the country and a natural diminution of faith in permanence of English tariff legislation. Whilst, however, the trade was not affected by the mere relaxation of the duties, because the preference still existed, it was unquestionably injured by the fear, and as it proved a reasonable one, that the end of such changes was not yet.

In studying the condition of the Canadian Provinces—prior to 1841 there was no union of Upper and Lower Canada—it is evident that this preferential trade did much for the colonists, but that its full benefit was destroyed and the measure of its usefulness restricted, first by a complete ignorance both in what we now call our Eastern Provinces, in Great Britain, and in foreign countries, as to the vast resources and extent of British North America; and, second, to the vexatious regulations which tied up our external trade in the hands of British middlemen and shipping interests. Our trade with the United States over a term of years shows to what an extent our foreign commerce was handicapped, not of course by the preference given Canadians in the British market, but by the Navigation Laws and other commercial regulations of that age of colonial leading strings. In a Memorandum prepared by Sir Edward Thornton, British Minister at Washington, assisted by Hon. George Brown, and dated 27 April, 1874, may be found the not easily obtainable figures of trade during the period referred to with the United States. The twelve years, 1821 to 1832 inclusive, show that the total export from the United States to the British North American Provinces (including Newfoundland) was \$31,401,326 whilst the imports were only \$7,684,559. In the thirteen years following, 1833-45, there was an increase to something like one year's total at the present time. Exports from the Republic into the Provinces were \$58,-

722,869, and imports from the Provinces into the United States were \$23,356,275.

During this whole fifty years there cannot be said to have prevailed a degree of prosperity which would be satisfactory to people of the present day. From the Constitutional Act of 1791 to 1841, the Provinces were indebted to for any little progress which they made to their preference in the British market, to the consequent growth of the lumber trade, and to the business operations of the Hudson's Bay Company. Tariffs were in a most complex condition. Each Province had duties against the other, and over all was the controlling power of the Home Government largely legislating in ignorance of the fiscal requirements of the then comparatively insignificant Colonies. Lord Durham, in opening his celebrated Report upon the condition of the Provinces in 1839, drew a picture which was apparently only too true of the difference between the countries whose borders, then as now, run together for thousands of miles.

“By describing one side of the frontier “and reversing the picture the other “would be described. On the American “side all is activity and bustle. The “forest has been widely cleared; every “year numerous settlements are formed, “and thousands of farms are created out “of the waste; the country is intersected “with common roads, etc. . . . On “the British side of the line, with the exception of a few favored spots, where “some approach to American prosperity “is apparent, all seems waste and desolate. . . . There is, on the side of “both the Canadas and also of New “Brunswick and Nova Scotia, a widely “scattered population, poor and apparently unenterprising, though hardy and “industrious, separated from each other “by tracts of intervening forests, without “towns or markets, almost without “roads, living in mean houses, and “drawing little more than a rude subsistence from ill-cultivated land.”

This lack of progressiveness where there was so much genuine patriotism and imperishable self-sacrifice; where lived those pioneers who were largely the sons of the United Empire Loyalists of earlier days, or in Quebec had proved themselves worthy of a great page in Canadian history as the French voyageurs and trappers who made that Province a fitting home for the peaceful agriculture and commerce of to-day, was due largely