

alteration in the free trade policy of the United Kingdom. It is inconceivable to us how any student of the history of England during the last forty years can believe in the possibility of Parliament imposing a duty on the food of the people. We must hope that without such a stimulus we shall get a fair share of the immigration from the United Kingdom.

The opposition journals have not failed to notice Sir Alexander Galt's speech, but they do not seem to view it in the same light. The *Globe* is of opinion that it was "very well calculated to affect English opinion in precisely the manner that we would wish," which is certainly a high compliment. The *Globe* infers that one object of the speech was to stimulate the Imperial Government to assist people to emigrate who had not the means to do so, but he treats the speech as designed to encourage emigration. The *Montreal Herald* has criticised the speech with some severity, but we venture to think that our contemporary was under a misapprehension as to its object. We have already stated our own opinion of the meaning of the expression "closer union." We find nothing in the speech to sustain the *Herald's* assumption that Sir Alexander Galt intended to convey the impression that emigrants to the United States were taken better care of after arrival than those to Canada, and that this was the reason of the larger emigration to that country. We admit with the *Herald* that such a reason would be childish. Sir Alexander Galt's real object is one that would be beneficial to Canada, and although the suggestion is couched in guarded terms, we can have no doubt of the meaning of the expression "closer union." Sir Alexander Galt will soon be convinced that no such union is feasible.

#### COMMERCIAL UNION.

Mr. Joseph Perrault does not seem to have been so fortunate in attracting a crowd at Chaboulliez Square as he was at the East end, his meeting having been but thinly attended. He told the old story of the disastrous condition of the country, but he seems totally incapable of comprehending the cause. He dwelt upon an enormous debt which every one acknowledges to be very considerable, but he surely cannot imagine that we could have constructed our canals and railways without getting into debt, and he cannot be unaware that if the question were put to-morrow to the people, whether they would prefer being freed from debt and deprived of their public works, they

would unhesitatingly answer in the negative. Mr. Perrault has one idea, which is, that our bankruptcies and debt are all owing to our exclusion from foreign markets. One would imagine from his speeches that he was wholly unaware of the fact that, owing to causes which have been repeatedly explained, there was a few years ago an extraordinary and abnormal inflation of prices in all parts of the civilized globe, during which period there was unexampled prosperity, property of all kinds having risen in value. When the time of reaction arrived, as it invariably does after periods of inflation, the holders of goods and the purchasers of property of all kinds, including real estate and stocks, found their assets so reduced in value that they were wholly unable to meet their liabilities. There is no occasion to seek for the cause of our depression, which is obvious to all who study the subject with a desire to learn the truth. We are glad to notice that Mr. Perrault deemed it expedient to inform his audience that his scheme "did not imply annexation," although we must be permitted to doubt whether such is his own belief. His writings would certainly lead us to think that if there is an annexationist in Canada he is one. We have the satisfaction of feeling assured that it is not in his power to effect much mischief.

#### THE BYSTANDER.

The reputed editor of the *Bystander* has on many occasions complained bitterly of being held personally responsible for articles of which, it was well known, that he was the author. We have therefore special reason to complain that he has seen fit to refer by name to a gentleman who, although a frequent contributor to our columns, has no responsibility whatever for the articles which appear in this journal. While we deprecate the introduction of personality into controversial discussions, we are quite prepared to defend ourselves from the attacks made on us in the May and June numbers of the *Bystander*, which we shall copy for the information of our readers. In the May number of that periodical it is said:—"The *JOURNAL OF COMMERCE* in an article 'on the Financial position' tells us that 'the country is annually piling up a gigantic debt; that it is drifting into bankruptcy; that the day of reckoning is assuredly near, and these, if the world is not mistaken, are the words of a man who is personally responsible for the situation.'" In the June number we find the following passages:—"Sir Francis Hincks, 'a strong Imperialist and an advocate of

"the Pacific Railway, proclaims that the 'country is 'drifting into bankruptcy,' 'and that a terrible reckoning day is at hand.' Again: 'We are drifting into bankruptcy, the reckoning day is near, and the main cause of this is rash expenditure on public works. So said the *Montreal Journal of Commerce*, yet now it 'applauds the decision of the House of Commons to go on with the railway in 'British Columbia,' &c.

The quotations which we have made from the *Bystander* have reference to an article which was published in this journal on the 26th March last, headed "Our Financial Position," the object of which was to discourage to the extent of our influence "new enterprises," and more especially "new railroad enterprises," our assigned reason being that "it seems impossible for the Government to delay the construction of the great work to the construction of which the faith of Parliament was pledged during the period of inflation, to which we have already referred, and in the belief that it would be undertaken by a company for a subsidy in land and money that would not have pressed on the resources of the Dominion."

We are not unaware that the *Bystander* has of late advocated the repudiation of the agreement with British Columbia, but in June, 1877, the writer of "Current Events" in the *Canadian Monthly* thus expressed himself:—"It may be, as Sir Alexander Galt argues, that the attempt 'to carry out the bargain may be something like national suicide, but the compact was made by our Government with its eyes open and a proximate knowledge of the outlay, and there is no decent pretext for withdrawing from it.'" Sir Alexander Galt has recently declared in his speech at the Canada Club that the Pacific Railway is "a work of great magnitude, introduced manfully, and which we intend to carry through successfully." We fear that his critic in June, 1877, has found some pretext satisfactory to himself for repudiating an agreement which three years ago he thought binding.

Our reason for using the expression "drifting to national bankruptcy" was that the policy of the Government and of Parliament was "to discourage imports to the utmost of our power," and that some zealous supporters of the Government were advocating a resort to fiat money to be used for the construction of public works. We are not inclined to discuss the Pacific Railway with the *Bystander*, because it is impossible that an advocate for the annexation of Canada to the United States can enter