

We conceive that when the opinions of eminent men, who have occupied the highest stations in the British Empire, have been unequivocally declared on subjects of vast importance, such opinions are entitled to the greatest consideration and respect, and we have ever thought it a duty to regard them in that light. Self-interest and party-politics may have great influence, but it would be unjust and ungenerous for us to suppose that men who are honoured by appointments in the Government of the most glorious empire that ever existed, should so forget their country, their honour, and duty, as to allow themselves to be altogether swayed by self-interested and party views and act contrary to their convictions and better judgment, in order to forward these views. We are induced to make these remarks at this particular period, when so much is said against the trifling protection that is provided for the encouragement of Canadian agriculture, and when it is probable that efforts will be made luring the approaching Session of our Legislature to abrogate this law. Before we proceed further, we would remind our readers that we advocate agricultural protection from foreign competition, as a Province of the British Empire, entitled to all the benefits and privileges which that station should afford us, and particularly that our agriculture should have the same protection as that of our fellow-subjects in the British Isles. We expect this as a reasonable right, and one that will not be injurious to our brother-farmers in England, Ireland, and Scotland. We shall quote the opinions delivered by eminent individuals, of the liberal parties, on the subject of agricultural protection.

Mr. Canning said:

"I am for the protection of agriculture; it must be protected as the primary interest of the State."

Mr. Huskisson, a most liberal man, observed, in reference to free trade:

"There are limits beyond which it would not be prudent to go. If the principle of free trade were carried to its fullest extent, he did not conceive that any advantage would result from it that would compensate for the evil of making us dependent on a foreign nation for the supplies of the necessaries of life."

Again, the same eminent individual, in a letter to his constituents, said:

"In the first eighteen years of war, we were forced to pay sixty millions of money (to nations, every one of whom has, in the course of it, been our enemy,) for a scanty supply of foreign corn; and when, for this purpose, we had parted with all our gold, and even our silver currency, combined Europe shut its ports against us; and America, co-operating, first laid on an embargo, and then went to war."

Lord Melbourne said:

"We shall never get into the markets of the continent, whether we repeal our corn-laws or not. Governments there will never relax their prohibitory enactments in our favour. The general opinions of the world are against free trade, and particularly so on the continent."

We could go on and quote opinions of the same tendency, delivered on this subject by the most eminent men in the British Isles; but we think it unnecessary to do so, as they must be well known to most of our readers.

The President of the United States, not long since, declared:

"That nothing could be so foolish, nothing so injurious could visit the interests of a country, as to cease to give encouragement to the interests of agriculture, and not to grow its own corn for the consumption of its own people: this is a principle which has been advanced by all countries, whether in ancient or modern times, and those countries have prospered in the greatest degree which have given full protection to agriculture."

Mr. Webster, one of the most eminent men of his his country—the United States—has, on several occasions, expressed his opinion in favour of protection, and encouragement to agriculture.

The author of "The Wealth of Nations"—Adam Smith—though very much opposed to exclusive privileges or monopolies, says:

"There are some cases in which it will be generally advantageous to lay some burden upon foreign, for the encouragement of domestic industry."

For our own part, we are not aware of any possible case that would be more generally advantageous for the population of Canada than to protect and encourage her domestic industry—her agriculture—that employs the great bulk of her people, and which is their exclusive means of support. Every true lover of his country will be in favour of encouraging the augmentation of the amount and value of the productions of his own country by every fair means, knowing that the greater the amount and value of these productions, the more certain will be the means of, and happiness to, his fellow-countrymen generally. Some persons may suppose that it is possible for those who possess capital to become rich in a country that is far from being in a prosperous condition generally; and we believe this supposition to be partly correct.

Smith, in his Wealth of Nations, in speaking of that class of society who live by profit, says:

"It is the stock that is employed for the sake of profit, which puts into motion the greater part of the useful labour of every society. The plans and projects of the employers of stock regulate and direct all the most important operations of labour, and profit is the end proposed by all those plans and projects. But the rate of profit does not, like rent and wages, rise with