

GOLD AN UNRELIABLE STANDARD.

THE Government of New Brunswick, some two years back, introduced and carried through the Legislature a measure for empowering the issue of Treasury notes to the extent of four hundred thousand dollars. These notes are received by the Government for taxes, duties, and the like. Hon. R. D. Wilmot explained the nature and operation of the proposed measure, and observed that the issue of Treasury notes was no new idea; that two bills of the same character had been passed on former occasions by the Lower Chamber, which were subsequently rejected by the Legislative Council, at the instigation and through the influence of the banking interest. The Secretary contended that it was perfectly justifiable to issue Exchequer notes to the amount of the revenue; and that inasmuch as the revenue was \$700,000, all of which, under the law, was payable in gold, the notes now proposed to be issued were of equivalent value to the metal coin, as far as the amount on their face. This would necessarily be the case when they were paid in as *duty or taxes*. No valid objection appears to have been offered to the principle; most of the speakers, in the discussion upon the bill, admitted that a considerable saving would accrue to the Province, but the more cautious feared the possibility of abuse of the privilege of issue. But surely this is a most ungrounded apprehension, when Parliament has the power to restrict the amount.

It is not so often because a thing is novel in itself that we object to its adoption, as to the habits and predilections for old usages and customs. We have learned to believe in gold, intrinsically the most worthless of metals; and, without the aid of an arbitrary compact and legislative enactment would be one of the cheapest and least prized. But men put their trust in it because they have been so taught. And what is this trust but confidence in the stability of the general agreement to accept it as the universal representative of value? Its modern history, as recently exemplified in the United States, has proved what an amount of fallacy we have been fostering in our theories concerning money, capital and currency. "Why," said the *New York World*, a short time since, "do not prices follow gold? Our currency is probably as redundant now as it has been at any time during the war, and the prices of most articles of immediate con-