

as in Connecticut. But through being longer established, and having possession of old trade connections, the American maker has a large growth of artificially created circumstances in his favour. Here Protection is wanted, not to interfere with *natural* laws, but to offset those circumstances of artificial growth, which prevent natural laws from having full play. It may be said, suppose, then, that we had Annexation or a Zollverein, so that the Canadian maker could sell as freely on the other side as the American maker on this, would not that be giving full play to natural laws, and fair play to both sides? I answer that it would not, as things are now, simply because the Americans are first in the field, and have, during years past, built up for themselves many artificial defences, over and above that of protection by customs duties. Some day after this, probably, we shall be as well entrenched as they; I do not mean in the defence of customs duties, but in other ways, wherein now we are deficient. But, even had we reached this point, I should still oppose the throwing open of the frontier, on the single ground that it would be the destruction of our Canadian nationality, and that commercial union would inevitably bring us to political annexation.

The manufacturer may be protected, but the labourer cannot, says Mr. Blake. Customs duties may keep out foreign goods, but the foreign labourer is still free to come in if he chooses. Granted that through Protection two dollars a day be paid for work that before was paid with one dollar only. The labourers of other countries will flock in, and our own working people will find themselves no better off than before: such is the argument. Very plausibly put; but it won't hold water. That is not the way the thing works in practice. The Free Trade theory is that both masters and men can and will, almost at any time, easily and off-hand, change either their trades or their domiciles, or both, to meet changes of circumstances. Free Traders seem to have in their minds the analogy of water finding its own level, or something of that sort. Two reservoirs being properly connected by pipes, if you pump water out of one the water will decrease in the other; it will, except in case of a sudden and overwhelming rush, keep at the same level in both. Carry out the analogy. If through foreign competition any particular trade be destroyed, let the capitalists engaged in it simply transfer their means to other trades, and let the workmen do the same with their labour. Let profits and wages run, like water through pipes, until, like water, they find their level. I answer that this pretty theory does not square with the facts. For a hundred years and more there has been a remarkable difference between the northern and southern counties of England in the wages paid for the same work, wages being much higher in the former than in the latter. Explain how it is that in such proximity the lapse of generations has not sufficed to make such a displacement of labour (that is what the Free Traders call it) as would equalize conditions and bring wages to the same level for both north and south. It is not demanded that such a change should be brought about in five years, but why does it not come with fifty years, or with a hundred? Tell the English ironmasters, now struggling under unexampled difficulties, how simple a thing it would be just to withdraw their capital and go into other kinds of business. Inform those thousands of English cotton operatives now out of work how easy it would be to turn to some other calling, or to take themselves elsewhere. Compulsory displacements of labour—and of capital, too—do occur sometimes, but ere they are effected a nation is ruined. We cannot run men and their belongings off and on, like water in reservoirs, to find new levels. Both capitalists and workmen have their local human interests, and their attachments to particular occupations. As for American labourers rushing into Canada, that is an entirely visionary apprehension. Considering how near to each other the two countries are, very few Americans come here seeking common, ordinary employments. No such thing as a rush of them into Canada for employment has ever happened; if it did, let somebody say when and where. It will not happen either, in this generation, at all events. No degree of Protection possible for Canada will raise wages here above the American level; of that let all concerned rest assured. Whatever difference there is will be in favour of our neighbours; this is what has been, so far, and it is what will continue to be.

When the English farmers said that the free importation of corn would ruin them, Mr. Cobden told them to raise less corn and more beef and mutton. They did so, and the change was a success for them, until recently. Mr. Blake cites this instance, and adds, as a feature of our time, that the removal of the labourers is becoming easy, as well as the change of occupation for capital. When there was a strike of workmen in Glasgow, workmen from America went there and took their places. That actually happened a year or two ago, at more places than Glasgow, but we do not hear of this going on any more. It was an experiment of a day, merely, and was soon "played out." Mr. Blake ought to tell us what advice Mr. Cobden would probably give to the English farmers now were he still present when foreign competition touches everything on the farm, from geese and turkeys up to the best Durham steers. To change from corn-raising to stock-raising, was not, after all, so very difficult a thing for English farmers to do. But it would take wiser men than Mr. Cobden even, to tell them what to do now, when the stock market, as well as the corn market is assailed from abroad. What now becomes of the easy-going but rather unsatisfactory counsel that all people have to do, if Free Trade destroys their business, is simply to change to some other business?

Mr. Blake further argues that the various forces and products of modern civilization—the locomotive, the steamship, the telegraph, the spread of knowledge, and the spirit of the age generally—are in favour of Free Trade, and working in that direction. This is most important, if true, for it means in effect that Protection is doomed, and that the future of the world belongs to Free Trade. Now I venture to maintain, and I hope to be able to prove, that exactly the contrary is the truth, and that the strongest influences of our civilization are working, not in favour of Free Trade, but of Protection. This, however, is too important a subject to be dismissed with a paragraph, and must be left to a future occasion. It is in no partizan spirit that I take up this utterance of Mr. Blake's. Others may see in it a political manifesto; I choose to see in it the human interest which attaches to the spectacle of an able man struggling in the toils of a false philosophy. The political aspects of the trade question—the relation to it of parties and their leaders in Canada—has been voluminously discussed, and the discussion is not yet ended. I do not say that these political aspects should not be discussed; needless to say that, indeed, for it is just these aspects which are sure to be more eagerly discussed than any other. But let it be mine to make the effort, in which perhaps I may to some extent succeed to exhibit such aspects of the question as may best be considered apart from either Government or Opposition partizanship in the Dominion.

In this respect my own wish agrees with a prime requirement, dictated by the independent attitude of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR towards both political parties, with regard to articles appearing in its columns. *Argus.*

## CANADA'S REPENTANCE.

BY A CANADIAN.

Canada has been growling and grumbling steadily for the last three years; and not without sufficient cause. Now, experience is beginning to bear fruit, for at last we are learning to look within ourselves for the origin of our evils. At first it was everybody and anybody, except ourselves, on whom the blame was laid. Trade was bad in the neighbouring nation, and in fact everywhere, and this was supposed to have a reflex influence on our affairs. The United States were making a "slaughter-market" of us, wickedly and feloniously attempting to sell us goods *too cheap*, while the unprincipled Mackenzie-Cartwright Reform Government would only stand still and see us ruined. They would not even build that glorious Pacific Railway to bring us the enormous trade of the Hudson's Bay Company's outposts and the overwhelming demands of that universe-loving Amor de Cosmos and his 9,168 fellow-countrymen.

Then, too, not only the U. S. but even Great Britain, our mother-land, *would* make a spoiled child of us and pour in her goods and money at cheap rates—would insist on feeding and clothing us, and refuse to let us work for ourselves. It was really too bad. If they could only be forced to let us alone, we would soon be all right. Everything was against us. We alone were right, wise, and willing to be self-helpful.

We stood it all—till we could stand it no longer, and then the people rose as one and turned out their blind leaders who could not see as the people saw. We had our way. We got a leader who could see things just as *every* class of men saw them and promise *anything* that heart could desire. We have him, and his sweetly assorted cabinet, now. Nay more, he has kept *one* of his promises, and the National Policy in all its grandeur and beauty is upon us; shingle factories are springing up in deserted villages, and are heralded in the pages of our Conservative journals by *flowery* descriptions of coming progress in the shape of prospective grist mills.

And people are getting just a little sick of it. It is true that Sir John A. Macdonald has shown great intelligence, not only in the statesman-like manner in which he has at length executed Lieut.-Gov. Letellier, but by conquering and driving from our borders the potato-beetle, the Hessian fly, and rust in the wheat, which Mackenzie and Cartwright so pertinaciously persisted in distributing among us. The beneficial effects of an N. P. are found most demonstrably in a bountiful harvest; but, with an Atheism so practical that even Sir John A. is left out in the cold, men *will* insist on ascribing this to the laws of Nature, which some call the laws of God.

If it be not found in the harvest, where else shall we look for the benefits of the N. P.? Banks, whose stocks were to rise to 212° Fahrenheit, investors positively *boil* with impatience to get out of. American coal dealers still insist on ruining Nova Scotia and Cape Breton coal mining companies by sending us coal cheaper than ever, even with the duty added, and not one solitary mine in Canada has become *drunken* and elate with the *stimulus* of the N. P. Wholesale traders, and retail, smash with the same grace and elegance as of yore, and pay constantly attenuating dividends; while, saddest of all, direct taxation has *not* lessened. The Pacific Railway seems as much a fevered dream as ever; for the older portion of the "Cosmos" remains unsmitten by any lively "Amor" towards the British Columbian, or an iron-bound union with him if it is to cost *them* money. Capital has not rushed wildly into our land, rabid to invest itself in factory smoke-stacks and the graceful vine-clad