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THE decision of the British Board of Agriculture that henceforth Canadian cattle must be placed in the same category with those from the United States and slaughtered on arrival at a British port, is no doubt a serious present disappointment and loss to those who have been engaged in the business of raising and shipping live stock for the British market. It is useless to rail at the British Government or its Board of Agriculture on account of its action in the matter. It is very likely that a good deal of the pressure brought to bear upon them was the outcome of a desire to keep the trade for the home farmers, yet in view of the magnitude of the interests at stake we can well understand the existence of much real anxiety and apprehension. Mr. Gardner, the President of the Board, seems to have acted with as much deliberation as was, perhaps, permissible under the circumstances. But admitting that Sir John Swinburne's claim on behalf of the deputation of which he was a member, that it was not protection from trade, but protection from disease that was asked, may not have been true throughout, it hardly lies with a colony which enforces a rigid policy of protection against British products to protest, though British consumers of beef might do so very forcibly were they convinced of the fact. We see no reason to doubt that, in case of the Dominion authorities being able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that there is no pleuro-pneumonia in Canada, and that the measures adopted here to prevent its introduction from the United States are satisfactory, the withdrawal of the order may soon be obtained. But that would perhaps be a doubtful benefit. The mischief will in the meantime have been done and the trade destroyed for this season, and, seeing that the same prohibition might be renewed at any moment, the basis of confidence would be lacking, and it is doubtful whether the trade could be revived to any considerable extent in the future. The question which then remains, What is to be done? admits, so far as we can see, of but one answer. The cattle must be fed for the market at home and shipped as beef, not as the raw material from which beef may be made. Happily it is pretty clearly

demonstrated that by thus making a virtue of necessity the misfortune may be turned into a blessing in disguise. Protectionists and free-traders are alike agreed that the more labour expended upon Canadian products before they are exported the better for the country. The necessity of shipping our cattle in their lean condition to the Mother Country has not been forced upon us by any hostile tariff on her part. On the contrary, the present prohibition differs entirely in its effect from the tariff policy of the United States and other protectionist nations, in that it tends to stimulate the export of the manufactured rather than the raw article. Hence, if and in so far as the farmers of Great Britain may have urged the scheduling of Canadian cattle as a measure of protection they are standing in their own light, as the event will be pretty sure to prove. If there be any force in the objection that is urged by some to the effect that Canadian farmers cannot compete with American in the production of fat cattle by reason of their inability to raise corn so cheaply, the obvious reply is: Let them compel the Government to admit free the corn and other raw material necessary to encourage this species of manufacture. All who intelligently consider the matter must agree that no more short-sighted mistake can be made by the Canadian farmer than that of selling the hay, coarse grains and vegetables from his farm, instead of converting them into finished products, and thereby not only reaping a double profit but saving his farm from impoverishment.

NO one who has followed the course of procedure and evidence in the trial of Messrs. Mercier and Pacaud can have been surprised at the result. Their acquittal, or at least that of Mr. Mercier, has been almost a foregone conclusion for some time past. Various influences co-operated to this end. In the first place the double form of the indictment bore a very peculiar aspect. To the non-legal mind the two counts seem well-nigh contradictory. They are at least incompatible. If the accused conspired to defraud the Province, they could not have conspired to defraud the bank of the self-same sum of money. Of course nothing is more usual than for the prosecutors in criminal cases to arrange two or more counts in the indictment so that in case of failure to establish the first they may fall back upon the second, and so forth. But it is rarely the case, we think, that the several counts are mutually destructive, so that the proof of the first would be the refutation of the second, and *vice versa*. We do not, of course, presume to criticize the action of the prosecuting attorneys, save from the point of view of its effect upon the public mind. They were probably in the position of men who see clearly that a fraud has been perpetrated or intended, but who either are unable to define its exact nature, or cannot find a law exactly adapted to meet and punish it. The judge himself charged that there could have been no conspiracy to defraud the Queen, because the signature of the Queen's representative, without which no contract made by the Government is valid, was not asked or obtained. This disposed of the first count of the indictment. It is true that this reasoning may be a little puzzling to the lay mind. There can scarcely be a doubt, we suppose, that Mr. Mercier intended that the contract should be carried out and the letters of credit redeemed by the Government, and that if he had remained in power, this would have been brought about in some way. Had the letters of credit been thus redeemed by the Government with Provincial funds, either with or without the assent of the Lieut.-Governor, would not Her Majesty or, which means no doubt the same thing, the Province, have been defrauded? And does not the crime of conspiracy, by its very nature, reside in the intention, and not in the successful execution of the act intended? But with such questions the jury had nothing to do. The judge's dictum on this point was the law for them. The second count would seem to have been still more easily disposed of, inasmuch as the bank in question had been furnished with good security at the time of the discount, and, consequently, there could have been no conspiracy to defraud it. Hence the acquittal as a matter of course.

ANOTHER influence which co-operated with the legal technicalities above described to render Mr. Mercier's acquittal tolerably certain, was the impression which widely prevailed that the fallen chieftain was being pursued with persecuting vigour for an alleged offence, while other men in leading public positions, who had been openly charged with offences almost identical, were being treated with the utmost leniency. Into that question we need not now enter. A still more important matter at the present moment is that of the position in which the Province of Quebec and in fact the whole Dominion is placed by the triumphant acquittal of these two men. What are the indubitable facts? A contract for a public service, involving a large sum of money, was assigned by the then head of the Provincial Government, without competition, to a certain stationer, who evidently expected to realize large profits from the transaction. The fortunate contractor was aided in obtaining the contract, in fact we may almost say that it was obtained for him, by Mr. Pacaud, the manager of the finances of the party to which the Government belonged. Immediately on the completion of the contract, the contractor received letters of credit from the Government, ostensibly to aid him in carrying it out, and immediately paid over almost the whole sum thus obtained to Mr. Pacaud for the use of the party. Can any man of ordinary shrewdness have a doubt in his mind as to the real nature of the transaction? And yet both the Premier whose party was aided by the fund referred to, and the intermediary who asked for, received, and handled this money, and who even transferred a portion of it to the Premier's own personal account, now, after trial, stand guiltless in the eye of the law! Not only so, but their acquittal is hailed with acclaim by a large crowd of sympathizing friends. What is to become of the Province in which such ideas and practices prevail? But it would be well for the Dominion if such ideas and such transactions were confined to a single Province. Such, unhappily, is not the case. It has repeatedly been established by evidence, and in many cases in which no legal proof has been adduced, it is a fact and custom too well understood to admit of reasonable doubt, that essentially the same kind of thing goes on with the regularity of an established custom. That is to say, the men who receive large contracts from the Government are expected to subscribe, and as a matter of fact do subscribe, large sums to the funds of the party which supports that Government. The impropriety and danger are so clear that he who runs may read.

WHILE the kind of thing above described is going on in one Province of the Dominion, from another, in which a general local election has just been held, come accounts of bribery and corruption to an extent that is simply appalling. After making all due allowances for the exaggerations of political enemies, it seems impossible to doubt that in the recent contest in New Brunswick votes were bought and sold in open daylight, to an almost unlimited extent, and quite as if they were an article of lawful merchandise. Private accounts confirm the strong assertions of the newspapers. Though, as is usually the case, the Government supporters seem to have done the largest business, as being the better provided with funds, we see no reason to doubt that the practice was freely resorted to on both sides. We saw the other day a private letter written in the freedom and confidence of friendship, and evidently without thought of any ulterior object, in which the writer described the buying of votes in his own locality as being carried on in the most unblushing and shameful manner. In fact, the writer says that he felt really thankful that he had not a vote, lest the temptation to obtain funds which he sorely needed might have proved too much for his integrity. The strength of the temptation in such a case would be all the greater from the fact that the contest was a mere struggle for office, no broad distinguishing principle being perceptible, a case in which it is quite conceivable that the person might not have cared a button which side was victor. But what are we coming to? Seeing that the secret ballot fails thus conspicuously to prevent the purchase of votes, what better means can be adopted to