

## Civil and Social Department.

## WHAT THE FARMERS EXPECT FROM PARLIAMENT.

Nay, start not, gentle reader, we are not about to read you a homily on party politics. The Parliament have a duty to perform, and to this duty involving as it does the substantial interests of the country, we shall refer without crossing the path of any man's political prejudices. The measures most required, have been rendered necessary by the recent movements in commercial legislation in England, by which the commercial relations between us and the mother country have been entirely changed. We must take steps to prevent our suffering by a movement which we did not originate and could not have controlled. Whether the sweeping changes that have been effected by Peel's commercial legislation, were the offspring of a physical necessity or not, it would be a waste of time to endeavour to determine. It is enough for us that they have been made, that we cannot unmake them, and that our interests have been affected, or our commercial position altered thereby. England has hitherto protected our grain, or in other words, admitted it into her markets on more easy terms than the products of Russia or the United States, or any other foreign country. And we in return protected her manufactures, that is we admitted them on more easy terms than the manufactures of France or the United States. To compare the results of these reciprocal acts of protection, or whatever else they may be called, would require a statistical calculation, which, for want of the necessary materials, it would be difficult to make, and which after all, would be rather curious than useful. It would be retrospective: an inquiry into circumstances which have ceased to exist. We must gain a thorough knowledge of our present position, to enable us to meet the necessities of the future. England has withdrawn her protection, and we shall hereafter have no advantages in her markets over the wheat grower of any other country. Whatever the Russian or the American can afford to sell his wheat for in Liverpool and London, that must we be content to receive for ours. We should have reason to complain, if England in taking from us a specific commercial advantage, required us to continue to give her a special privilege. Such want of reciprocity would be manifestly unjust. But she desires to take no advantage of us in this respect. She has given us as a matter of undoubted right, and without solicitation on our part, the power to pass a law to enable us to purchase our manufactures in any market where we can buy them cheapest. The duty of our Legislature, under these circumstances, is clear. There are many articles in use in almost every family, such as cotton, woollen and linen manufactures, which on being imported into this Province pay a greater duty by 7 per cent, if the produce of foreign countries, than those which are the produce of English labour. If a farmer wants to buy any one of these articles, he must pay the augmented price for it. These are called discriminating or differential duties, because they discriminate or make a distinction between goods produced in foreign countries, that is out of England, and those produced in England. Now it needs no argument to prove that all discriminating duties add to the cost of the article just as much as the duty amounts to; whether it be ten or 15 per cent.

It is the interest of Canada to abolish these differential duties, and this the country expects Parliament will do before the present session closes. A measure having in view this object has indeed been promised in the royal speech. A duty for the purpose of creating a revenue will continue to be levied on goods imported in the Province; but it will be placed equally upon all articles, without reference to the country in which they have been produced. This is what Cobden understands, and what the now extinct Anti-Corn Law League understood by free trade. But there are others who meddle in their idea

of free trade the entire abolition of customs duties and custom houses. When these are abolished, some other mode of taxation must be resorted to; for in every country it is necessary to raise a revenue by which to carry on the government. The only questions that arise are, by what means can the necessary revenue be raised without injustice to any class of the community; what mode of taxation is attended with the least expense of collection; and if the best mode of taxation be determined upon, have the people no prejudices that will be a bar, for some time, at least, against the application of that mode? If customs duties are abolished, direct taxation must be substituted in their place. But if it could be proved that this mode of taxation would be attended with the least expense of collection, there is a prejudice in the minds of the people, especially in Lower Canada, against its adoption, which would require constant exertion for several years to eradicate. It is not expected that anything of this kind will now be attempted. Our present difficulty will be got over by the abolition of all differential duties. If this be neglected or prevented by faction, the interests of the country will suffer severely. It is the duty of every member of the legislature to support a measure having in view the accomplishment of this object.

There is a general feeling throughout the whole country against the granting of large tracts of lands to companies of any description, under any pretence whatever. The public lands are merely held in trust for the people; and if there be a case in which the whole people should be consulted, it is on the proposition to make grants of public lands. If it be desirable to facilitate the settlement of the waste lands of the crown, why not throw them open on terms that will attract the attention of individuals, not of companies, who will become actual settlers? This would work out the improvement of the country, and people it with a happy and contented, because industrious and thriving, population. It is not within our province, but belongs to the statesman, to say on what terms and in what manner this shall be done, and how the revenue arising therefrom can be best made available for the advancement of the real interests of the country: our duty as the conductors of an agricultural journal, begins and ends with giving expression to the public opinion in the country, that the system of granting public lands by wholesale to companies should be discountenanced by Parliament. This opinion seems to be intimately associated with a wholesome fear of the injurious effects of landed monopolies. It is generally believed, and we think not without reason, that land companies retard rather than facilitate the settlement of the country, by enhancing the price to actual settlers and putting the profits into the pockets of speculators.

So far as the question of Navigation Laws is understood, their repeal is very generally desired. And it is natural that it should be so, for every penny which these restrictions imposed by the Navigation Laws enhance the price of freight or produce, is so much taken out of the farmer's pocket. What is the nature of the instructions which the provincial government have received on the subject, has not yet been developed, and we can have no means of judging. If Parliament have the power, it will best serve the public interest by removing every restriction to the free navigation of the St. Lawrence. If it has not the power to do so, we have strong hopes that an address from that body on the subject would be cheerfully responded to by her Majesty's government.

## EMIGRATION.

The emigration to Canada this year, is likely to swell to an extent altogether beyond the emigration of any previous year. It has been estimated that 200,000 persons will seek an asylum on the shores of Canada during the present year; and it has also been calculated by competent authority that of all the emigrants who come from Ireland, nearly 10 per

cent will die either on the passage or almost immediately after landing. And this prediction, awful as it seems, actual occurrences show the fearful possibility of being realized. At Grosse Isle, the quarantine station, where the sick are landed instead of being allowed to come up to Quebec, a counterpart of the worst horrors that have afflicted Ireland may be seen, and on a scale immensely large. A Quebec paper of the 11th, states that during the previous week there had been 2000 cases of malignant disease; the horrors of which are greatly augmented by the inadequacy of the accommodation prepared for their reception. Up to the 11th inst. more than 1000 had been buried at Grosse Isle, many of them without coffins.

On the 3d June were buried 100.
5th do do 105.
6th do do 94.
7th do do 80.

A hundred funerals a day and many of the bodies thrown coffinless into the grave! This is awful. We may indeed consider ourselves fortunate if the seeds of disease that have been imported do not scatter themselves thro' the country, and carry off a large portion of the inhabitants. This, with the utmost care, it will be extremely difficult to prevent.

The law enacted by the Senate of the United States for repelling pauper emigration from their shores, will turn the current toward Canada; so that a greatly increased emigration is inevitable. Already has one vessel freighted with human beings been driven from the shores of republican America, and sought refuge in Nova Scotia. It is certain that Nova Scotia is not in a condition to receive any considerable number of emigrants who do not bring with them ample means to provide for their own necessities; it is indeed doubtful if they can, without danger of suffering starvation go there even with means. A despatch from the Governor to Earl Grey states that, from the failure of the crops during the two last seasons, Nova Scotia is not in a condition to receive emigrants who do not bring with them the means of supporting themselves for two years. The class of emigrants this year will consist mainly of persons whom poverty drives from their native shores. A voyage to Australia would require an outlay altogether beyond what their limited resources could afford; if indeed they had the inclination to sail 23,000 miles to Australia instead of 4000, to Canada. Kept from Australia by the very necessity that will drive them to America,—repelled from the United States, and with no chance of finding food for their labour in Nova Scotia, the great body of the emigrants, especially of the poor ones, will come to Canada. Previous to the sailing of the steamer before last, 40,000 emigrants had left England, Ireland and Scotland for Canada; and to what the whole number may swell it is impossible to say, but it will inevitably be very large. Such is the present appearance of things;—what the future will disclose it is easy to imagine as to character, but impossible to judge of as to extent.

How all these emigrants will be absorbed it is utterly impossible to tell; and at whose expense the unemployed will be fed may become a serious question. We shall not now attempt to give more than one suggestion, and that is that every one should be on his guard against deluding the emigrants, by holding out to them hopes of high wages. In no country is a crowded labour market compatible with high wages; and the intrinsic value of emigrant labour is much lessened by the labourers being necessarily unacquainted with the labour that has to be performed here, and especially on new farms.

## COMMON SCHOOLS.

We cannot at this time enter far either into the merits or defects of the present Common School Law. It is complained against by persons of all parties, and it is probable that it will undergo some alteration whatever may be the changes in the personnel of government. When the tuckering process begins, we intend to lend a little aid in the way of suggestion. It is discouraging and

humiliating to think, that our legislators are spending their time and our money (£1000 per day) in taunting each other with former delinquencies; one learned gentleman calling another learned gentleman a "rat," and a "dancing bear," and he in return suggesting the hippopotamus as a more appropriate animal, and telling his opponent that he was neither so handsome nor so clever as a horse! Shame on such vulgar, unprofitable, unparliamentary conduct. While the dusty records of the last century are ransacked for the precedent of a man being appointed Solicitor-General of Scotland at the age of twenty-one, the volumes which record the progress of intelligence among the people of other countries, and the causes, the "ways and means," and the consequences of that progress, are left unopened; the indicia of advancement in knowledge, civilization, and social happiness that is taking place all around us, are unobserved; the accumulation of ignorance from "home production," and by "importation," rapid though it be, yet not so fast as the necessities for its removal, awakens no attention, excites no alarm! The public lands may lie unproductive, the public schools may be neglected, the advantages of improvement and scientific discovery may be locked up from the masses; the clumsy machinery of an ill-contrived, defective law—the joint product of clerical corruption and legislative stupidity may continue to give dissatisfaction, but what of all that? A few lawyers—a few professed politicians—have secured their salaries; they have got a majority!

We tell our public men, we care not to what party they belong, that these things will not be tolerated. They must study the wants of the country, and must devote their energies and the means, which the people have placed at their disposal, to supply them.

The "one thing needful" in the School Law, which has heretofore been entirely overlooked, is the introduction of AGRICULTURE as a subject of study. In considering the amendments required, we hope our Legislators will look to the example of Scotland, Ireland, and the United States on this point. We shall give them some information in a future number.

## COPPER AND SILVER MINES OF LAKE SUPERIOR.

The first arrivals from Lake Superior have brought down a number of individuals who have during the winter been prosecuting their works in the search of mineral. All of our previous accounts are nothing in comparison to the accounts now given of the mineral wealth of that region. When we predicted a short time since that this region would be able to supply the world with copper at much less price than Cornwall, we had not anticipated there were large deposits of silver, rivaling the mines of Mexico.

We yesterday had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Thomas C. Childs, the agent of the British North American Mining Company, who is on his way to Montreal with several casks of mineral taken from the location known as the "Prince Location," and from the vein discovered by Col. Kinsie the last session, on Spar Island. It has been traced to the main shore, where the specimens now here were obtained. The mineral is a vein stone strongly charged with metallic silver. It is associated with calcareous spar, quartz, sulphate baryte and cloud or vein stone. The specimens of silver from the south shore are very rich, but not of the character of those found by Mr. Childs on the north shore. We have been informed by those who have seen and examined specimens from the celebrated mines of Durango and Chihuahua, in Mexico, that those obtained from Lake Superior have a very strong resemblance to them. All the indications in that country would lead us to believe there is mineral wealth beyond calculation almost; but at the same time it would not be amiss for those who are engaged in mining to remember that there is much uncertainty in mines.—[Det. Free Press.

MONTRÉAL BANK.—The following gentlemen have been elected Directors of the Montreal Commercial Bank, for the ensuing year:—Benjamin Ansell, Benjamin Brewster, William Connolly, John Dods, John Frothingham, Luther H. Holt, William Lyman, Joseph Ross, D. P. Ross, W. T. Whitehead, Joseph Vallee. Application will be made to the Legislature for an increase to the Capital Stock of the Bank to the sum of £200,000.