

THE CANADIAN TARIFF.

In our last impression, under this head, we expressed our opinion freely on the importance of a change being effected in our fiscal regulations. The views we advanced on this point, were an honest expression of opinion entertained by us, and from which we shall not retract, unless better arguments are adduced by the advocates of free trade than those which have characterized the mass of impracticable theories that have been written on that side of the subject.

If it were possible, through any act of ours, to effect a change in the present tariff laws of this country, we would unquestionably give the Canadian farmer and mechanic every justice that the importance of their stations, and the merits of their calling warrant, but we possess no such influence, nor do these classes themselves possess that amount of influence in the Colonial Legislature which would embolden their medium of communication to express itself with that degree of assurance that it otherwise would if those interests were properly represented.

From what was advanced in our last, the readers of this journal will clearly see that, as soon as the circumstances of the country will admit, a high tariff will be recommended by us, not so much with a view to retaliate as for the general advancement of agricultural and commercial prosperity. We apprehend that this intricate question will be better understood when public attention has been more devotedly drawn to its importance.

We have before us a table exhibiting the proposed duties on agricultural products, which will, no doubt, pass both branches of the Legislature, without any material alteration. This table of duties, when compared with the duties on manufactured goods, may be considered fair protection, and will, no doubt, give general satisfaction to all classes; but when we compare it with the American tariff, it comes far short of what we would call "fair play." Hops, butter, cheese, hemp, and flax should be subject to the same scale of duties that is collected on those articles going into the United States. If 9 cents per lb. were exacted on all American cheese entering the Canadian markets, the result would be that the Canadian farmers would turn their attention largely to the dairy business. A farmer who sells only a few hundred lbs. of cheese in each year, must have a profit of 20 or 25 per cent. on the money and time invested in the manufacture of the article, or else he would consider that the business were a losing one. But, supposing that fifty or a hundred cows were kept by the farmer, and a reasonable share of attention and skill were devoted to the business, a profit of eight or ten per cent., in this case, would be better than heavy profits on a small business. The more a man sells the cheaper he can sell. Under this low proposed tariff, the Americans will still flood this country with cheese, and supply, as formerly, nine-tenths of the market. The American dairy husbandmen have had long experience in the business

and have spared no pains or expense in introducing the most scientific and economical methods of managing their business. Not so with the Canadians; they have allowed themselves to be undersold in their own markets by a people who have less natural advantages than they possess, when at the same time the Canadian farmers might have been enabled to sell at lower prices than their neighbours, if they had introduced the same skill, and invested a proportionate amount of capital in this department of business.

A farmer in the Brock District, who keeps thirty cows, informed us some time since, that eight dollars per 100 lbs. for cheese, paid him much heavier profits than the business of growing wheat at a dollar per bushel. It is useless for us to recommend the Canadian farmers to turn their attention to the dairy business, so long as their markets are thrown open to a foreign article; but let a high duty be exacted on all foreign cheese entering the Canadian market, and we venture to predict that in less than two years they will be supplied with an article of as good description, and afforded at as low a price, as has been done from a foreign country. Under such a tariff as we propose, British and American cheese busbandmen would settle in this country, which would introduce the business on a large and profitable scale, and, instead of Canada being an importer of the article, she would export it largely to Britain, where it would be admitted at mere nominal duty. We already know of three American farmers who have purchased land in this country, and have migrated here for the express purpose of engaging largely in the manufacturing of cheese. Each of these farmer have between thirty and forty cows, and find it a profitable business at the present low prices.

We mentioned in our last that it would be difficult, in a few years, to compete with the agriculturalists of the "far west." As another evidence of the soundness of the opinions we entertain on this subject, we make the following quotation from the *Prairie Farmer* for October, in which the Editor remarks, in alluding to an article on the low price of produce in the Eastern markets, in a late number of the *Albany Cultivator*, that "butter and eggs have been selling every season at the west, for less than six cents per lb. for the former, and six cents per dozen for the latter. The East must make up its mind to Western competition, and the extent of it is no where nearly realised as yet, either in the East or West. The elements of production are by no means yet put in full operation here. The West has been occupied hitherto, and will be for some years, in getting its harness on; and it is fairly staggering to contemplate the results, when its full strength is put to advantage."

It is clear to us that English farmers will never allow the question to rest, so long as the United States produce is admitted into the British markets, through the Canadian waters, at a mere nominal duty. It is unreasonable for us to expect it, and, in our opinion, the

statesman who would coolly calculate on the advantages which the Colony would derive from this great boon, without taking into the account the great loss that the English farmer must sustain, and the indirect loss which the Colony must suffer in being merely the carrier of the produce of a foreign country, certainly deserves to be censured for being void of patriotism.

We wish to be distinctly understood that we are strenuous advocates of a protective tariff on all articles, whether agricultural or mechanical, and also advocate a free trade with our parent country, so much so as if we were part and parcel of the British Isles. As soon as this can be effected, hundreds of thousands of the wealthy and respectable portion of British subjects will select this country as a home for themselves and their families; and, as we remarked in our last, British America might be placed, by such an arrangement, in an enviable position, when compared to the neighbouring country.

Canada would shortly become a large and profitable exporting country to England, if it were possible to raise the spirits of her hardy and worthy sons. It is clear that they have been much neglected by the men of theory, and cold-hearted speculators, whom they have selected to legislate for them from Parliament to Parliament, since the first settlement of the country. Merit has not been rewarded to any extent. Arts and sciences have been, in a great measure allowed to struggle on without much aid; and mechanical genius, and agricultural skill have not received that fostering care which is necessary in a new country to ensure rapid progress. The day has gone by for a repetition of these evils. A class of true lovers of their country—their institutions and laws, in our opinion, will come into notice.—these men will see the necessity of burying into oblivion every thing which is calculated to arouse the angry passions of man, and study to legislate for the good of the country. It is not a legitimate province of ours to enter into the details of the past chequered history of Canada, but so far as we are concerned, we are determined to expose the fallacy of parties exhibiting such a deadly spite towards each other, when there is not the slightest grounds for such an exhibition.

What we want to see consummated in this highly privileged country, is that encouragement should be given to the introduction of the cultivation of new articles for export and protection against all articles imported in the country from the United States.

Labour in Eastern Canada is forty per cent. less than in the Eastern States; and, notwithstanding, thousands of pounds worth of manufactured articles are brought into Canada from that country. We are happy to see by the Montreal papers, that a few enterprising men have made arrangements to work a large manufacturing establishment in the District of Montreal. We wish them success, and hope others will follow so worthy an example. If