

We need scarcely stop to point out the viciousness of this reasoning. If it were true that what is for the interest of one country must be to the prejudice of another, and that the laws of nature, like those of men, were made to be in a constant state of antagonism, there might be some grounds for a suspicion so little favourable to the rational progress of the human race. But we need scarcely say that such is not the case. The interests of all nations are, on the contrary, most intimately interwoven, and nothing but the prejudice of rulers and the ignorance of classes could ever have persuaded the world to the contrary.

The arguments used by the French protective press on this question are just those which have at all times been employed to support a restrictive tariff. England, say they, has only adopted Free-Trade measures when she had no longer anything to fear from competition. She was protective just so long as it suited her interests; and as it no longer suits her interests, she wishes to induce other nations to sacrifice their policy to a policy which has now become her own. If we fall into the trap and follow her example, we must be losers by the change. Free Trade will not increase our exports, because products similar to those of France are either produced cheaper in England, or are not required to a greater extent than at present; and as to the idea that an increase of imports must lead to an increase of exports, that is a mere theory, not supported by experience, and in no respect applicable to ourselves. It follows from this, that we shall be inundated by the cheap manufactures of England, to the injury of our own workmen, and without in the least degree benefitting our own native industry and commerce.—These positions are most admirably combated in an article in a late number of the *London Economist*, which is now before us, and in which the writer shows, by Parliamentary returns, that up to the present time the manufactures of France have received a great impetus from the liberal measures of England. In spite of the assertion that France has nothing to give that Great Britain will take, the increase upon the imports of silk manufactures alone for the five months the tariff has been in operation is nearly forty per cent, and on cotton goods equally great. Nor is this all. For many years past—that is, since 1827—the policy of England has been gradually becoming less and less restrictive towards her Gallican neighbour. Without waiting for France to set the example, Great Britain perceived that it would be to her interest to get the wines, and silks, and gloves, and cottons she required at as reasonable an outlay as possible. Some persons would say, and some did say, that she was injuring her own manufactures by this, and that it would have been better to have paid a higher price for a worse article of her own production. But English statesmen thought differently. They had tried that system and knew what it led to. Experience had shown them that it neither contributed to the revenue, nor the morals, nor the commercial welfare of the country, and therefore without listening to what a few interested manufacturers told them, they brought down the duties, and invited the cheap goods into the market, knowing very well that they would find out a way to pay for themselves. What has been the consequence? An enormous extension of this branch of commerce with France, as will be shown by the following returns:—

Imported from France.

	WINE.	SILK GOODS.	COTTON GOODS.	GLOVES.
	<i>Gals.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>	<i>£.</i>	<i>No. Pairs.</i>
1832, . .	311,448	146,665	6,365	1,513,106
1841, . .	480,720	254,120	72,046	1,369,277
1845, . .	725,308	301,573	35,943	1,863,741

But did not the interests of England suffer by this one-sided trade? for one-sided every Protectionist will assert that it was, when France was keeping up against England heavy restrictive duties. Trade, say these gentlemen, ought to be reciprocal, and it is an act of suicide in one country to abandon its tariff till every other country has done just the same. Well, let us see. We have shown how our imports from France increased from 1832 to 1845, under the various reductions in our tariff, and we will now just enquire how it stood with our exports during the same period. Here are the figures:

1832,	£647,701
1844,	2,656,259
1845,	2,701,238

Can any one mistake the meaning of these simple facts, or fail to perceive the direct connexion that exists between these two classes of figures? There is no reciprocity of tariff here, but a wonderful sympathy of trade! And just exactly the same result is shown in every other case. Although Russia, Germany, Belgium, and the United States have been pursuing the principle of exclusion, the exports of England, under the changes she has made, have been steadily increasing. Thus they were in

1832, £36,150,591, before Lord Melbourne's changes.
1841, 51,634,623, before the New Tariff.
1844, 53,581,292, after two years' experience of the Tariff of 1842
1845, 60,111,052, after three years.

We think that these facts ought to be sufficient to show the absurdity of the old notions of "reciprocity," "balance of

trade," &c. It would be much better for the interests of every country certainly that they should all at once come to a rational system; but their not doing so will only injure themselves, and not their neighbours, who adopt a more liberal policy. England does not take more French goods than she can pay for, and she gets them at a price which enables her to be a good customer to her foreign neighbour. The increase of her demand stimulates the manufactures of France, and with them the use of coal and iron, which England supplies. Thus both parties are mutually benefited; though, of course, not so much as they might be if the trade were perfectly free, and the industry of France were not shackled with the enormous duties imposed by her Government.

The same rule applies equally to every thing and every country. An increase of exports will always accompany an increase of imports; and the only effect of restriction is to limit trade, and not to violate this universal law. The more this is inquired into, the more evident it will appear, until at length men will look back and wonder how a truth so evident could ever have been overlooked.

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

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To the proof, then, of our proposition, that the action had upon the Report of the Commission, so far at least as Canada is in question, has done as much harm as good, and perhaps more; has resulted in a state of things certainly not better as a whole, and as certainly in a variety of particulars worse, than that which the Commissioners found existing and described.

On all the more important recommendations of the Report, there has been next to nothing done, and the little done has been ill done. On the less important class, there has been more done, but still almost nothing well done.

We hardly wonder that the death of Mr. Howe, the late Depy. Post Master General at Halifax, which occurred shortly after the Report was made, was not taken advantage of, to place the whole of British North America under the charge of one Deputy Post Master General. On this point the Commissioners were perhaps too far-seeing. Till the Provinces shall be united under one Governor General, it might not be easy to put them all under one resident Post-Office Head. At any rate, the attempt was not made, and is not now likely to be made, and its policy need not therefore be discussed.

Setting aside this project, then, the great first reform relied on by the Commissioners, and without which they held that no real thorough reform of the department could be carried out, was the placing of the Post-Office under the control, as well of the Provincial Government in its local details, as of the Imperial Government in its more general regulations. Incidentally, in describing the system recommended by them to this end, they observed that it might naturally place the patronage of the department "in the same hands and under the same conditions and limitations as other patronage." Towards the great change no step whatever has been taken. Towards the minor change, regarded by the Commissioners (and justly) as a mere corollary from the great one, a single step has been taken, and one which, single as it was, had been better not taken. The patronage of the department,—or rather, so much of it as one may hold to be "more plague than profit" to the dispenser,—has been graciously vested in the Governor, subject always to conditions and limitations unknown to any other branch of the public service. The office of Postmaster, whenever vacant, is to be filled by the Governor; one Postmastership perhaps in twenty being, on the score of emolument, worth the holding, and the task of finding a fit person willing to accept the post being, therefore, in a large proportion of cases, the reverse of easy. Clerkship vacancies, being generally worth more, are to be filled by regular promotion, so as never to offer anything better than the poorest place on an establishment for His Excellency's gift. And the Deputy Postmaster-General's, Accountant's, and Surveyors' Offices, being the best of all, are reserved from His Excellency's interference altogether, for the gift of My Lord the Postmaster-General at home. Add to this, that after the Governor has appointed, the Deputy Postmaster-General may dismiss, and that the Governor himself cannot; and we have described in short metre the patronage regulations which the wisdom of the department at home has substituted for the system of local administrative control devised and urged by the Commission.

We are bound to admit, however, that other steps are understood to have been taken to attain one of the ends sought by the scheme of the Commissioners,—the subjecting of the Provincial Head of the Department to a real instead of nominal responsibility. And we are further bound to add, that they have made matters worse. The Report, besides complaining of the entire absence of local control by the Provincial Governments, had set forth the fact that the control of the Postmaster-General, complete and absolute in theory, was in practice merely nominal. Its remedy was, to set the Gov-