

apprehensions of the Board of Trade of Montreal, or of other parties similarly situated, as to the effect in Canada of the alteration of the English Corn Law, if it be passed in conformity with the views of Her Majesty's Government. But as it is necessary that I should return a distinct answer to the memorial which is now before me, I have to instruct your Lordship to acquaint the memorialists, that if Parliament shall adopt the changes in the Corn Law of this country which have been submitted to their deliberation, Her Majesty's Government will regard the local duty of 3s. on corn as an exclusively provincial question, and if the Legislature of Canada shall think it expedient to pass an Act for the repeal of that duty, Her Majesty will not be advised to disallow the measure.

2. You will state to the memorialists that, according to the view of Her Majesty's Government, any proposal to alter the imperial duty on flour imported into Canada should follow, and be dependent on, but should not precede the abrogation of the 3s. duty on wheat.

3. That with respect to their application for the free introduction into this country of grain, flour and meal of whatever origin, Her Majesty's Government regret that they do not think it entirely compatible with the spirit of the commercial treaties between this country and other powers, to revive the system which once prevailed, of allowing the introduction of goods from colonies at colonial duties, with reference, not to their origin, but solely to their place of export.

I have, &c.
(signed) *W. E. Gladstone.*

— No. 9. —

No. 9.
Governor Earl
Catcart to Mr.
Secretary Glad-
stone,
25 March 1846.

(No. 27.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor the Earl Catcart, K. C. B., to the Right Honourable *W. E. Gladstone.*

Sir,

Government House, Montreal, 25 March 1846.

At the request of the Quebec Board of Trade, I have the honour to forward the accompanying petition, addressed to you by that body.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Catcart.*

Enclosure in No. 9.

To the Right Honourable *W. E. Gladstone*, Her Majesty's Minister of State for the Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

The Quebec Board of Trade, by this their Petition,

Respectfully represent,

Encl. in No. 9.

THAT your petitioners observe with deep anxiety the contemplated adoption by Her Majesty's Government of a new system of commercial policy, at variance with those maxims of protection and old established principles which have hitherto been acted upon in regulating the trade of Great Britain and her possessions abroad.

That the introduction into the Imperial Parliament of measures, the operation of which will immediately deprive the province of Canada of a great portion, and at no distant period of all the protection her produce now enjoys in the markets of the United Kingdom, should be received by your petitioners with anxiety and alarm, cannot be a matter of surprise.

Convinced as your petitioners are of the desire of Her Majesty's Government to encourage the commerce of the colonial possessions in North America, and promote the welfare of Her Majesty's subjects therein; and convinced, also, that any legislative measures, prejudicial to the North American colonies, must be prejudicial to the shipping and other great interests of Great Britain, they beg respectfully to bring under your consideration certain suggestions, which it appears to them would, if carried out, be beneficial to the colonies and the parent state, whose interests are inseparable.

That in Session of last year, the Congress of the United States of America enacted a law (called the Drawback Law), allowing a remission of the duties on British and other foreign manufactures and produce imported into the United States, on the same being exported inland into Canada; and a Bill is now in contemplation to allow the transportation of Canadian produce through the territory of the United States to an Atlantic shipping port, for exportation to Great Britain and other foreign countries, free.

That the question will no doubt suggest itself to you, whether the natural effect of this seductive law will not gradually, silently and imperceptibly, even to themselves, wean the inclinations of the subjects of Great Britain from their true allegiance to the parent state, and bias their minds in favour of a closer connexion with a foreign country, through which the transport of their merchandize and produce is encouraged, and a consequent more frequent intercourse with its inhabitants produced.

That