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## CONTENTS:

BRITISH CONNECTION AND CANADIAN POLICY.  
COLONIAL TITLES.  
THE N. P. HAVING FAILED—HOW NOW?  
"ALL THE RAGE."  
OUR SUMMER RESORTS.  
UNSOUND TRADING.

CONQUESTS OF LOVE—A Sermon by the Rev. A. J. Bray.  
POETRY.  
THINGS IN GENERAL.  
CORRESPONDENCE.  
MUSICAL.  
CHESS.

## BRITISH CONNECTION AND CANADIAN POLICY.

No. VI.

In these papers the attempt has been made to show that the natural commercial relation of these Provinces to the States, on or nearest their border, is in the main, one of competition, antagonism, and opposition of interests. At international gatherings, when mutual admiration speeches are in order, it is customary to take the sentimental view, and to give eloquent descriptions of the vast commerce that might be carried on between the two countries, to the profit of both. Some articles there are, undoubtedly, which may profitably be exchanged on a large scale; for instance, the fish and lumber of Canada, commodities of which our neighbours have not a sufficient supply, for the raw cotton and the tobacco of the Southern States. There may be mutual advantages, too, in the exchange of Canadian barley for Western States Indian corn, though that would still be no reason why the latter should come into our market free of duty, while the former enters the American market only after paying toll to the amount of 15 cents per bushel. Some people talk grandly and eloquently about the immense trade which ought to be done between the two countries, but they should be asked to come down to particulars, and to state what precisely this trade is to consist of. When they condescend to details, it will be found that the great bulk of the trade which looks so largely before their eyes is to be made up in two ways. One is, the purchase of Canadian produce, by Americans, for export to Europe or elsewhere, and the purchase, by Canadians, of American produce for the same purpose. Suppose that our buyers go into the Chicago market and buy a million dollars worth of produce, which they ship for sale to Europe; and that at the same time American buyers take a million's worth of our produce, also to be sent across the Atlantic to find a market. Is either country a cent the richer for this needlessly roundabout way of doing business? Or would not both have been fully as well off in the end had each sold its own produce direct to the European consumer? Yet those who think there is some magic of money-making in the word "trade," cannot get the notion out of their heads that somehow or other this is what they call "doing business." Another way is, the exchange of Canadian raw produce for American manufactured goods. This sort of trade was to a large extent dictated by circumstances in years gone by, when Canada was backward, simply because of her having been later in the start, which could not be helped all at once; and, more recently, because we for several years submitted to a policy which kept us backward, and most effectually prevented our coming to the front. But this is surely evident enough, that as Canada progresses in arts and manufactures her need of buying from the States will dwindle away, and that the very foundation and *raison d'être* of a border trade in manufactured goods will be in course of disappearance. We hear nothing of the exchange of Canadian manufactured goods for American raw produce, although no *natural and permanent* reason can be given why that kind of trade should not be carried on as well as the other. In brief, the two peoples are destined to produce more and more alike as time progresses, and therefore to be more competitors and less customers to each other in the future.

Very different is the commercial relations of Canada to the mother country. Let us advance as we may, there will always be a thousand and one articles that we must buy from England, because we cannot advantageously make them for ourselves. We need not attempt to make out a list, the number of articles in shop windows and on the shelves, that are made in England, and that are not likely to be made in Canada for generations to come, if ever, would bewilder any one who might try. The vast interval between England and Canada, in manufacturing position, is the measure of the trade that must always be done between the two. Broadly speaking, we can with fair success make for ourselves most textile fabrics, which are of a staple character, and unaffected

by the changes of fashion. But the many hundreds of articles over which fashion holds her sway, we must leave to England to make for us, if we want them, because our limited market would never pay for cost of invention and designs. Very many articles there are also, outside of dress and apparel,—articles of luxury for some people, of necessity, almost, for others,—which cannot be produced to advantage, except in quantities beyond what our market can take. These we must continue to buy from England, as the staunchest Protectionists amongst us admit. But meantime the senseless howl has been raised that the new tariff is to compel the making at home of everything we want, so that we shall be no more customers of England for anything. I call this a "senseless howl," and with good reason; for a cry more utterly nonsensical and unreasonable would be hard to get up at all.

We are to go on making everything for ourselves, it appears, until our purchases from England have dwindled away to "the small end of nothing," by which time it will be in order for the Mother Country to tell the Colony to go about its business, and trouble the Empire no more. On this point we might try deep discourse of reason to show the visionary nature of the apprehension in question; and it might be deemed sound philosophy to rest our case on the single point, that as England is the foremost manufacturing nation in the world, the interval between her position and ours will inevitably, for a time longer than we need stop now to calculate, perpetuate Canada's relation to her as a customer for manufactured goods. At the same time we might with abundant good reason ask the objectors to wait a little for some proof of diminished purchases from England ere condemning the new system. As too many bankers and merchants know to their sorrow, there have been years, and series of years, in which we bought a great deal too much from England, more than it was within our means easily to pay. But will any Free Trader put his finger on the date, and inform us what year exactly it was in which we bought too little from England, so little that it was or ought to have been matter of regret that we did not buy more largely? I venture to say that no such year has rolled its cycle around within the last half century, and I dare prophecy that no such year will be among the years of half a century yet to come. To any business man, who will calmly reflect upon facts which he knows, this apprehension that we shall, under circumstances conceivable and probable, injure ourselves by *importing too little*, must appear like very midsummer madness. Our follies, too often repeated, in the way of *over-importation*, have for their monuments many failures, and many a sad disaster. But, as for not importing enough, why, the man who seriously talks of *that* as a contingency to be dreaded, should certainly be looked after by his friends. I challenge all and sundry to produce, from the records and reports of Canadian bank meetings, and board of trade meetings these fifty years past, a single expression of opinion from a responsible quarter to the effect that the country had suffered or was suffering from the evil of not importing enough. Opinions from the best authorities, as to the country's suffering from over-importation, may be cited to fill volumes; but on the other side, none.

Ah! but, it will be said, we never in time past had such a tariff as that of this year; now we shall surely see something that never happened before. Perhaps we may, but under the circumstances it seems a very reasonable request that we should wait a while for the proof. The burden of proof certainly lies upon the objectors, for it is their contention that something entirely out of the usual course—something that never happened before—is about to happen now. My contention is that the greater prosperity of the Dominion, caused by increased production of those commodities that it comes within our reach to make for ourselves, will make us the better customers to England for the thousand-and-one articles that we are not going to make at all—at least not in this generation, or in the next either, perhaps. These are the two opposing contentions, both relating to what is yet to be, and therefore incapable of positive proof for either. But, as I must further contend, the burden of proof is surely upon those who maintain that the extraordinary, the absolutely unprecedented calamity of suffering caused by not importing enough goods, is coming upon Canada.

Is it England's interest that we should buy beyond our means, more than we are able to pay for? Surely not. We are all too apt to buy beyond our means, and to run in debt; a slight error in the other direction would be refreshing, if only for the novelty of the thing. As for England's true interest in the matter, that still remains to be considered, along with the larger aspects of Imperial and Colonial relations.

*Argus.*

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP, for Children Teething, and all Infantile Diseases