

to the formation of a direct line between France and Canada, a line which, according to him, may assume a very great importance. The special knowledge of Mr. Bernard gives particular weight to this opinion. La Banque Maritime, which is directed by him, is a very powerful loan and trust institution, and the only one in France engaged in maritime business. It is a matter of great importance not to crush out such sympathy, nor to sacrifice by delays which are unpardonable, private interests so intimately bound up with public interests and prosperity. According to the Trade and Navigation Returns, prepared by the Customs Department, the wines containing 25 per cent. or less of spirit, imported direct from France, rose to 60,038 gallons, of which the value was \$59,030, during the fiscal year ending the 30th June, 1884. The loss to the public treasury consequent upon the removal of the *ad valorem* duty of 30 per cent. would be reduced to the sum of \$17,709. But this loss would only be an apparent one; in reality the increase from the entry of these wines would produce a sum exceeding this. I find in a report of Mr. Lalande, chairman of the Bordeaux Board of Trade, very significant figures in this respect. Before 1860 he says French wines were afflicted in England with the enormous duty of 5s. 6d. per gallon. In consequence of this oppressive duty, the consumption of French wines in England did not exceed 3,000 casks, or about 27,000 hectolitres. On the other hand, with the reduced duties which placed the wines of France within the reach of the whole world, inasmuch as the duty on each bottle does not exceed 4 cents, the same as paid at Paris, the consumption rose from 27,000 hectolitres to 270,000 hectolitres, representing a value of 70,000,000 francs each year, and effecting the interesting result that with the duties five times less the English custom house collected twice as much in money.

For all the foregoing reasons, I cannot be too exacting, Sir, in asking you to give all your attention to this question, and to call forth on the part of the Dominion Government an Order in Council removing the duty of 30 per cent. *ad valorem* on all kinds of wines, except the sparkling ones, including ginger, orange, citron, strawberry, raspberry, elderwine, and gooseberry, containing 26 per cent. or less of alcohol, which form what are known in France as "*vins et liqueurs.*" And in order to limit the sphere of this reduction to add, "and coming direct from the ports of France."

I have no doubt but that, as a sequel to this Order in Council, the French Government will bring before the Houses a Bill aiming at the bestowal on Canada of the benefits of the convention of the 28th February, 1882, between France and Great Britain; and at the request of the High Commissioner of Canada will consent to grant on their part a subsidy to the company already subsidized by us.

Be pleased to accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

HECTOR FABRE.

A.

PARIS, 1st April, 1886.

Mr. FOURSIN, 76 Boulevard Haussman, Paris.

MY DEAR FOURSIN,—I have seen Mr. Fernand Faure, representative from the Gironde, to whom I have spoken respecting the commercial treaty with Canada.

Mr. Faure has visited Canada; consequently, he is well disposed to assist us. I promise to introduce you at his house to-morrow.

He will see you again at 10 o'clock, at his house, No. 26 Cardinet Street, on Thursday morning.

Yours truly,

E. RIOTTEAU.

B.

PARIS, Wednesday morning, 14th April, 1886.

Mr. FOURSIN, 76 Boulevard Haussman, Paris.

SIR,—I will be disappointed in not being able to see you this morning, I am obliged to leave for the south at 8.45. I will not return to Paris until about the 20th May.