

"It may not be amiss, before leaving this subject, to call your attention to the position of the present Ministry. The success of their measures respecting the proposed commercial relaxations is quite certain; and the Corn Bill, having now finally passed the House of Commons, may be expected, at no remote day, to pass the Lords by a majority no less decisive. From that time, however, the tie which has hitherto kept the Whig party in support of Sir Robert Peel will be dissolved; and the determination of the Protectionist party, who suppose themselves to have been betrayed, to drive him from office, has lost none of its vigour or power. Indeed, it is confidently reported, in quarters entitled to great respect, that they have even offered to the leader of the Whig party to select his own time, and that, when he is ready, they will be no less prepared to force Ministers to resign,

"I have reason to know that, at present, Ministers themselves believe a change to be inevitable, and are considering only the mode and the time in which it will be most likely to happen. It will not be long, after the success of the measures for the repeal of the Corn Laws, before opportunities enough for the accomplishment of the object will occur. The Factory Bill, regulating the hours of labour, will afford one, and most probably that on which the change will take place. With a knowledge that the change, sooner or later, must be unavoidable, and that the offer has been made to the probable head of a new Ministry to select his own time, may it not be expected that, instead of waiting quietly to allow the Whig leader to select the time of coming in, the present Premier will rather select his own time and mode of going out, and, with his usual sagacity, so regulate his retirement as to leave as few obstacles as possible to his restoration to power? In that case it is not very unlikely he would prefer going out upon the Factory Bill, before taking ground upon more important measures; and, if so, it will not surprise me to witness the coming in of a new Ministry by the end of June, or earlier. With a knowledge of the proposition now to be made, I am not prepared to say that one more objectionable might have been apprehended from a Whig Ministry; unless, indeed, the present Government may be supposed to be prepared to accept qualifications, when proposed by the President, which it was unwilling at first to offer. Upon that supposition, it might be desirable that the modifications should be offered before the coming in of a new Minister, who, finding only the acts of his predecessor, without a knowledge of his intentions, might not be so ready to take the responsibility of assenting to a change.

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"I have, &c.

(Signed) "LOUIS MACLANE."

The following was Mr. Pakenham's report after receiving Lord Aberdeen's despatches of 18th May:—

(No. 68.)

"My Lord,

"Washington, June 7, 1846.

"Her Majesty's Government will necessarily be anxious to hear as soon as possible the result of my first communications with the United States' Government, in pursuance with your Lordship's instructions of the 18th of May, on the subject of Oregon.

"I accordingly take advantage of the departure of the 'Great Britain' steam-ship to acquaint your Lordship that I had yesterday morning a conference, by appointment, with Mr. Buchanan, when the negotiation for the settlement of the Oregon question was formally resumed.

"As the best explanation which I could offer of the motives which had induced Her Majesty's Government to instruct me to make a fresh, and as your Lordship hoped, a final, proposition for the solution of these long-existing difficulties, I read to Mr. Buchanan an extract from your Lordship's despatch No. 18, beginning with the words, 'In this state of affairs, it is a matter of some anxiety and doubt what steps, &c., to the end of the despatch. It seemed to me that there was nothing in the observations contained in this part of your Lordship's instructions which might not be advantageously made known to the American Government.

"Your Lordship's language appeared to make a good deal of impression upon Mr. Buchanan. After I read to him the extract which I had prepared from the despatch, he requested to be allowed to read it over himself, in my presence, with which request I of course complied. I thought it best not to leave a copy of it in his hands, having in view the possible, although not probable, failure of the negotiation which might render it desirable to deliver to him a copy at length of the despatch, with a view to its ultimate publication.

"I then laid before him a copy of the draft of a Convention which accompanied your Lordship's despatch No. 19, which Mr. Buchanan said he would immediately submit to the President for his consideration. A minute of what passed between us was then drawn up and signed, with the draft of the proposed Convention formally annexed to it.

"Mr. Buchanan frankly told me that, in his opinion, the only part of the proposed arrangement likely to occasion any serious difficulty, was that relating to the navigation of the Columbia, for he said, that the strongest objection existed to granting the perpetual freedom of the navigation of that river. I did not fail to point out to him the great difference which existed between a perpetual and general freedom of navigation, and the qualified right of navigation contemplated by your Lordship's proposition. He admitted the force of my observations in this sense, but I collect, from what fell from him on this point, that an attempt will be made to limit the proposed concession to the duration of the existing charter of the Hudson's Bay Company.

"At 4 o'clock yesterday evening I again met Mr. Buchanan by appointment, when he told me that the President had come to the determination to submit our whole proposition to the Senate for their advice, and that it would accordingly be sent to the Senate at an early day with a Message, which

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† The last three paragraphs of this letter are omitted here. They have no relation to the question before the Arbitrator, and they have not (as far as Her Majesty's Government know) been published by the United States' Government.