

## Agricultural Protection.

No one is more sensible than ourselves of the injurious influence that the repeal of the British Corn Laws will have upon the future destiny of this colony, unless the colonists adopt a system of political economy adapted to the emergencies of the case. It is extremely doubtful that any decided action will be taken, by either colonial government or people, in establishing a spacious home market for the productions of the soil, and in developing the vast and numerous resources of wealth with which Canada abounds, so long as the present liberal policy of admitting our breadstuffs and other provisions into the British market is in force. The present Canadian Corn Law is a much more liberal measure than the farmers of this country had any right in justice to the British farmers to expect, inasmuch as the colonists pay no share of the expense of sustaining the Imperial Government, or of maintaining the poor of the British Isles. In many parishes in England the poor-rates alone equal fifteen shillings sterling per acre upon lands, and the other taxes and assessments at the same ratio—no share of which is borne, nor should be, by the Canadian farmer. It therefore must appear clear to every unprejudiced mind, that the low duty placed upon Canadian provisions is probably the greatest boon that was ever granted a colony. The carrying trade to be sure is principally in the hands of capitalists in Britain, yet the competition in this trade is open to the colonists; so that view the matter in all its bearings, every degree of justice is done the latter.

The manufacturing classes of the mother country argue, and probably with some reason, that with the present fostering care given to the various manufacturing trades on the continent of Europe, by the several governments, it will shortly be impossible for the British manufacturer with his high price of labor and provisions, to compete with the continental manufacturer with his low price of those commodities.

The deleterious influence upon the British manufacturer, from this quarter, has not yet been experienced to any great extent, but many clever statesmen apprehend the most disastrous consequences from the competition alluded to; and to avert the evil in some measure have demanded in a constitutional manner, that free trade in corn be enacted. The agriculturists of Britain are as firmly convinced that they cannot compete in

growing grain with the great corn growing countries of Europe, as are the manufacturers that they cannot compete with the cheap labor and provisions of those countries. The question at issue is between two powerful parties or interests in Britain; and although we are to a very great degree an interested party, it is extremely doubtful that we have any right to interfere in the contest. It is highly probable that an appeal to the British nation will be made upon this single question before many months:—the motto of both parties is "NO SURRENDER," and nothing short of a general election will amicably adjust the difficulty.

In this election the views and interests of the Canadian people will scarcely be consulted, and we see no tenable grounds for a general agitation being engaged in here so long as this is the case. If others differ with us in this view, and think that we should generally petition the British Parliament upon the Corn Law question, we have no objections to lend the columns of our journal and the little influence we may possess, in influencing the British Government if possible to continue the protective system, which has already done so much good for this colony. As there are so many difficulties in the way in getting petitions of this kind widely circulated among the farmers, probably the best course would be to petition the Provincial Parliament to memorialise the Queen on this important subject.

The following communication from Captain James B. Harris, shows in a most conclusive manner the importance which he attaches to the great question at issue at present in England; and if other leading agriculturists concur with him in opinion that we should petition, the sooner action is taken in the matter the better:—

Benares, near Credit,

Feb. 12, 1846.

DEAR SIR,—

Having noticed in the late files of the *John Bull* newspaper, that the Agricultural Protection Society of Great Britain, as well as a great many of the Agricultural Societies throughout the Kingdom had held meetings, which were very fully attended, at all of which it was determined to petition Her Majesty and both Houses of Parliament in support of the Corn Laws, I conceive that the farmers of Canada ought to do everything in their power to second the views of the agriculturists at home, our interests and theirs