

First of all, they wish to repeal the existing duties on agricultural products, but as this subject has been pretty fully discussed, we shall forbear any remarks on it for the present. Secondly, the Board advises the Government to pass a law to *force* every trader in the Province to resort to Montreal and Quebec for supplies. Veiling their selfish design under cover of a patriotic desire to preserve to the St. Lawrence its trade, they call upon the Administration to remit one third of the duties payable on the various imports, when such importation shall have been made via the St. Lawrence. We shall endeavour to illustrate the working of this selfish scheme. A trader wishes to import tea, tobacco, cotton and other productions of the United States. If he conveys his purchases to the country by the most direct route, he may pay, say three pence per lb. on tea, while the same article brought round by Quebec will only pay two pence per lb. Now, as a country dealer does not purchase enough for a ship load, the practical operation of the plan proposed would be to force every country trader to purchase his goods in Montreal and Quebec. The plan, like most selfish and narrow-minded schemes, would defeat itself. We should smuggle rather than submit to an unjust tax, levied for the benefit of the merchants of Montreal, (they remind us of Shylock) we would smuggle—covertly if possible—openly and forcibly if necessary. The tea tax cost Great Britain the thirteen Colonies. Any administration that adopts the views of the Montreal Board of Trade is doomed. We do not apprehend, however, that any statesmen will ever be seduced into a policy so narrow and unjust; and have noticed the project, more to illustrate the contracted view among the Montreal merchants, than from desire to warn the administration of the “decoy duck” placed before them.

Our remarks may not be very palatable to those for whose especial benefit they are intended, but as they are meant for their good, and as we happen to be in an officious humour, we shall repeat them our good advice.

If our Montreal friends would cease to fritter away their energies on schemes utterly unattainable, and would concentrate their forces upon objects they can attain, there would be no lack of vessels in our noble river, nor any want of craft or produce for our magnificent Canals; remove the restrictions on the free navigation of the St. Lawrence, and the mighty products of the Great West would as inevitably seek our outlet to the ocean as water will find its level. Nature designed the St. Lawrence as the sewer of the West, and although short sighted legislation may dam the current for a period, in the end, nature will triumph over man, we can hasten natural consequences or we may retard them, but we cannot *stop* them.