

have, that for a long time all our commerce will be transacted with England, because England will be able to sell better goods at a lower price than any nation in the world. If England, in spite of duties from 30 to 75 per cent, can yet compete advantageously in the American markets, what will she not do in ours, where the duties will be uniform? If she competes in the markets of France, Holland, Germany, Prussia, and Russia, and all the markets in the world, in spite of their high tariffs, do you not think that in such a market as ours she will meet them with a ruinous rivalry, and succeed then, as well as now, in monopolizing the supply by the excellence of her fabrics, and the low prices at which they are sold.

Many articles will, notwithstanding, be brought from abroad by the Americans,—such as tea from China, the wines of France,—coffee, sugar, and other articles, the products of the soil rather than manufactures. This will be our benefit in the reduction of the differential duties, and I repeat it, if we cannot get these articles by sea, we shall by land; and England, without gaining one additional advantage, will only subject us to one more inconvenience, and give the States one new advantage, to her own detriment.

There can be but one opinion, as there ought to be but one voice, in the country to demand—

1st.—The Repeal of Maritime Restrictions.

2nd.—The Repeal of Imperial Duties.

3rd.—Full power to the Colonies to regulate their Tariffs.

But every thing is not done, when we have desired these things; every thing is not done when we have said so in private conversations. It is necessary to use more efficacious and more energetic means. Every parish should have assemblies, should pass resolutions, should name committees to draw up reports, based on the resolutions, and accompanied by petitions signed by all the inhabitants of the parish, in order that copies may be sent without delay, to the Executive, the Council, and the Legislative Assembly, and the Imperial Government. "Ask and it will be given to you."

(Here follows an account of the principal restrictions imposed by the Navigation Laws.)

It must be evident to every one who reads these articles, that the entrance to the St. Lawrence is virtually closed to foreign ships. It is the repeal of these laws which it is our interest to effect. The prosperity of Canada will depend upon the measures of political economy which we may adopt. England having carried out her great Corn Law reforms, invites us to watch over our own interests; she herself removes from us at one stroke the heaviest of our hindrances,—the differential duties. Certainly we shall be grateful for it, although she could no longer justly load us with them, any more than she can longer load our commerce with maritime restrictions.

If England has believed up to this time that Canadians did not understand their interests, she has certainly deceived herself. We have not demanded the repeal of these hindrances, so heavy and so narrow, because our voice has been so long stifled by louder clamours; but now that the whole country, *en masse*, from the extremity of Lake Superior to the entrance of the St. Lawrence, demand justice from England, we will demand also, what we have long considered as a right.

The Free Trade Association of Montreal deserves that the people should attend to its demands and read its remarks. This Association has given an impetus to the commercial and agricultural world; and though I do not approve of all its principles, I see with pleasure the progress that its opinions are making among Canadians of all origins.—*"Aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera."*

G. B.

LACHINE RAILWAY.

We are informed that it is the intention of the Directors of this line of road to make the width of the rail 4 ft. 8½ inches. In England all the railways prior to the Great Western, had been laid down 4 ft. 8½ in. apart. Mr. Brunel, the engineer for that road, extended the width to 7 feet; the Irish Railway Commission recommended 6 ft. 2 in., while several of the Scottish Railways are laid down at 5 ft. 6 in.

We are not now about to dispute which width of rail is the best, but only to suggest the propriety, while it is yet time, of having, if possible, throughout the main trunks in Canada, a uniform width of rail. The Directors of the Portland Railway, both in this city and in Portland, have, after much consideration, adopted a width of rail of 5 ft. 6 in., that width being deemed the most advantageous where heavy freight has to be carried. If, as is now pretty certain, the Portland Railroad does not terminate on the other side of the river, but is brought into Montreal by means of a bridge across the St. Lawrence, the effects of a non-uniformity of gauges would be most injurious. Thus it will often happen that large craft will discharge at Lachine instead of coming down the Canal, and this must frequently be the case in the fall of the year, when vessels can arrive at Lachine ten or twelve days after the Canal is found closed. Now, how important is it not, that such freight, when put into the cars, should not again be removed until it reaches Portland; and this is what we want to effect. There is nothing in the charter to prevent the Lachine Company from taking their cars over the Portland road; but this, of course, they will not be able to do if the width of rail with one is 4 ft. 8 in. whilst it is 5 ft. 6 in. with the other. The inconveniences of such a deviation are too evident to require much argument, and should be sufficient to induce the Directors of the Lachine line to adapt the same width as the Portland. In the one case, the goods when put into cars at Lachine will remain undisturbed till they reach the seaboard, whilst in the other

there must be, what under the circumstances would be a useless, vexatious, and expensive removal, at the end of nine miles.

We throw out these hints that the Directors of the Lachine line may not hereafter have to reproach themselves with having imposed a tax and burthen on the public.

FREE TRADE IN QUEBEC.

It would seem from the following remarks, furnished by the correspondent of a local paper, that the public mind is not quite indifferent, even in Quebec, to the great questions of the day, and that although the newspapers and Boards of Trade of that City make "no sign," a portion of the mercantile community are beginning to "desire that the navigation of the St. Lawrence should be conceded to all nations":—

QUEBEC, September 16, 1846.

"In common with other of the good people of Canada, our merchants talk about the repeal of the Navigation Laws. Their attention has been drawn to the subject, more particularly, by the remarks of the Montreal Press and of the Quebec Gazette. Some are inclined for repeal; others are opposed to it. The older and more aristocratic gentlemen believe that this extension of the Free Trade principle cannot possibly be productive of good; they fear that it will be ruinous to British connexion—that it will be an injustice to English and Colonial shipowners, and scarcely beneficial to us. The younger and less aristocratic, though equally gentlemanly merchants, desire that the navigation of the St. Lawrence should be conceded to all nations, believing that the opposition would increase the trade of the Province, and so add to the general prosperity. Both British and American shipowners might be ruined on the first trial of strength; but while they suffered, Canada would prosper. Freights would be cheaper and more voyages would be made in the course of a year than are now made. Competition with the Americans would make it essential for our shipowners to introduce a better class of vessels—vessels which would sail faster, or at least as fast as the foreign crafts, with whom they would have to compete. Could a sailing vessel navigate the Atlantic *via the St. Lawrence* on an average in from 20 to 30 days, a great saving in both time and money would be the consequence, and then shipowners could afford to accept a lower rate of freight than now from that very circumstance. But, supposing that they could not do so, that they not only would be brought to the brink of ruin, but the foreigners too, by the competition, then a new class of vessels would spring up—other shipowners would rise, or their predecessors fall, and what the first could not accomplish the second might. We frequently see this accomplished in ordinary oppositions; but what is of more importance, the repeal of these laws would create and cement a connexion between this country and Great Britain—Great Britain and the United States—indeed between all who speak our language. A commercial relationship would spring up between the lost Colonies of Britain and the Parent State, which might reunite them, for their interests being identical, their sympathies would be so also, and old England and English or British America, States and all, would be allied by commodities, for they feeling their interest one, would support each other against the other nations of the earth. Self-government is not inconsistent with family relationship. A family compact frequently and naturally exists after the younger branches have grown up and govern themselves. The Civil Government of Scotland is different from that of England, yet both agree and identify their interests. The continental Solvism is a proof that commercial interests may cement where variance of rule might divide."

THE PETITION OF THE TORONTO BOARD OF TRADE,

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

1. That by the provisions of the Navigation Laws of your Majesty's kingdom, the carrying trade of the exports and imports of Canada to and from Great Britain and Ireland, or any British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, is confined to British ships; in consequence of which restriction, serious loss and inconvenience are at present imposed upon the inhabitants of this Province.

2 Your Petitioners, having carefully considered the operation of the said laws upon the commercial and agricultural interests of Canada, feel called on to state, that prior to the alterations in the Corn-laws of your Majesty's kingdom, effected in the last session of Parliament, your Majesty's subjects residing in Western Canada, did not feel the disadvantages resulting to the Colony from the monopoly of the carrying trade conferred on the owners of British ships by the navigation laws, as it was found that the prices of their agricultural exports generally equalled those which were observed to obtain in the contiguous sections of the neighbouring states of the republic of America, for the same products destined for shipment to the British market through the Atlantic seaports of the said states. Your Petitioners cannot, however, conceal from your Majesty the fact, that the protection generally supposed to have been enjoyed by the agriculturists of Canada, in consequence of the preference given to their products in the markets of your Majesty's kingdom,