

mortification, their only alternative in the conversion of their export trade into a valuable branch of the resources of their republican neighbours, who will not fail to avail themselves of so opportune a juncture for demonstrating to the people of Canada, by the removal of every obstacle standing in the way of a free egress through their territory, that they possess the means, and have the desire, to advance their interests.

Your petitioners further most humbly submit, that Your Majesty's Canadian subjects have incurred a heavy debt in the constructing of canals capable of giving passage to vessels of large dimensions, under the expectations that by these improvements of their internal navigation they would not fail to secure to themselves a large share of the carrying-trade of the rich agricultural countries bordering on the great lakes of Canada. The repayment of the debt thus incurred is an object from which your petitioners feel convinced no consideration can ever divert the intentions of the people of Canada; but it is quite manifest, that in the event of the export trade of Western Canada, and the states adjacent to the lakes, being forced out of the waters of the St. Lawrence, the outlay upon the improvements, from Lake Ontario to the ocean, will have become a dead weight on the resources and energies of the province, the trade of the recently flourishing cities of Quebec and Montreal will have disappeared, and the mercantile capital of their enterprising citizens will have been transferred to the commercial emporia of the neighbouring country.

These are evils which your petitioners cannot contemplate with other than the most gloomy apprehensions, but they feel convinced that in the wise foresight of Your Majesty, they may rely with entire confidence for the prompt adoption of every practicable means by which they may be averted.

Your petitioners have further most humbly to submit to Your Majesty, that the trade of Canada labours under weighty disadvantages resulting from the imposition of protective custom duties under authority of Imperial statutes. This class of duties your petitioners are pleased to observe, by the declarations of Your Majesty's advisers, as well of the recently existing administration, as of the present, is no longer held to be in harmony with the recognized principles of British commercial legislation; and your petitioners are disposed to believe that a pressure of other more absorbing measures has been the only cause which has prevented Your Majesty's Government from proposing to Parliament the repeal of the Imperial Customs Laws authorizing the levying of protective duties, for the purpose of securing to the manufacturers of Your Majesty's Kingdom a preference in the supply of the Canada market, which they no longer consent to extend to the people of Canada in the supply of the British market. Several of the protective duties referred to are found by your petitioners, not only to be burthensome upon the resources of the province, but also to be totally inoperative in effecting the purpose contemplated in their devisal, as they are levied, in their maximum extent, on some articles of general consumption, as window glass, sugar and coffee, which at present do not come into competition with the same description of goods of British origin.

Your petitioners observed with much gratification that Your Majesty's late Secretary for the Colonies, in a despatch No. 32, dated Downing Street, 3d March 1846, in referring to the then proposed measures of Government for the removal of commercial restrictions, expressed his desire "that the efforts of the British Legislature in this respect may be seconded, their range extended, and the example rendered yet more impressive, not only by the acquiescence, but by the approval and active co-operation of the Legislatures and the inhabitants of the colonies." And your petitioners would cheerfully have sustained the Provincial Legislature in that co-operation, in preference to the course adopted by it, of remonstrating against the passage of a measure which circumstances had rendered no longer resistable.

Your petitioners, therefore, believe, that in submitting to Your Majesty their convictions of the expediency of repealing the present Imperial Customs Laws, authorizing the imposition of protective or differential duties within this province, they are not preferring to Your Majesty a complaint, the redress of which will not be in accordance with Your Majesty's wishes and intentions.

Your petitioners, therefore, in view of the premises herein set forth, most humbly pray that Your Majesty will be pleased to recommend to Parliament an immediate repeal of the Navigation Laws of the United Kingdom, so far as the same relate to the River St. Lawrence and inland waters of Canada, and also such alterations in the present Imperial Colonial Customs Tariff as may render the trade of this province with the mother country one of fair reciprocity.

And Your Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

For and on behalf of the Board.

(Signed) GEO. PERCL. RIDOUT, President.
HENRY ROUSE, Secretary, T.B.T.

Toronto, Canada,
9th September 1846.