

Government, and with him went McLellan, Hugh McDonald, Stewart Campbell, Edward M. McDonald and other leading spirits of the party, and the agitation subsided. But it will be acknowledged by all who have any understanding of human nature, that this was a poor beginning for Confederation in Nova Scotia. For a Legislature to force a constitutional change upon the people of a free Province in defiance of their known wishes was a crime of the deepest hue. To have been compelled to suffer the consequences of this foul wrong has always rankled in the breasts of a very large portion of the people of Nova Scotia. It is likely, however, that Time, the great healer, would have eventually assuaged this feeling if all had gone well. But all has not gone well. First came the influx of the Upper Province drummers, driving Halifax wholesalers out of their own markets. This gradually undermined the supremacy of Halifax as an importing centre. The merchants ceased to make fortunes. Next came an increase of the tariff, which tended to shut our people off from a profitable trade with the New England States, and force them to engage in an unprofitable trade with the Upper Provinces. The former was advantageous inasmuch as in exchange for flour, cotton and woollen goods, etc., we could send them the products of the forest, the farm and the fisheries; whereas, for what our people got from the Upper Provinces they were compelled chiefly to send cash.

The next unpleasant feature of the Confederation was the steady increase of expenditure and of the public debt. At first the construction of the Intercolonial Railway seemed an equivalent, but after a time came extravagant contracts with an unknown section called British Columbia. They observed wild schemes of immense magnitude in the North-West, and these eventually so engaged the attention of the Federal Government that Maritime interests seemed to be forgotten.

Next came the National Policy—a pleasant disguise for Protection. It came upon the country suddenly and took everyone unawares. There had been a period of hard times. People got discontented and disgusted. When a man is chronically ill, and regular physicians fail to give him relief, he is ready for the quack. In this condition were the people of all Canada in 1878. Those who lived in the Maritime Provinces were told that there was to be no increase, only a re-adjustment. The West India trade was languishing, the Quack said, "Refine Sugar at Halifax—that will make you flourish." The coal industry was depressed, "Secure a duty, and thus get command of the Ontario markets," was the syren song sung in the ears of all concerned in coal. The same was said in regard to iron, and so, with a blind infatuation unworthy of an intelligent people, the masses rushed to the polls seeking "a few years of prosperity." And thus scarcely eleven years had elapsed before the Maritime Provinces found themselves actually the willing victims of the very evil they had dreaded before the Union—Protection.

All this while the tariff is going up, the public debt increasing, the expenditure growing greater, the rate of taxation becoming higher. The National Policy has failed. Ontario does not take Nova Scotia coal and our people are compelled to buy Ontario flour, or pay a tax upon American. Two sugar refineries have been built in Halifax, but they have proved ruinously losing concerns. More than half a million of Halifax capital is locked up in one of them, and the net loss last year was over \$200,000. The West India trade, instead of being benefited by these refineries, received its last kick from them. Before the National Policy, the Halifax West India merchants used to send cargoes of fish to the West Indies, and bring back cargoes of raw sugar to the leading American ports, which they sold to advantage and then brought refined sugar and other staple articles to Halifax. This was a lucrative trade. The tariff of 1879 put an end to this, and the Halifax West India traders were at the mercy of the Montreal refinery for the sale of their raw sugars. To meet this difficulty they were told to build a refinery of their own and then they would have a home market. But no sooner was the refinery built than the directors went abroad all over the globe to buy raw sugars in the cheapest markets, and at the lowest prices, which made it impossible for the home traders to sell a cargo in competition. The consequence is that the West India trade, which has been steadily declining, has reached bottom, and it would have been better if every West India merchant in Halifax had chained his ships to the wharf and retired from business one year ago.

Two or three cotton factories were erected in Nova Scotia as a result of the tariff. They have all lost money systematically. Another half million of Halifax money is locked up in a factory that has had a deficit ever since its machinery was first started. No other industries have sprung up since the National Policy was introduced, and the only consequence of the protective tariff is higher taxation and a declension in the shipping industry. Nova Scotia can only regard the National Policy as an attempt to force an artificial, unnatural and profitless trade with the

Upper Provinces, instead of a natural, healthy and profitable trade with the New England States. The tariff of 1879 has proved a success in only one particular, namely, as a revenue-extorting machine. Millions have been obtained from the people, but it has all gone to the North-West—all been absorbed by the Pacific Railway. It is a matter for wonder that the people of Nova Scotia should fail to see any brilliant prospects in a Railway to the Pacific Ocean. They have contributed over eight millions of dollars to this enterprise—a larger sum than they expended on public works within the Province up to the hour of Confederation.

It will be necessary to pursue this topic in a subsequent issue, for the catalogue of grievances is long.

NOVA SCOTIAN.

### THE ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN ETCHERS.

THE exhibition of etchings thrown open on Saturday last to the citizens of Toronto, inaugurates an important movement in the direction of Art education in Canada, and places all under a special debt of obligation to the little band of artists and amateurs to whose joint labours and unflagging zeal this happy result is due. The collection includes upwards of three hundred examples, from England, France, Germany, the United States, and—as we have pride in noting, from Canada. Among them are the works of artists of high standing and well-proved skill in the handling of the etching-needle. They also embrace types of diverse classes included in the product of the etcher's art; and as it is new to Canadian connoisseurs, it may be well to draw attention to this diversity.

We can scarcely err in saying at the outset that one great value of the etcher's art lies in the fact that by its means the collector of true taste, even though of very moderate means, may enrich his walls, and still more store his portfolios, with genuine works of the leading artists of the day, or even of the same great masters whose paintings form the prized treasures of royal and national galleries of art. Etching in fact has effected for the connoisseur in art what the printing-press has done for the book collector. If the latter cannot aspire to an illuminated MS., he may possibly become the delighted possessor of a Guttenburg, a Caxton, or a Wynkin de Worde; or at the least a choice Elzever is sure to be within his means; and so, too, the modest lover of Art may rejoice in the acquisition of a genuine Albert Durer, a Rembrandt, a Hogarth, or a Turner, to whom the price of a single painting of such artists would be a fortune capitalized.

Through the courtesy of Mr. E. M. Wilson, of New York, the Associated Etchers are enabled to exhibit two little Rembrandts: a pair of heads, No. 231, by no means so large as the palm of the hand. Doubtless there will be some among the visitors to the gallery who will read the price affixed to them of \$50 each, and look anew with incredulous wonder on the objects so appraised. And yet to the true Art collector the price is calculated rather to awaken a doubt as to their genuineness; for not only \$50 but \$500, and still larger sums, have been freely paid in recent years for choice impressions of the genuine handiwork of the great master of chiaroscuro. For such they are; with the very same rare qualities which render his paintings among the most prized works of the great school of Art which produced Reubens and Vandyke, Quentin Matsys, Berghem, Cuyp, Ostade, and the whole realistic painters of the Netherlands. This is a point which we trust the members of our "Association of Canadian Etchers" will keep steadily in view. A genuine little scrap of honest original work, the product of the same hand and brain, has a charm for the true lover of Art that no mere transcript of another's picture can possess. It is this quality of originality, this freshness from the hand of the artist, which confers the special value on the most modest productions of the etcher. It is no mere engraver's copy, but as genuine a work of Art as the finished painting, fresh from the artist's easel; and not unfrequently the more spontaneous product of his mind; for as Hammerton the artist-critic truly says: "Every stroke of it has value exactly proportionate to the mental capacity of the artist." The larger number of works in the present exhibition are of this class, and include some of rare excellence. But we note this, at the outset, in order to indicate clearly the legitimate field of the etcher's triumphs. The etcher's needle is to the true artist what the chisel is to the sculptor, and the pen to the poet; and, as by the one the marble is kindled into life, and with the other the poet "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name":

Even so the etcher's needle on its point  
Doth catch what in the artist-poet's mind  
Reality and fancy did create.

We can readily imagine that among the large and attractive pictures "on the line," few will take a higher rank in popular favour than R. W. Macbeth's skilful rendering of Pinwell's pictorial version of the famous Browning ballad-epic: "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," No. 138. Yet we question if this is a true application of the etcher's art. With laborious industry Mr. Macbeth has striven to reproduce the original painting by a pure effect of light and shade. But in such an effort the translator of another's work by the etcher's process is at a great disadvantage, as compared with the true engraver, whether in line or mezzotinto. He produces only a tinted sketch, as it were; and cannot pretend to translate the colours of the original into their relative light and shade. The etcher altogether misunderstands the true triumphs of his art if he fancies that his needle can supplant the burin of Raphael Morghen, Sir Robert Strange, Sharpe, Burnet, or others of the great line-engravers to whom we owe the "Last Supper" of Leonardo de Vinci, the "Aurora" of Guido, and some of the