

HAMILTON BOARD OF TRADE.

We have great pleasure in giving insertion to the Report of the Hamilton Board of Trade, read at their annual meeting. We have here the expressed opinion in favor of Free Trade of the representatives of the mercantile community in our rising and flourishing sister city, and we cannot but augur favorably of our future prospects when three cities so dissimilarly situated as Montreal, Toronto, and Hamilton, join in seeking the attainment of the same objects. If anything were wanting to prove the groundlessness of the assertion that the objects of the Free Traders are selfish, it is to be found in this complete unanimity of opinion, where a great diversity of interests might be supposed to exist.

Powerful, however, as the Reports of the Boards of Trade above alluded to are, as arguments in favor of Free Trade, they are even less so than the Reports which purport to be written on the other side; such as that from the Quebec Board of Trade. As the unwilling admission of an antagonist is of more unequivocal value than the willing testimony of a friend, so the reluctant tribute which the Quebec Protectionists are compelled to give to the soundness of Free Trade principles, whenever their local interests are not immediately affected, must tend to convince dispassionate persons of the general applicability of those principles.

We rejoice to learn that the new Board of Trade of Hamilton are thorough Free Traders, and that we may depend on their cordial coöperation in every measure to forward the prosperity of all classes of the community. We congratulate our friends on the choice they have made of a gentleman so long a respected citizen of Montreal as their President. Mr. BRONDCREST'S experience as a merchant here,—conducting the business of one of the most extensive commercial houses in the country—his occupation for some time of the Presidency of the Montreal Board of Trade—his active coöperation in the Council of the Free Trade Association—all eminently fit him for the post in which the suffrages of his fellow-citizens of Hamilton have placed him; and we are satisfied that the appointment—flattering as it is in the highest degree to the individual so elevated—will also conduce to the advantage of his constituents.

We observe that the *Hamilton Spectator*, and certain other Protectionist newspapers of Canada West, dwell with marked pleasure on the change which has taken place in the Montreal Board of Trade. The *Hamilton Spectator* observes that "the recent election in the first commercial body in Canada proves that the theories advanced by the Free Traders have been disproved by facts and matured reflection." Now, we think we may fairly set off against the result of the election, the resolution which was unanimously voted by "the first commercial body in Canada," at the meeting alluded to, and which, lest it should have escaped the recollection of our contemporary, we insert for his edification:—

Moved by W. Bristow, Esq., seconded by Mr. Cumming:—

"That the thanks of this meeting are justly due, and are hereby given to the Officers and Council of the Montreal Board of Trade, for the zeal and ability with which they have, during the past year, advocated those important modifications in the fiscal and economical regulations of this Province, which the recently adopted commercial policy of the Mother Country imperatively demanded, and for the assiduous attention which they have devoted to all subjects connected with the local and general interests of the mercantile community."

As to the "facts and matured reflection," to which the *Hamilton Spectator* alludes, we think it will puzzle him or any one else to shew a single assertion which the Free Traders have ever made which has been refuted; and for this simple reason, that they never drew on their imagination to supply them with those "facts," but derived them from statistics of undoubted accuracy. The results of the "matured reflection" of the present Montreal Board of Trade remain to be seen: we have little doubt that they will take sufficient time to give them "maturity," whatever expectation we may form of their wisdom.

We apprehend, however, that our friend of the *Hamilton Spectator* will find himself disappointed in his expectations of the new Montreal Board of Trade, should their opinions ever see the light. He will find them little disposed to protect those pet interests for which he so valiantly does battle. Agricultural Protection and the 3s. per quarter on wheat will find little favor in the sight of the Montreal Protectionists. No; they, like the doughty Protectionists of Canada West, have their own cry,—"Protect us, but let every other interest protect itself!"

We cannot afford again to take up the subject of Taxation. We have frequently repeated that Free Traders are altogether opposed to DIRECT TAXATION, and that nothing in their doctrines leads to such a conclusion. The attempt to create such an apprehension amongst the agriculturists, is dishonest in the extreme.

With these observations, we give the proceedings at the Annual Meeting of the Hamilton Board of Trade.

HAMILTON BOARD OF TRADE.

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Trade took place on Wednesday, when the following Report was read, and unanimously adopted:

The Committee of the Hamilton Board of Trade, in resigning their trust, beg to report:

That during the past season, when so many and such important changes took place in our commercial relations with the Mother Country, when the whole system of protection was done away with, your Committee did not fail in their duty to their constituents, but petitioned Her most gracious Majesty the Queen, craving time, in order that the Colony might accustom itself to the change. To this petition a reply was received adverse to the prayer thereof. They subsequently forwarded to Her Majesty another petition, praying for such a modification of the Navigation Laws as might place the Canadian produce in a more favorable position. To this petition no answer has been received.

That your Committee have continued vigilant as to many matters of great importance to the welfare of the Colony; among them, the necessity of a uniform rate of Postage, the Repeal of the Duty upon American Wheat, useless to the farmer, burthensome to the merchant, and affording no revenue to the Colony; the Repeal of various Duties on American Provisions,—as, were such admitted for home consumption, free of duty, the whole of the very superior articles produced in Canada, would be put up for consumption in Britain; and thus, not only would the Canadian farmer obtain as good prices as at present, but a trade would be formed of the highest value to the Colony. The assimilation of duties on goods from whatever country derived, as an equivalent for the protection withdrawn from Canadian produce, so considerably permitted to be taken up by the Canadian Parliament, by the Authorities, have also occupied their attention, and would with many other matters have been urged on the Provincial Government, had there been any Parliament sitting. Your Committee, therefore, can only recommend these matters to their successors in office.

The completion of the Canals on the St. Lawrence will do much to facilitate our intercourse with our sea-port towns; and should the British Navigation Laws be so far altered as to permit foreign vessels to load at Quebec and Montreal for ports in Britain, and also allow foreign ships to bring to Canada the produce of any part of the globe, then your Committee trust that, so far from there being any necessity for Upper Canada merchants to import and export via New York, on the other hand, cheapness of inland transport will induce the merchants of the Western States of America to import their bulky and heavy goods by way of the St. Lawrence, and the present strange anomaly of our position be done away with, permission being given to import through a foreign port and foreign canals in foreign ships, and to be denied the privilege of importing in the same ships through a Canadian port and Canadian canals. Your Committee, judging from the late debate in the Imperial House of Commons, trust the day is not far distant when their hopes will be realised, and the cities of Hamilton and Quebec assume the commanding positions laid out for them by nature, and so improved by art.

The Magnetic Telegraph between this city and New York, continued on to Toronto, and to be extended to Montreal on the one hand, and to Port Sarnia on the other, your Committee have taken great interest in, conceiving such mode of communication of the highest importance to the interests of commerce, although they regret that, from accidents and other causes, the benefits derived from those in operation have been less than were anticipated. Your Committee recommended to their successors, on the completion of the other two lines, to obtain, either in connection with the press or otherwise, a daily report of the markets and news.

Your Committee have regarded with much satisfaction, the favorable position of the Canada Great Western Railway Company, conceiving such of the highest importance to the colony at large, and to this rising city in particular, and trust such may be merely the backbone of a series of railways, constructed from the materials so abundant on their respective lines, stretching to every corner of the fertile West.

Your Committee are much pleased to observe the enterprise shown in the establishment of a mining company and an association for life insurance, and notice with great satisfaction the formation of manufacturing establishments, which although commencing on a small scale will probably lead to undertakings of greater magnitude.

Your Committee would beg to point out to their successors, the importance of their publishing occasionally, information for the benefit of the Agriculturists, regarding the descriptions of grain suited for the British markets, the proper methods of preparing flour, of curing provisions, packing butter and making cheese, of raising and dressing hemp and flax, the culture and preparation of articles for dyeing, and on various other matters, respecting which the farmer naturally looks to the merchant for advice.

In conclusion, much as your Committee regret that their exertions have not met with the success they could have desired, they