

the retention of the present duties on agricultural produce. But they have a right to expect that if Free Trade principles are to be carried out to their disadvantage, they shall also be carried out for their benefit, therefore, the Montreal Mercantile interest has been *selfish* in its demand, as we have had repeatedly occasion to remark. They have complained latterly of agricultural protection, but they have never remonstrated against that part of the protective system under which the agricultural interest suffered. The gentlemen of the Free Trade Association have moved forward, and have taken a position which we think they will be able to maintain. We are against any half measures at the present crisis. Without any action on our part the protective system has been abandoned by the Mother Country in so far as *her interests* are concerned—we have now to fight the battle to destroy that part of it under which *our interests* are injuriously affected. It would be desirable that all classes of our population could unite together in fighting this battle, and our farmers may rely on it that *they are now the parties who have most to gain by the extension of Free Trade.*"

21st April, 1846.

"With regard to the merits of the question itself, we agree with Mr. Baldwin, that in bringing it forward, the administration should have been prepared to announce what measures it proposed for the relief of the agriculturists who will be severe sufferers by the Free Trade policy which has been forced upon the country. We are not of the number of those who endeavour to delude the agriculturists by advocating a system of protection which, under existing circumstances, would be ruinous to the trade of the country, and which would injure the agricultural, as much as any other class of the population. We contend that in the extension of Free Trade principles alone can we look for relief. The measures for the benefit of the agriculturists are 1st, the admission of our products into the United States free of duty. 2nd. The abolition of all imperial duties. 3rd. The opening of our commerce to the whole world, and more especially making the navigation of the St. Lawrence free. These measures would, we conceive, be of immense advantage to the country, and would amply compensate us for any injury that we may sustain by the adoption of Free Trade principles in England.

We observe that some of our contemporaries are terribly alarmed at the idea of the Americans being granted the free navigation of the St. Lawrence. It would, they say, lead to "Annexation." We should like to hear some reasons for such a supposition. At present the Americans make use of the