

1845, which every one will allow to be a fair approximation to the probable export of the year. But we leave out of our calculation, as too insignificant to be noticed. The total extra cost of transportation is thus shown to be £972,382 11s. 11d.; against which we now place the credit side of the question, that is the allowance for the actual difference of cost between navigating from New York and via the St. Lawrence.

The pages of the Economist furnish the necessary figures. In our seventh No. the question at issue is thoroughly examined; and the following conclusion established, viz., that the essential difference of expence between Montreal and New York respectively and Liverpool amounts to 2d. per bushel on Wheat or grain generally, and 6½d. per bbl. on Flour or similar packages. Such was the result arrived at by abstract reasoning; and we are happy to say that its conclusiveness has been established by the opinion of American shipmasters who have been consulted on the point, and who have not hesitated to say that if the St. Lawrence were open to them a difference of 9d. to 1s. per bbl. would at all times (excepting very late in the season) be a sufficient inducement to them to seek freight in the St. Lawrence, in preference to New York or Boston.

To be liberal, therefore, in our calculation, we will allow a difference of 9d. per bbl. on Flour and such like, and 3d. per bushel on Wheat and other grain. The account will then stand thus:—

Excess paid to the British shipowner	£972,382	11	11
Less allowance for extra expence of navigation—			
9d. per barrel on 1,503,819 barrels.....	£56,393	4	3
3d. per bush, on 2,036,126 bushels....	25,451	11	6
			81,844 15 9

Amount sacrificed by the Canadian producer in three years!.....£890,537 16 2

Per Annum.....£296,845 18 8

Thus, it is demonstrated by abstract reasoning as well as the testimony of practical men, that this colony has sacrificed for the last three years the sum of £300,000 a-year to the British shipowner! yet the *Gazette* tells us that we must submit to it patiently, because it is the price the mother country exacts from us for protection against—*nobody!*

We will now devote a few words to show how inconclusive the *Gazette* is in attempting to argue that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would have no "appreciable influence" in the way of lowering the rates of freight,

We have shown, both by abstract reasoning and by testimony, that the actual difference in the cost of navigation from Montreal and from the ports of New York or Boston to Liverpool is 7d. to 1s. per bbl.; indeed, we have the authority of a mercantile friend, a member of an importing house, who recently visited Boston on business, to say that he was offered a beautiful American bark, (capable of carrying 3,500 bbl. flour, and drawing 9 feet of water only when loaded,) at a shilling over the rate then current in Boston, (2s. 6d. per bbl.,) provided he could give her a cargo to Montreal, a transaction which he was prevented from entering into by three absurd restrictions:

1. The Navigation Laws;
2. The impossibility of bringing a foreign vessel further than Quebec, supposing all other obstacles removed; and
- Lastly. The Differential Duties.

These obstacles put together prevented his loading this foreign vessel with an assorted cargo of molasses, raw and bastard sugars, and teas, which he was offered on consignment, and which he assures us would have come to a good market, benefiting the Canadian consumer by cheapening his supplies, and the producer by lowering the rate of sea-going freight. But the *Gazette* says we must forego all such advantages as the price of British protection!

One illustration more and we have done for the present.

On referring to the freight tables furnished by the Report of the Montreal Board of Trade (which the *Gazette* thinks so silly, but which we think so useful,) we find that on the 11th July last, freight for flour was 6s. per barrel at Montreal, and 2s. per barrel at New York; yet, according to the *Gazette*, it would have had no "appreciable influence" on the rate of freight here to have been allowed to charter American vessels where the freight was so low, to bring them here where the rate was so high. Oh no, competition among British and Colonial ships alone is quite sufficient to keep the market at the *minimum*. We could give a thousand such instances to show the utter absurdity of the *Gazette's* reasoning, but we must conclude for the present as our article has already considerably exceeded our limits.

Since the foregoing was written another number of the *Gazette* has appeared, with an article of three or four columns in relation to the question before us. What specific propositions the *Gazette* endeavours to establish we confess we are unable to determine; his article being to us for the most part contradictory and unintelligible. One point, however, is clear: he lays aside the plea he formerly urged that the Navigation Laws should be submitted

to as the price we paid for British protection, and now takes new ground still more untenable, nay preposterous, viz., that they must be looked upon as a fair equivalent for the differential duty maintained by the mother country in favor of Colonial timber! "Oh, what a falling off is there!" In our next we shall lay statistics before our readers to show that the amount sacrificed by this Colony annually to the British shipowner, would go far to pay for the whole quantity of timber annually exported!

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

To judge from the very little that is written or said hereabouts on Post Office matters, a stranger might naturally fancy folks to have come to one or other of two very wrong conclusions; and to be of the mind, either that the arrangements for the Post Office accommodation of these Provinces are all they ought to be, or else, that it matters little whether they are or not. One not a stranger to the subject might draw a third and truer inference;—might suspect the real cause to be a general want of acquaintance with the facts and merits of the case, resulting in part from the necessary intricacy of the details of Post Office management, and in part from their having been always kept out of public view by the system adopted of centering all Post Office authority in the Post Master General at home, and making the Imperial character of the establishment a pretext for not letting the Provincial Government or Parliament do, say, or see, aught in the premises.

That all is not as it should be must be tolerably clear, when it is remembered that whilst for the Three Kingdoms there is but one letter rate, of 1d. sterling, and whilst for the whole United States there are but two, of 3d. and 6d. currency, there are for British North America eighteen or more, ranging from 4½d. to about 4s.; that a letter mailed here will pass all the way to the furthest Post-town in Texas, for little more than twice the charge here made on it for carrying it to the line 45°,—for little more than the charge that would be made upon the same letter if sent to Kingston,—for less than the charge upon it to Toronto; that it would cost less to mail a letter from Toronto, first to England and thence to Halifax in Nova Scotia, than to mail such letter direct to Halifax; that a letter weighing less than half an ounce costs more for carriage from this city to Quebec, than a barrel of pork or flour sent down by the same steambot; that a new Post Route cannot be laid down, nor a new Office opened, nor even an old Route or the site of an old Office, or the mode or cost of carrying a mail, altered, unless after special reference to an authority on the other side of the Atlantic, and with its sanction; that, in fact, every rule of the Department, no matter how trifling the detail to which it may have reference, emanates from that authority, and if appealed against must be appealed against to it, and decided on in the last resort by it.

That this state of things is anomalous, and its continuance irreconcilable with the first principles of the system of government established as regards other matters in these Provinces, is too plain to be argued. That it is prejudicial to the country, and that in a high degree, is not less plain. To hold our own with our rivals, as we now must do, we must start fair; must shake off, with the rest of our drag-weights, this heavy drag of our present Post Office system.

To this end, however, public opinion must be brought to bear in the right direction, and with the required degree of energy. The system must be understood, the causes and consequences of its many short-comings appreciated, and a definite view had of the steps to be taken for its reform.

The recent publication of the Report of Lord Sydenham's Commission furnishes an opportunity for attempting our share of this task. We have given some extracts from it; but, whatever it may have been when it was written, it is not now what the public want, to set them right on the subject. It is a long, tough document, almost five years old, describing minutely many things that have since been changed, suggesting many changes in detail, some of them of little general interest, some since effected, some since made impossible or impolitic. A shorter and newer account is needed; a statement in as few words as may be of the leading changes proposed by the Commissioners, of the extent to which their recommendations may have been acted upon or set aside, and of the matters now most urgently calling for further action. We purpose in future numbers to set about this task, and shall only be too happy if the press generally will advance the object we have in view, by joining with us in the discussion of this important topic.