

From the Toronto Patriot.

To His Excellency SIR CHARLES BAGOT,
Governor General of British North America, &c. &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY :

As it is probable that the Agricultural interests of this Province will shortly engage your Excellency's attention, and as various statements, apparently in their behalf, are likely to give a false impression of the nature of the evil they complain of, and the relief they seek, I take the liberty, as an agriculturist, of addressing your Excellency, with a view to explain my own, and, as I believe, the sentiments of the great majority of those engaged in the cultivation of the soil.

In the year 1832, the following duties existed :—

	£	s.	d.
Wheat flour per bbl.,	0	5	0
Wheat per bushel,	0	1	0
All other descriptions of grain, 0	0	0	7
Live Stock, for every £100.	10	0	0
Salted Beef and Pork, the cwt. 0	12	0	0

An Act was then passed, called the Canada Trade Act, which gave free admission to foreign agricultural produce. The great immigration at that period probably experienced some relief by its enactment, as the population of Upper Canada was then thin and scattered; but during the years 1830 to 1834, two hundred thousand emigrants arrived, the principal portion of whom were employed in agriculture. An abundant supply could therefore be obtained, of their own produce, and the removal of the restrictive duties on American produce was thought so injurious to the interests of the Province, as to induce the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada to petition the Imperial Government for agricultural protection.

It is necessary to observe, in order to account for this sudden transition from scarcity to abundance, that, at the same period, an extensive change was also in operation in the neighbouring Republic:—vast numbers from the Eastern States of the Union had sold their possessions, and exchanged an exhausted soil for the rich prairies of the West; crowds of emigrants from all parts of Europe were constantly proceeding in the same direction, and British capital supplied the means of effecting such internal communications as would facilitate the transportation of their produce.

From 1834 to the present period, emigration from Great Britain has continued to this Colony, but to a much greater extent to the United States. As emigration has extended, so have the difficulties of the Canadian farmer increased. Unable to compete with the far-West, which possesses a mild climate and abundance of fertile land, fit for immediate cultivation, and congenial to the growth of corn, with a boundless extent of pasture, the settler in Canada can no longer rear cattle with any reasonable expectation of profit; and the twenty-five to thirty thousand barrels of pork, with which the West India market was formerly supplied by the Canadian farmer, are now furnished by the American.

The difficulties we have to contend with, which nature has imposed, are only presented to your Excellency's notice, in order to explain the true position of the Canadian farmer.

Exposed to an unequal competition in his own and the British market, by the free admission of American produce, he is likewise subjected to heavy duties on similar produce when imported into the United States. Prohibited by a duty of 75 or 80 per cent. from exporting his wool, which is frequently unsaleable, he has to contend with the American, who has derived a large profit on the fleece in supplying the market with the car-

case; and whilst the agricultural produce of the United States is freely admitted to rival his staple productions, he is compelled to purchase every article necessary for his own consumption, 15 to 30 per cent. dearer than it can be obtained in the neighbouring States. The duties which are considered necessary to protect British manufactures would never cause a murmur, were the difficulties they impose on the Canadian farmer duly considered; but it cannot reasonably be expected that the producer, who labours under so many disadvantages, can bear the additional burthen this heavy taxation must create. Salt, so requisite for agricultural purposes, is taxed 40 per cent.; tobacco, 20 per cent.; leather, coffee, sugar, iron, glass, machinery, cotton sheeting, and all other goods, from 15 to 30 per cent.

As it is evident the source of the evil arises from the free admission of American agricultural produce, the remedy must be, protection.

Greatly as the boon of the remission of the Imperial duty on Canadian produce would be esteemed, were a just, discriminating duty imposed, yet, under existing arrangements, no relief would be afforded, but, on the contrary, an additional impetus would be given to the settlement of the Western States of America, which would effectually crush the agricultural interests of this Province. The emigration of 400,000 British subjects to the United States, during the last ten years, has excited some surprise in the mother country, and various conjectures are surmised as to the cause and to the mode of correcting the evil. Can your Excellency peruse this statement, and think it a matter of astonishment, that the stream of emigration has been diverted from these shores? Is it not natural that discontent should be the fruits of a policy, which has been sowing the seeds of separation? Can it be expected the connexion with the parent state, should be an object of solicitude to those who daily experience proofs that the interests of a foreign nation are preferred?

The efforts now making to promote emigration, presents a favourable opportunity of strengthening the bonds of union with the mother country. Canada, with only one fifteenth part of her surveyed land in cultivation, and millions of acres of rich forests, could, with proper encouragement, afford employment to the superabundant population of Great Britain. The importance of encouraging a settlement of this Province, to the British manufacturer, is sufficiently evident; for whilst his productions are successfully competed with in Europe, and almost superseded in the United States, Canada has steadily increased in her demand, and consumes, in proportion to her population, three times as much as any foreign customer he possesses.

The Agricultural interests having been totally neglected, it is not surprising that so small an amount of grain is raised for exportation; but, instead of using it as an argument in favour of a continuance of the present system, would it not be more rational, whilst so large a portion of the Province is unsettled, to change a policy which has discouraged production and prevented settlement? The assertion that the price of grain in Canada is not affected by importation from the United States, is supported by no evidence, and the prices obtained for wheat during the last two years, is sufficient proof to the contrary: the profit which the importers of American produce assert to arise from the flouring of the grain, is equally unfounded; for it is well known that but a trifling portion of American flour, exported via Canada, is manufactured in this

Province. It forms a subject of complaint from the forwarders in the State of New-York, who state, they are losing a portion of the carrying-trade, from the facilities afforded the Canadian merchant in purchasing his flour in Rochester, which he brands and ships as Canadian. The farmer is no longer to be duped with the fanciful illusions of interested speculators or vain theorists, experience has proved to him that his prosperity (if it is to arise from remunerating prices for his produce) is not to be obtained by free admission of American produce for the sake of the carrying trade—supposing the trading community increased by an extension of this commerce, the farmer is well aware their consumption is supplied from their own importations,—as nearly the entire population of Upper Canada can only be profitably employed in agriculture. If the carrying trade is thought to be more advantageous, it is worse than folly to encourage emigration to a country, where neither capital nor labour could be profitably employed. The ridiculous idea of claiming to be an integral part of the British Empire with a view simply to free admission of agricultural produce into Great Britain is too absurd ever to have been entertained by the agriculturists. If Canada is entitled to this distinction, the protecting laws of England should equally guard the Canadian and British farmer.

The British market is our home market, and before the agriculture of the neighbouring republic should be so extensively encouraged,* it would be prudent to test our own capacity of furnishing the requisite supply. It should be remembered that, within no distant period, England for several years raised sufficient for her consumption, and although the last few years of bad harvest have compelled her to import largely, a succession of favourable seasons may render her independent of foreign supply; (the general use of steam carriages will also most probably cause more wheat to be raised)—An increased production from our own soil, is the most beneficial and effectual method of regulating the exchanges, and commerce is more likely to be increased by an exchange of our produce for British manufactures than simply acting as forwarders for the United States, who import nothing in return via Canada.

It being generally admitted some duty is requisite, its amount is the principal object for consideration. The merchants of Lower or Eastern Canada cannot object to a just protection of the agricultural interests of Western Canada, for if they have been made liable by the union of the Provinces for a debt contracted without their authority, they should consider they have been the parties principally benefited, and the vast improvements now in contemplation, chiefly tend to their advantage. The merchants surely do not see, that reducing the farmer to the condition of a mere serf, must recoil upon themselves, by destroying the means of their customers.

When the difficulties which the farmer has to encounter in his competition with the neighbouring republic, are duly considered, a duty of less than one shilling, currency, per bushel on wheat, and five shillings per barrel, on flour, would be insufficient.—Whether it should be a fixed duty on all grain imported, or only on such part intended for home consumption (that for exportation being bonded) is immaterial to the farmer, the amount of the duty effects him individually, the disposal of the revenue is for the consideration of the Province. The proposition to establish a fixed duty of five shillings per quarter, to be paid into the Imperial Exchequer, (in lieu of the Imperial