

Your Council learn with satisfaction that the great national undertaking of a Railway to Halifax continues to occupy the attention of Government, and that surveys are now in active progress, and it is to be hoped the enterprise will be commenced at no distant period and prosecuted with that vigour its vast importance demands. Additional motives might be adduced, were such necessary, to stimulate immediate action on the part of Government in furtherance of this great object.

In the present unfortunate conjuncture, when destitution and suffering are exhibited in such appalling form, and prevailing to such an alarming extent throughout Great Britain, any means that can be devised to afford even temporary relief are deserving of attention, and infinitely more so if likely to be productive of permanent advantage. Were the undertaking once commenced, with the determination of continuing it to the Upper Lakes, ample employment would be afforded to thousands who will visit our shores in search of food and employment, and the relief would not cease with the termination of the work, formed along a line of a vast and fertile country, now a wilderness, and which by well directed management would furnish a home for all employed.

During the past season, a flagrant violation of the Passengers' Act, resulting in much suffering and death, was brought by your Council under the notice of the Imperial Authorities, and a prompt communication was received, stating the case would undergo searching investigation, and that proper precaution would be taken to prevent the recurrence of similar disgraceful occurrences.

The Council in resigning their trust, beg to call the attention of their successors to the improvement of the River St. Charles, which, with the increasing trade of our port, is of great importance, and although aware the subject is now under consideration of the Board of Works, and that there is every disposition on the part of the heads of that department to make the necessary improvements, yet they fear the calls on them are so numerous that means may not be found to enable them to do as they would wish. Under this apprehension, your Council regret the offer made by a most numerous class of our citizens, to improve the St. Charles and to build a breakwater, was not favorably entertained by the executive.

It being understood, however, that the Provincial Government are to make these improvements, your Council are of opinion that Commissioners should be appointed, with authority to borrow money for this specific object, in like manner as the Montreal Harbour Commissioners were empowered, should the Board of Works not be able to commence them immediately.

The necessity existing for a new and commodious Custom House, in an eligible situation, has been repeatedly brought before the notice of the Executive, but your Council regret to say their application has not hitherto been acted on.

Your Council have had under consideration the want of an Insolvent Debtor's Act, which subject they recommend to the prompt notice of their successors.

The Chief Police Magistrate, last year, kindly volunteered to visit New York and Boston, with the view of suggesting some improvement in and on the Water Police and Seamen's Act, which your Council have this year gladly availed themselves of, as there is little or no improvement apparent on our port, notwithstanding the large annual expenditure, and which your Council attribute mainly to the defect in the laws now existing.

From Mr. Justice McCord a draft of a Bill has been received within the last few days, therefore your Council can do nothing but refer it to the immediate attention of their successors.

The Treasurer's accounts are open for inspection, and a detailed statement of receipts and expenditure connected with Water Police is made out for the information of the shipping interest.

WM. WALKER, President.

FUTURE TRADE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

We copy the following remarks on the future trade of the St. Lawrence, from the Cincinnati *Merchants' Exchange Reporter*. The letter to which they refer presented a short statement of the changes that are likely to be made in the Colonial commercial laws, and the advantages these changes will offer to the Western merchant and shipowner.

"We find in a communication published in the Cleveland Herald, addressed by a *Canadian* to the editor of that paper, the following remarks and suggestions in regard to the Commerce of the St. Lawrence, the trade of the Canadas, and the tonnage of our Lakes.

"The proposition to employ the Lake vessels, during the winter months, in the Atlantic and Gulf Trade, is not new to us. It is, we conceive, one of the most utilitarian ideas of the age—a project for economy which would necessarily greatly enrich our Western Commerce, and indeed, the whole nation. Of what vast use would the numerous large Lake craft now be in the Gulf and Coast Trade, thus enabling the still larger sea vessels to engage in the exportation of our products to Europe. Suppose that at this time the fleet upon our Lakes could be brought to the aid of our Atlantic Commerce, how greatly would both the producer and shipper be benefited thereby, reducing as it would the rates of freights, thus is the same ratio enriching the farmer by the increased prices of his productions, and also the merchant by facilitating and ensuring promptness in forwarding.

"And the sail-craft are not all which might find employment in winter. Why should not the steamers and propellers leave the Lakes in season, at least a large share of them, to reach the Mississippi before the winter gales, and be employed during the winter in the navigation of the father of waters and its tributary, *'La Belle Rivière'*? Perhaps the latter project might not be profitable, and perhaps, also, the canal will not let them out. Nevertheless we cannot deny ourselves one of *'the pleasures of imagination'* in fancying that, at flood tide, a few of the mammoth lake steamers are delivering and receiving freights at our landing. How would it seem? Could our boats, which we denominate *'splendid shine then?'*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We give below the copy of an address to the electors of the county of Wentworth, by a gentleman named Down. That address explains itself. The objection to Mr. Aikman, the proposed candidate for the county, is, that he is not a Free Trader. Thus an important constituency has taken the first opportunity of requiring a pledge on this subject, and dividing the ground at the spot which the Protectionists and Free Traders have marked out. The example will most certainly not be lost on other constituencies, and candidates must prepare themselves henceforth to speak out boldly either on one side or the other of the question:—

To the Intelligent and Independent Electors of the Townships of Brantford, Binbrook, Saltfleet, and Onondaga.

GENTLEMEN,—

You have doubtless seen in the public journals an account of the meeting of Delegates held at Duff's Hotel, on the 23rd ultimo. You are also aware that it was convened for the purpose of selecting, if possible, a fit and proper person to represent the Conservative interest in the County at the next general election.

The result of that meeting has been but partially given, and I feel it due to the electors of Brantford in particular, and to the electors of the Townships above addressed, not represented at the convention, to supply the omission.

It would appear, by the reported proceedings, that Mr. Aikman was unanimously selected by the members of the convention present as the fittest and most desirable person in the county to be put in nomination for its representative, and also that the electors were in a great degree pledged by the choice of their delegates to use every possible means to secure his election.

Believing that I was appointed one of the delegates to the convention solely because I advocated at the preliminary meeting in this township, in conjunction with my colleague, Mr. Good, the necessity of selecting for our representative a gentleman of sufficient energy and ability willing to adopt the enlarged commercial policy of the Imperial Parliament to the exigencies of this Province, I felt that I should be very inadequately discharging the duties and confidence bestowed on me, if I did not oppose the selection of one whose opinions are known to be in favour of upholding that most pernicious of all monopolies to this Province,—the Carrying Trade.

I therefore met the nomination of Mr. Aikman with the following resolutions, viz:

1st. That the members of this convention present do not feel themselves justified, in the absence of delegates from the townships of Binbrook, Saltfleet, and Onondaga, in selecting a conservative candidate for the representation of the county of Wentworth.

2nd. That this convention do adjourn until the dissolution of the present House of Assembly be positively known.

These resolutions were lost,—the delegates of two townships, and a volunteer delegate from another, voting against it.

I will make no further comment on this proceeding than to observe, that there are seven townships in the county, and that Mr. Aikman is the nominee of only two of them. I took some pains to explain to the meeting, and in particular to the gentlemen who proposed Mr. Aikman, that the nomination of that gentleman by so small an assemblage of delegates would be probably not very acceptable. But it was persisted in. This explanation, which I conceive the electors of the unrepresented townships, and the dissentient one, are entitled to, will leave them at liberty to take what course they please.

Should the present Parliament live its natural existence, and there appears to be little prospect of its immediate dissolution, there will be a long interval between this and another election. Gentlemen, you will have well employed that time, if, when it shall have terminated, you are prepared with a candidate worthy of the honour, and well qualified to represent you.

Never had this Province greater need of all the energies and discretion of its electors than it will have at the next general election. We are fast approaching a new era in the annals of this Province. The Mother Country is about to try the experiment of governing colonies, when placed on the same footing with independent and foreign powers. This bold experiment—for it can be called nothing less—will be a dangerous one, unless representatives of enlarged and liberal, but conservative views be selected by the respective constituencies of the colony. It is an experiment, I think I am justified in saying, that will render the discharge of senatorial duties more hazardous to the Legislature, and of more importance to this country, than during any other period of its history. The more arduous, and the more important, then, are the duties required of a representative, so much the more circumspect should you be in the exercise of your elective franchise. Pledge yourselves, therefore, to no candidate till you have tested his qualifications for the high and important trust he seeks. It is your privilege to apply a test, and to ascertain the political bias of your candidate; for no member is worthy of being called your representative whose opinions are not, in the main, identical with your own. It is in fact the only guaranty you have of an honest and faithful discharge of parliamentary duties. The future prosperity of the colony may be said to be involved in the general exercise of this right, for if your interests be not ably and properly represented, how can you expect the enactment of remedial measures?

It is to be hoped that the agricultural electors especially, not only of this county, but of the Province generally, will support only such candidates as will, if returned to Parliament, advocate the application to this colony of the principle involved in the new commercial policy of England. If it be wise for a wealthy country like England to "buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market," it cannot be a folly to allow a poor one like Canada to do likewise.