

EXTRAORDINARY FLOOD.—GREAT DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY.

We regret to learn that the rains of the last few days have done a great deal of damage to property in the vicinity of Toronto, and doubtless further eastward. In this vicinity, we have heard of no damage of consequence; but from the border of the Home District downward, the whole of the bridge, except the fine bridge over the Hamber, have been carried away, and a great quantity of private property destroyed or seriously injured. We saw only a few of the boats that were driven north of us, by the opposition of the tide being still in the ground, the water was unable to penetrate, and rushed along the surface, swelling the streams to an unusual size. The steamer 'Ellips' had a great difficulty in reaching this port yesterday, in consequence of the Lake being covered with timber, driven from the small rivers and creeks. A schooner, lying fifteen feet above the level of the creek at Okaville, was regularly lashed and cast into the lake by the flood. Mr. Gable, of the York Mills, is reported to have lost 8,000 barrels of flour, and many other losses are reported. We learn that the bridges on the main road to Toronto are carried away, with the exception of the one at Toronto, which is believed to be safe as far as heard from. The destruction has been equally general. The Colonel of yesterday retains the following: We greatly fear that the latter accounts will considerably swell the list.—Hamilton Spectator.

The extraordinary and unusual heavy rains of Wednesday and Thursday, caused much damage in this city and neighborhood. The creek which flows through a portion of the Pottery Field, being ground, and through the streets of the city, became so swollen yesterday morning, from the rain of the night previous, that it rushed down Yonge Street in a torrent, from Pimley gate to Edward Street, and seriously injured the portion of road over which it flows. In some places nearly half the breadth of the road has been carried away by the flood, to the depth of three feet; and as far as it went, almost every bridge from the side-walk to the road, and almost every bridge swept away. Altogether the damage done is very great, and will exhaust considerable time and means in repairing.

The Don River also rose to such an unprecedented height, that many of the bridges and much property along its banks were destroyed or swept away. About half past 9 o'clock yesterday morning, the new Don Bridge, situated a mile and a half above the old bridge, on the Kingston road, gave way, and was floated down the river, until it struck the latter bridge, which it completely swept off. Many houses in the vicinity of the Bridge were inundated by water, and considerable damage, especially the Morocco Leather Works, and a portion of this city, which stood close beside the old bridge. This establishment, for a time, appeared to be in imminent danger; and many feared that it would share the fate of the bridge. While we stood beside the logs and raft, borne along the turbid stream; and we understand that the flats, for many miles up, were entirely cleared of fences. The low grounds, above and below the old bridge, as far as the eye could reach, presented the most desolate appearance which we have ever seen. The water, which cut off the communication between the city and country in that direction.

We hear, further, that the damage done along Young Street, and around the Pottery Field, as mentioned above, and the bridges at New York Mills and Thornhill have been carried away.

On the Hamber River, west of Toronto, several bridges have been swept away. Our accounts, as yet, have been only partial, and the fear, that from all parts of the Province we shall hear of serious losses from the flood.

About two o'clock, yesterday afternoon, the rain abated, after having fallen in torrents for twenty hours, and continued to fall partially during the evening.

By late accounts, we hear, that considerable damage has been done to premises in the hollow at Thornhill Mills. The Store of Mr. Beauskill has been mentioned as one that suffered from the flood. At the Hamber the extensive mill belonging to Mr. Howland is said to have suffered considerably by the water, which had risen to a great height, running through it. It is impossible to estimate the amount of damage, which has likely been done over the country by this great calamity, but it will, no doubt, prove to be very large, including in the ruins, mills, houses, factories, mill-dams, &c. We sincerely trust that the damage may prove to be less than we anticipate.

The English are the most practical people on the earth. This is a dictum which has been announced by the states of the world, and the discount in Canada—the irritation at the Cape of Good Hope—and the ruin of the West Indies, are strange commentaries on this text. At all events, we are the most practical people on the face of the earth, our practice is not very successful in its results.

Again, looking at our nation, the revelations made by the Morning Chronicle and the Times as to the state of our agricultural labourers, should read a lesson of modesty to our national vanity.

Free Trade! What were we not promised? and did we not get somewhat better? We are told that the great experiment has failed, and that we must return to the millenary? Do we see the first rosy streaks of the coming dawn?

We have legislated on trade in the hopes of affecting prices—we are told that we have succeeded in raising the whole nation in debt, and with a love of cheapness; but where is the benefit of universal cheapness? Can we reduce rent? Can we suddenly lower wages, or, if we can, is it a pleasant operation? And then, we are told that we must return to the same facility under the present rate of prices as before? Have we a larger sale? Hardly so, when our customers are also subject to the same law of cheapness. Will we be taken out of our ears, upon the assumption that a man knows his own business best, and we see that cheapness does us no good.

Again, cheapness is a troublesome work. It is to the injury of literature, and gives a whole day for a penny? Some of our readers will perhaps, in that case, have the kindness to estimate the weight of our

national debt. We confess to a reluctance to enter upon this disagreeable computation.

Free trade is all very well—it seems to be true; we cannot controvert it. It seems right and proper that nations should interchange commodities; it looks like nature's behest, with the divine seal of truth upon it. Why then these tame and impotent conclusions? Must the farmer be ruined? From one end of the kingdom to the other they unanimously cry,—"Forty shillings a bushel, and a bushel for a penny." "We cannot pay rent or taxes." The landlord is taking our capital, and has no other savings, as yet. "We must either emigrate or break stones." To say the least, this is an ugly fact, and behind it, an uglier. The farmer discharges his labourer, and the labourer, in his despair, fires the ricks, or throws a lucifer into the barn.

How is all this confusion and friction on the social wheels? A not price? Are we not all farmers, gardeners, labourers, manufacturers, all thriving for remuneration, and why cannot we get them? What is the great regulator of price? There is but one answer—Money. This is denied by Mr. Cobden and a host of supporters. "Supply and demand are the only regulators of price." Here we must insist upon the play of supply and demand. There is not an input into the nature of our money a very urgent and pressing business? Are we right in fixing upon the dearest and scarcest commodity to serve as our money? Was Mr. Hinkinson right when he uttered the dogma, "The value of money is not of intrinsic value?" Is it not money, on the contrary, the shadow, increasing and decreasing with the substance—wealth? Is it not merely certificate; and where the certificate is not backed by any real value, it is not money, but a piece of paper, as costly as the things they certify?

These are questions Free-trade is threatening upon us, and we must find an answer. Till that answer is found, there is no peace for us, no hope, no permanent prosperity. The fate rests upon this inquiry. We shall be well whipped until we have learnt our lesson.—European Times.

THE NAVIGATION.

It has been announced that it was the intention of the pioneers of the Lake and River Line of Steamers, to have commenced their season of Navigation on the 1st of April. The cold nights and the ice, however, have rendered it impossible to start on this date. Our harbor is still closed hard and fast. Amongst the vessels now lying in port, every preparation is being made to put them in efficient working condition, and to add to the elegance of their appearance. There is one boat to be run from this place which is not already known to the travelling public, and that is the Ottawa. It is intended to place her as one of the River Mail Line; and from her convenient size, light build, and exceeding neat appearance, she is expected to prove a competitor of the best boats on the lake. The arrangements on board such as to secure the greatest possible convenience to the passengers, officers, and crew. Below the main-deck a suite of apartments, consisting of Gentlemen's Cabin, First Cabin, Wash-room, Kitchen and Fore Cabin, extends from end to end connected by spacious openings, as in H. M. S. Cherokee. Above the promenade deck, neatly roofed, affords clear space for walking in any direction.

The splendid iron Steamer Passport, although already favorably known to most persons who have of late years visited Montreal, will prove a novel attraction to sight-seers on her first arrival at Toronto. She was scarcely put to sea, but she is in the comfort of the arrangements, or the elastic finish and fine appearance of this favorite. The Passport is capable of sleeping a hundred and ninety persons in her cabins and state rooms, and her Stowage is very generally admitted to be the finest on the Lake. The New Era is to turn out as spry as a Lark for the Lake.

The Canada now ready for a trip, is as comfortable as ever she was. Every exertion has been used to keep up her appearance, and certainly she looks well.

The steamer St. Lawrence, recently sold by Capt. Chrysler, of this City. Wherever her owner may determine to run, we hope his enterprise may meet with the reward it merits. If Capt. Chrysler shall decide upon the Bay of Quinte route, where he is so favorably known, we feel confident the inhabitants of Belleville and Picton will gladly accommodate by putting on a fast daily boat, every way worthy of their patronage. The Kingstonians would also feel the convenience of such an arrangement.—Kingston Argus, April 2.

ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPA.

New York, April 4. The steamer Europa arrived at Halifax yesterday. From the Continent there is little of moment. The elections in France have passed off quietly. Favorable reports of the Cotton Market. Much steadiness exists in the prices.

ENGLAND.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has presented his budget for the ensuing year, and he had the pleasure of announcing a surplus of nearly £2,500,000. The Chancellor elected to proceed on two kinds of estimates, the income and expenditure of 15th April, 1850. He estimated that the income of the financial year, ending on the 5th, would amount to £52,755,560, and the expenditure to be £50,531,631. He estimated the probable surplus at £2,223,929 for the year ending April 5th, 1851. He found he could not hold out a hope of a favorable state of customs, owing to the reduction of sugar, and partly from the reduced importation of the articles such as corn, brandy, &c. He estimates the receipts from customs, including corn, at £20,000,000, making a total probable income of £52,285,000 for the year ending April 5, 1851. He estimated the expenditure at £50,615,113, but he proposed to take as a margin £150,000. Consequently the probable expenditure would be about £50,765,113, in which case the probable surplus would be round numbers £1,500,000.—Globe.

HURON SIGNAL.

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1850.

"However great may be the amount of taxation, however vicious the appointments to office, or however ruinous the policy of a Tory Administration, the faith and practice of the real genuine Tory remains the same! He has no defined line of policy that he is anxious to have carried out—no particular measure that he wishes to see passed. He contemplates no change, and consequently no improvement—Retrenchment, Reciprocity, Reform of abuses, &c. &c., are merely matter-of-course phrases, and, in his political vocabulary, are just equivalent to a certain quantity of sound. His one political idea is his own party in power, and this idea he clings to as devotedly as the victim of superstition clings to the household god of his fathers, and to make it a reality will contentedly toil on in sackcloth and ashes to the end of his days."

This paragraph is from an article in the Signal of the 28th March, and upon which the Spectator in his issue of the 3rd inst., has indulged in some severe strictures with his usual earnestness. The purport of intimation of our readers, the fact that the avowed principle of Toryism is to keep things as they are. That the Tories of Canada have not been, and cannot possibly be the authors or advocates of any popular measure of improvement, so long as they adhere to the fundamental principle of their own creed, because, such a supposition involves a contradiction. The Spectator assumes that we have been guilty of "a gross libel" on his party, and says, "When the Signal advances facts in support of the statements which he makes above, we shall endeavor to meet him." Now the Spectator is here wishing us to prove a negative, which we are not inclined to attempt. We have asserted that the Tories have no definite line of policy further than the mere retention of power, and our assertions is unsupported or contradicted by the history of their Government we have no other proof to adduce. We think it rests with the Spectator to refute our assertion by bringing forward the particular facts in opposition to it. Let him point to some instance where his party, when in power, were defeated by the opposition in an attempt to carry some important popular measure. Let him point to the particular Tory Administration that was thwarted in attempting to break down the narrow bigotry and exclusive sectarianism, with which the policy of the past had envenomed the civil and religious institutions of our country; and to confer on all her Majesty's subjects equal rights and privileges, irrespective of all differences of country or creed. Let him point out some instance where the Tory party have demanded from their Leaders, when in power, some important change for the common good, or petitioned their Rulers or reasoned with them on the propriety of reforming existing abuses or curtailing the public expenditure. If such instances do exist they can be produced with a twofold part of the difficulty which we would necessarily encounter in attempting to prove that they do not exist.

THE TOWN COUNCIL.

The Town Councilors, by mutual agreement, met in the Hall of the British Hotel on Tuesday last, for the purpose of adopting means for forming themselves into a corporate body, by the election of a Mayor. "Better late than never" said well. Benjamin Parsons, Esq. was unanimously called to the Chair, and A. W. Otter, Esq. was proposed to act as Secretary. A motion was then submitted by James Watson, Esq. to the effect that a petition be drawn up and forwarded to the Legislature, immediately after the Meeting of Parliament, praying for a remedial Act to enable the Town Council of Stratford to elect a Mayor; and in order to prevent a recurrence of the former disagreeable "die" affair, it was also to be prayed that the Government would appoint or nominate a person to act as Chairman at the said election, with power to give a "casting vote." It was then very wisely proposed in amendment by Christopher Crabbe, Esq. that Mr. Parsons do leave the Chair, and that the Councilors proceed immediately to choose a Mayor. This amendment created at once a mighty fuss, and a few solemn protests were entered against the legality of the proceedings. These protests were substantially and willingly supported by the legal opinion of David Watson, Esq. Barrister, who peremptorily denied even the right of the Councilors to meet as Councilors, and declared that if they did elect a Mayor and proceed to act as a Corporation, their whole Acts would be illegal! Common sense, however, once gained, the ascendancy over legal dogmatism, and Mr. Parsons was chosen Mayor by a majority of the Council, without opposition. The motion for petitioning the Legislature for assistance in the matter, although somewhat extravagant, as we believe, made with a good intention—it was treated as an expedient to conciliate the conflicting opinions in the Council. But in the first place the delay which it would necessarily have occasioned, would have prevented the town of Goderich from receiving some sixty pounds which will shortly be paid over to the Corporation, by the Receiver General, as the amount of Tavern Licenses in the Town for the present year. In the second place it may safely be presumed that the Legislature would have viewed the prayer of the Petition entirely beyond the legitimate sphere of its action; and would have replied to the Councilors by simply saying, "If you have been elected by the inhabitants of the Town of Goderich, who, then, has any right to dispute your freedom of action in the premises in which you are elected?" And in the third place "the mover of the motion should have deliberately considered what it was that he entitled to conciliation in this affair. On this point there can certainly be but one opinion.—The Radical party were the aggrieved party.—They had fairly and honestly elected Mr. Parsons Mayor three months ago. He was dethroned from assuming office, and the business and interests of the town neglected solely by the basest political rancor, exhibited through the agency of perjury and seditious votes. Mr. McLennan, who formerly voted against Mr. Parsons, has already been declared by the highest legal authority of the land to have been illegally elected, and there is scarcely a speaking child in Goderich who does not snare the shameless presumption of Dr. Hamilton, in attempting to take his seat at a Council Board, or in allowing himself to be put in nomination as a Councilor. Dr. Hamilton receives twenty pounds a year from the public funds of these United Counties, and is, therefore, positively proscribed by the Statute from offering himself as a Councilor. But in this, as in every other respect, he is unable to recognize his true position in society, and audaciously thrust himself forward on the suffrages of the less intelligent portion of his own special party, who, as a matter of course, vote for him, utterly ignorant, at the time, that in electing him they are acting in opposition to the law of the land.

Every man must be aware that if the inhabitants of any of the Goderich Wards should, out

of mere spleen or frolic, vote that Mr. Galt's name should be taken at the Council Board, the first to demand Retrenchment, and however much certain writers may choose to sneer at their motives, and disparage their exertions, we have abundant evidence that the country at large commends and supports them."

The courage of the Tory party, or at least of the League Division of it, on the subject of retrenchment, has a strong resemblance to the courage of Sir John Falstaff—the man was dead before they killed him! The Tories were aware that retrenchment just means cheap Government and the reform of all existing abuses. They were aware that whether or not the Reform Government were willing to carry out a radical policy, the reform people were willing to demand and determined to obtain reform and retrenchment; and when they saw a reform Ministry in power, and discovered that even Hobbler and ruffianism could not put the said Ministry out of power, then, like Falstaff, they resolved to share the honor of a victory which they were unable to prevent, and in the great League Convention, to mitigate the extravagance and violence of their revolutionary rancor, they bawled out loudly for retrenchment! If our sagacious cotemporary wishes to obtain credit for himself and his friends on the Retrenchment question, he must refer us to a few instances where the Tories, when their own party were in power, formed Leagues and held Conventions for the purpose of intimidating their Leaders into a retrenchment policy; then—and not till then, can we afford to give them credit for the sincerity of their retrenching propensities.—The Spectator is unwilling to believe that we write against our own convictions, and we readily extend the same charity to him, while at the same time we conscientiously declare that on looking into the past history and present condition of Canada, our conviction is, that real, genuine Toryism has been a withering, paralyzing curse to this fine country, and we are not aware that the nature of its policy is much changed for the better. Our charitable cotemporary, however, is careful to remind us that we have "received a profitable office or two for our adherence to the men in power," and in return we can only utter a little additional condemnation of the Tories who neglected when in power, to reward with a profitable office the talented, zealous and untiring adherents of the Hamilton Spectator.

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The Town Councilors, by mutual agreement, met in the Hall of the British Hotel on Tuesday last, for the purpose of adopting means for forming themselves into a corporate body, by the election of a Mayor. "Better late than never" said well. Benjamin Parsons, Esq. was unanimously called to the Chair, and A. W. Otter, Esq. was proposed to act as Secretary. A motion was then submitted by James Watson, Esq. to the effect that a petition be drawn up and forwarded to the Legislature, immediately after the Meeting of Parliament, praying for a remedial Act to enable the Town Council of Stratford to elect a Mayor; and in order to prevent a recurrence of the former disagreeable "die" affair, it was also to be prayed that the Government would appoint or nominate a person to act as Chairman at the said election, with power to give a "casting vote." It was then very wisely proposed in amendment by Christopher Crabbe, Esq. that Mr. Parsons do leave the Chair, and that the Councilors proceed immediately to choose a Mayor. This amendment created at once a mighty fuss, and a few solemn protests were entered against the legality of the proceedings. These protests were substantially and willingly supported by the legal opinion of David Watson, Esq. Barrister, who peremptorily denied even the right of the Councilors to meet as Councilors, and declared that if they did elect a Mayor and proceed to act as a Corporation, their whole Acts would be illegal! Common sense, however, once gained, the ascendancy over legal dogmatism, and Mr. Parsons was chosen Mayor by a majority of the Council, without opposition. The motion for petitioning the Legislature for assistance in the matter, although somewhat extravagant, as we believe, made with a good intention—it was treated as an expedient to conciliate the conflicting opinions in the Council. But in the first place the delay which it would necessarily have occasioned, would have prevented the town of Goderich from receiving some sixty pounds which will shortly be paid over to the Corporation, by the Receiver General, as the amount of Tavern Licenses in the Town for the present year. In the second place it may safely be presumed that the Legislature would have viewed the prayer of the Petition entirely beyond the legitimate sphere of its action; and would have replied to the Councilors by simply saying, "If you have been elected by the inhabitants of the Town of Goderich, who, then, has any right to dispute your freedom of action in the premises in which you are elected?" And in the third place "the mover of the motion should have deliberately considered what it was that he entitled to conciliation in this affair. On this point there can certainly be but one opinion.—The Radical party were the aggrieved party.—They had fairly and honestly elected Mr. Parsons Mayor three months ago. He was dethroned from assuming office, and the business and interests of the town neglected solely by the basest political rancor, exhibited through the agency of perjury and seditious votes. Mr. McLennan, who formerly voted against Mr. Parsons, has already been declared by the highest legal authority of the land to have been illegally elected, and there is scarcely a speaking child in Goderich who does not snare the shameless presumption of Dr. Hamilton, in attempting to take his seat at a Council Board, or in allowing himself to be put in nomination as a Councilor. Dr. Hamilton receives twenty pounds a year from the public funds of these United Counties, and is, therefore, positively proscribed by the Statute from offering himself as a Councilor. But in this, as in every other respect, he is unable to recognize his true position in society, and audaciously thrust himself forward on the suffrages of the less intelligent portion of his own special party, who, as a matter of course, vote for him, utterly ignorant, at the time, that in electing him they are acting in opposition to the law of the land.

Every man must be aware that if the inhabitants of any of the Goderich Wards should, out

of mere spleen or frolic, vote that Mr. Galt's name should be taken at the Council Board, the first to demand Retrenchment, and however much certain writers may choose to sneer at their motives, and disparage their exertions, we have abundant evidence that the country at large commends and supports them."

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