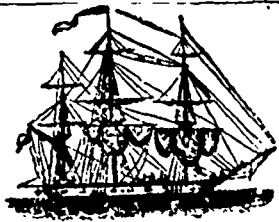


# CANADIAN ECONOMIST.



## FREE TRADE JOURNAL, AND WEEKLY COMMERCIAL NEWS.

Vol. 1.]

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 1846.

[No. 26.

### CONTENTS.

- |                                                 |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1.—The Navigation Laws.                         | 7.—Miscellaneous Articles.                    |
| 2.—The Post Office Department.                  | 8.—Intelligence—General and Local.            |
| 3.—Spirit of the Press                          | 9.—Shipping Intelligence.                     |
| 4.—Proofs for Protectionists                    | 10.—Markets.—English, New York, and Montreal. |
| 5.—Operation of the U. S. Bankrupt Law of 1841. | 11.—Prices Current, &c.                       |
| 6.—The Montreal Gazette.                        | 12.—Advertisements.                           |

## THE CANADIAN ECONOMIST.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 1846.

### THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

We renew the consideration of the important effects resulting to Canadian interests, from the operation of the laws in question.

Our last article has, we are glad to see, done good service to our cause by attracting the notice of the press generally to this subject, as well in the Upper as in the Lower part of the Province.

Prominent among those who have criticised our labours, are the *Herald* and the *Gazette*. The former, while avowing himself to be strongly in favour of claiming a modification of the laws in question upon the broad ground that he thinks we are entitled to it, as an act of simple justice, on the principle of Free Trade (which the mother country has adopted for herself), does not give himself any trouble to furnish specific facts and plain reasons to enable the colony to arrive at the same sound conclusion; but, wrapping himself up in the mantle of self-importance, thinks it a sufficient condescension to tell the country that the Navigation Laws, in his opinion, ought to be modified. He is in the right path, however, and therefore we shall avoid, if possible, making any observation that would irritate or wound his excessive self-esteem.

On the other hand, the *Gazette*, the subservient tool of the Government of the day, having at length received permission from its masters to speak, seems determined to redeem the time it lost in waiting for the necessary signal. In its number of the 16th instant, it reopened its battery of abuse by aspersing the character of the Montreal Board of Trade, representing its President—the Hon. Geo. Moffatt, M.P.P. for this city—as a mere puppet managed by wires in the hands of certain members of the Free-Trade Association. We have no hesitation in asserting that a vile calumny was never uttered. The Hon. Geo. Moffatt has, we understand, for upwards of twenty years held offices of the highest public trust, in the Councils—whether Special, Legislative or Executive—of the colony, yet, though known to be a man of great independence and consistency of character, he is now accused of allowing himself to be used as a mere ornamental puppet—accused of putting his name to a grave and deliberate document suggesting organic changes in the commercial policy of this colony without sincerely committing himself to the principles and doctrines thereby propounded. We say, a paper capable of making such an infamous charge as this, should be punished with the scorn of the commercial community.

In his number of the 19th instant, he has the temerity to accuse us of "falsehood" in stating that he had seen fit to abandon the principles he professed when he joined the Free-Trade Association. Our words were, "But, *tempora mutantur*, the Editor of the *Gazette* was then one of us, though he has since, for reasons no doubt satisfactory to himself, seen fit to abandon the principles he then professed." To this he replied, "Our readers know well the falsehood of the accusation." We have but one word to add, and our readers will be able to judge where the charge of "falsehood" should rest. On turning to the books of the Free-Trade Association, we find the Editor of the *Gazette*'s name the ninth on the roll of members, by which he pledges himself to the following resolution:—

"That it is expedient to establish an Association to watch the proceedings of our Colonial Government—that the said Association shall take for its fundamental basis the principle of unrestricted Free Trade,

pledging itself to exert its utmost influence and to use all lawful means to cause every protective or merely regulating duty to be removed: and in the same spirit to oppose the future enactment of any duty which the Legislature may attempt to impose for any purpose but that simply of raising a revenue for the necessities of the Government."

How far the doctrines now advocated by the *Gazette* tally with the above pledge, we leave the public to judge.

We now resume the consideration of the question we set out with.

The objections raised to our previous article (vide No. 24) are—1st. That we were not warranted in attributing to the operation of the British Navigation Laws the whole excess paid by Canadians, to the British shipowner, for transporting their produce to England, via the St. Lawrence, over what it cost the Americans to send the same amount of produce, via New York. 2nd. That the repeal or modification of these laws would not have the effect of reducing the average rate of freight by way of the St. Lawrence; or in the words of the *Gazette* who says, in proceeding to inquire "what their influence really does amount to,"—"We apprehend that it is demonstrable that it is infinitesimally little, and that the whole of the navigation of these Provinces is kept in British hands at the very smallest appreciable cost to the merchant and farmer."

In our former article we showed that the excess paid by the Canadian producer on three articles alone exported from Canada, viz.:—flour, wheat and timber, in the years 1844, 45 and 46, amounted to £924,098 11s. 6d. over what the same articles would have cost if shipped from the Port of New York, and thus we set up as a valid ground upon which to claim relief from the Mother Country from the restrictions of her Navigation Laws.

But, it is urged, that we cannot charge the whole of this excess to the operation of these laws, because the expenses of navigation are not the same in both cases.

We admit the validity of the objection, and also that we should have been more careful in guarding ourselves against its being even temporarily raised. Our readers will bear in mind, however, that our former calculation embraced three articles of export only, and that we relied on these as sufficient to show the enormous sacrifice of wealth which the laws in question entail upon this colony. We will now make our statement more complete, and feel confident it will prove to every impartial inquirer that, after making full allowance for the difference of expense, the amount sacrificed by this Colony to the British shipowner comes within a trifle of our first estimate. We may add, that we say the British shipowner advisedly,—it being notorious that fully four-fifths of the tonnage employed in the Canada trade is owned in England. But even if it were all owned in this Colony, it would not alter the principle we are contending for, viz.,—that we ought to be allowed to employ the cheapest ships we can find, wherever they are owned or built. Why should the owner of a barrel of flour be called upon and compelled by law, to pay an Englishman, or a fellow Colonist, 3s. more for carrying his barrel of flour to England than the American or any other foreigner will do the same work for? It is manifestly unjust and inconsistent with the public weal.

The extra cost of carriage of Exports from Canada, as already shown amounts to.....£924,098 11 6

In addition to which there were Exported in the years in question—

Ashes, barrels.....	96,659
Beef, do.....	9,848
Oatmeal, do.....	9,295
Pork, do.....	19,657

Making together—Barrels..... 135,459a3s.3d. £22,012 1 9

Barley, Bushels.....	121,381
Peas, do.....	651,267
Oats, do.....	128,104

Making together—Bushels..... 900,752 a 7d. £26,261 18 8

Butter, Kegs (not worth notice)..... 35,680

Making a total of.....£972,382 11 11

In the above statement the exports for 1844 and 1845 are actual, and for 1846 are estimated in round figures the same as