

any port in the United States, American vessels are limited to a few ports, denominated "free ports," on the great extent of coast bordering on the eastern front of Canada; in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland; while British vessels are allowed to load at other places than free ports, thereby giving them a great advantage over American vessels. As the exports of the colony are bulky articles, and are not wholly shipped from free ports, the carrying trade is chiefly confined to the colonial vessels.

The following resolution was adopted by the legislature of Maine and forwarded to their representatives in Congress:

"Resolved, That the interests of the State of Maine require that all the ports in the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which are now or may hereafter be ports for the delivery and reception of cargoes for British vessels, be made ports of entry for the delivery and reception of cargoes for American vessels."

The annual returns to Congress prove the active competition in the chief Atlantic ports of the Union, between American and British ships, for a participation in the foreign and colonial trade. The petitions which have at different periods been presented to Congress on this question from the shipping interest, and the extract from the memorial of the Boston Board of Trade, are given to furnish an illustration of the feelings which have been entertained on the merits of that convention.

This brief history of the colonial policy of Great Britain I have hastily compiled from public documents and Mr. Cushing's very able report, in order that the basis of our commercial intercourse with the colonies, up to the recent changes in the navigation laws of Great Britain, might be well understood, and serve as a guide to future negotiations.

Hieretofore the great contest between England and the United States, with reference to colonial trade, related chiefly to the trade between our country and the British West Indies, which, prior to 1840, was of great value and importance. During the eight years from 1832 to 1840, the aggregate value of imports into the West Indies was \$194,305,980, being a yearly average of \$24,288,242; while the aggregate value of exports during the same period was \$282,406,800, or an annual average of \$35,300,850. In the six years which followed, from 1840 to 1846, the value of imports fell to an average of \$20,200,000, and the exports diminished to somewhat less than \$25,000,000, annually. This diminution has since gone on from year to year, until the British West India trade has ceased to be regarded as of that importance which was formerly attached to it. On the other hand, the trade of the North American colonies since 1840 has advanced, especially with the United States; and the accompanying returns show clearly that this trade has greatly increased with every relaxation in the commercial policy of either country.

The colonial commercial intercourse between the United States, the West Indies, and the British North American colonies, however, after this diplomatic struggle of the two governments, commenced on a more liberal footing, and was the basis of all our trade and commerce with those colonies until January, 1850, when the United States navigation law of 1817 and the British navigation law of 1849 first took effect.

Although the arrangement made by Mr. McLane had an injurious effect for a short time on our navigation interests, and was obnoxious in