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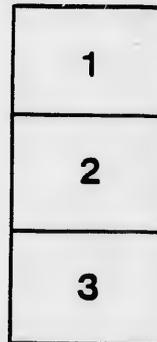
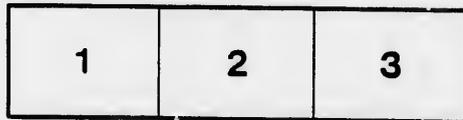
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Not in Tremaine. Disson, 1154.
Not in Goughen.
Not in Casey.

A LETTER

ON THE

INSURRECTION IN CANADA.

TO EDWARD BAINES, ESQ., M.P.,

EDITOR OF THE LEEDS MERCURY.

SIR,

A friend, knowing that I felt much interest in the question—now the great one of the day—THE REBELLION IN CANADA, has sent me your *Mercury*. I much regret that it should have been a week old before I had the opportunity of reading it, because, had I read it when fresh, I should have had time to have attempted this answer in a less hasty manner, and before other matters had destroyed or thrown fresh light on your facts, opinions, or arguments.

I trust, however, to your candour in publishing the following attempt to show the question in a somewhat different light; and I think it proper to premise that I have travelled over a considerable part of the United States, and a still greater proportion of the two Canadas, and was not an unobservant traveller, nor confined to the decks of steam-boats and the great public roads, nor solicitous of finding myself always in select company only. You say—

“Not a doubt seems to be expressed in many quarters that the insulted majesty of the country must be vindicated, and the troublesome and violent Canadians coerced by the sword.”

Here let me say, that I hope there is not a doubt that such is the case; and, from your known intimacy with some of

her Majesty's Advisers, I am right glad to assume it to be so.

As to the American Revolution and the Canadian Rebellion, I really see little analogy, though there is no doubt that a great proportion of your readers will know little more than that Canada is in America, and that they will therefore needs be alike.

You are fully borne out in your opinion—"That the demand of an *elective* Council (or Upper House of Legislature) in Canada was a *disguised* demand of *independence*;" and I agree with you, "that it would be far better to release the Canadians entirely from our dominion, than to keep the *name* and the *expense* of sovereignty without the *substance*;" and that "the demand of an elective Council was fraudulent, and ought to be resisted." I am not a little surprised how you can have found reasons for altering these opinions. The public revenues have not yet been seized, though, in my opinion, they ought to have been seized long since, and appropriated to the objects for which they were collected, viz. the payment of the Governor, Judges, and Officers of the Crown, so unjustly kept out of their honourable earnings; and, when pushed to the greatest inconveniences, themselves and their families depending, in most instances, on the credit of their tradespeople, have had insult added to injury, by an Advocate—himself a hireling—denouncing them as "*howling officials*," in a certain Assembly, where he can claim immunity for his conduct.

You ask—"Shall Great Britain consent to the independence of Canada?" and add, "To this question we are not prepared to give a negative."

Sir, I am prepared to give a negative, and trust to be only one among an overwhelming majority of my countrymen ready to give it,—certainly among those classes who are best able to appreciate the question, but who have not to exclaim to the people "give me your voices,"—with the exception of a certain school of politicians, not very numerous, but always in person, voice, or writings, before the public—I mean the political economists, who, though apparently everywhere and in every thing, are far from numerous.

And this large majority will not “doubt the *right* of “England to coerce the Canadians,”—will not “doubt her “*power* to do it,”—and, moreover, will not “doubt the “*advantage* of holding Canada under military subjugation.”

It will occupy far too much space to go with you through the history of Canada, though it is probable that we might not agree upon every point. You are sufficiently correct and fair to answer every purpose required. I will state, that, since Mr. M'cGregor (of whom I wish I could speak favourably) wrote, the relative populations of British and French origin are a little altered—the British increasing by emigration and births far more rapidly than the French,—the latter, though producing large families, bringing up but a small proportion: the Cholera likewise made sad havoc among them in the seignories, whilst in the free and common soccage of the British emigrants not one case occurred. We may, I think, take, then, the French population of the Lower Province at 420,000, and the British at 170,000. This difference, though of little importance in itself, will hereafter become of value in argument. The population of the Upper Province may remain at 400,000 or 410,000, British and Irish.

For myself, Sir, I see no reason why the Province could not have continued to go on quietly and prosperously under the very (may I say too) liberal constitution granted to it, but for the “*violent guidance*” of the House of Assembly, by *Papineau* and others.

You say truly, “that the Canadians were not oppressed; “they paid no taxes; and they enjoyed civil and religious “liberty;” and you have acknowledged, that “a high “degree of constitutional liberty is given by the enjoyment “of representation on a wide basis, with elections every four “years;” to which may be added, that they are not subject to tithes, or any personal demand for religion, beyond that which they give voluntarily to their own priests or ministers.

Now, Sir, I would ask whether any society so constituted should not be expected to go on quietly and happily, if not agitated by crafty persons, having certain egotistic notions, which they continue so to mystify as to mislead with.

Such appears to be the opinion of their neighbours in the United States,—at least that portion of them, the thinking part. As a proof, I quote the following observations, by Professor Silliman, of Yale College, Massachusetts, from his travels in Canada:—“ It is questionable whether any conquered country was ever better treated by its conquerors than Canada; the people were left in complete possession of their religion and revenues to support it—of their property, laws, customs, and manners; and even the defence of their country is without expense to them; and it is a curious fact, that (unless by the great counterbalancing advantages it produces), so far from being a source of revenue, it is a charge on the treasury of the empire. It would seem as if the trouble and expense of government was taken off their hands, and as if they were left to enjoy their own domestic comforts without a drawback. Such is certainly the appearance of the population; and it is doubtful whether our own favoured communities are politically more happy;—they are not exposed in a similar manner to poverty and the danger of starvation, which so often invade the English manufacturer, and which, aided by their demagogues, goad them on to every thing but open rebellion. Lower Canada is a fine country, and will hereafter become populous and powerful, especially as the British and Anglo-American population shall flow in more extensively, and impart more vigour and activity to the community. The climate, notwithstanding its severity, is a good one, and very healthy and favourable to the freshness and beauty of the human constitution. All the most important comforts of life are easily and abundantly obtained.” And, if more is wanted on that head, I quote various extracts from an address of this very House of Assembly, at a period when, if there exist at this time (after so much has been conceded to their demands) sufficient grounds for rebellion, there then existed ten times as much.

It is true, that, though they have got much that they demanded, they demand more, and those demands appear to me to be far too monstrous to be upheld by any one (not

either ignorant or forgetful of parts of the argument) who has patriotism, who has national feeling, or any regard for 580,000 of his brother subjects, speaking his own language, connected with him either by close or remote relationship, and who, sympathising with us in our glory or our shame, are as ambitious as they are desirous of the closest connection with their Mother Country, and desirous that their Canadian brethren of a different origin should partake in the blessings of a Constitution and Laws which they and their ancestors had learned to prize.

On the 24th December, 1792, the address to his Excellency Alured Clarke, Esq., Lieut. Governor, from the House of Assembly, says—

“ Truly sensible of the paternal solicitude of our most
 “ gracious Sovereign, in watching over the happiness of his
 “ people, and of the justice and benevolence of the Parliament
 “ of Great Britain, in granting to his Majesty’s loyal subjects
 “ of this province a new and liberal constitution for their colo-
 “ nial government, we shall ever retain the most grateful and
 “ lively sense of the duties we owe to the parent state; we
 “ cannot express the emotions which arose in our breasts on
 “ that ever memorable day, when we entered on the *enjoy-*
 “ *ment of a constitution* assimilated to that form of govern-
 “ ment which has carried the glory of our mother country
 “ to the highest elevation, &c., &c.

(Signed)

“ J. A. PANET, Speaker.”

29th March, 1799, to his Excellency Robert Prescott, Governor in Chief—

“ We are truly sensible of the safety and protection which
 “ these distant parts of his Majesty’s dominions have experi-
 “ enced amidst the storms that have agitated other countries.

“ The dispensations of Providence in our favour, and the
 “ security we have enjoyed from the mother country, are
 “ objects which merit our sincere and devoted acknowledg-
 “ ments; and we shall guard against *the insidious practices*
 “ *made use of for withdrawing the credulous from their duty to*
 “ *the government by which they are protected.*

“ Your Excellency may rely upon the continuation of
 “ harmony in the discharge of our duty, on every object
 “ tending to the support of the excellent and happy govern-
 “ ment under which we live.

(Signed)

“ DE BONNE.”

7th March, 1800. To His Excellency Sir Robert Shore
 Milnes, Lieut.-Governor:—

“ It cannot but afford us matter of the highest consolation
 “ and gratitude to his Majesty, that at a time when many
 “ parts of Europe, and other parts of the globe are afflicted
 “ by the miseries of war, his faithful subjects in this province
 “ are enabled to enjoy with confidence the fruits of their
 “ industry, and to meet in tranquillity to consult for the pub-
 “ lic welfare, &c.

“ The prosperity of our mother country, on which our own
 “ depends, must ever give us great satisfaction, &c. The
 “ general mediocrity of the fortunes of his Majesty’s subjects
 “ in this province being well known, we flatter ourselves our
 “ *voluntary contributions*, though small, will be favourably
 “ received.”

12th January, 1801. To His Excellency Sir Robt. Shore
 Milnes, Lieut.-Governor:—

“ As by his Majesty’s paternal care, and the activity of
 “ his fleets and armies, his faithful subjects in this colony
 “ have been protected from the violence of open aggression;
 “ it is our peculiar duty by the steadiness of our principles to
 “ *guard against the delusions of secret artifice.*

“ With the most lively gratitude we learn that his Ma-
 “ jesty, in his paternal attention to the wants of his subjects,
 “ however remote, has not only seen the necessity, but in
 “ his royal munificence has provided the means of early
 “ education for our children.

“ Your Excellency may depend on our zealous and active
 “ co-operation for the prosperity of the province, and by our
 “ loyal and unanimous exertions for the preservation of that
 “ most excellent constitution and government under which we
 “ have the happiness to live.”

Again, 12th January, 1802. “ We consider as a happy

“circumstance the *apprehensions which were for a moment raised in the public mind by a society of lawless adventurers,* as they only served to bring additional proofs of the perfect harmony which subsists among all ranks of his Majesty’s subjects in this part of his dominions.

“All classes of his Majesty’s subjects entertain the highest sense of his Majesty’s paternal goodness, which has given to them the blessing of an excellent constitution, and secured to them all the advantages that flow from it.”

These, Sir, are a few extracts from the Journals of the Assembly, as they happen to be within my reach.

To proceed—“The House of Assembly claims a right to appropriate to the public service according to its own discretion, the whole of the revenues of the crown accruing within the province, including those produced by the sale of timber and waste lands, all fines and forfeitures, and the income from seigniorial rights.” And I would ask, under what act of Parliament, by what law, or even custom of this country to her colonies they make these claims? which, if granted, would be an abandonment of the colony by the Crown.

The rights of the Crown of France were, at the conquest, ceded to the Crown of Great Britain, and among those rights are all those named by you.

How can England exercise a sovereignty, if the Crown itself is despoiled of her rights? When and where are the waste lands of a colony considered the sole property of a few natives, a few earlier settlers, or the conquered inhabitants resident at any particular period claimed by the parties themselves? To argue this question with a look of seriousness, would, I take it, lead some to suppose that the “head was not all right;” because if granted, they would have left the Queen no power in the province but to appoint a Governor, and to maintain and pay the troops. And, to show that there was no mistake, in 1833 “the House of Assembly exercised their *constitutional power* of stopping the supplies, declaring that they would grant no more money until an elective Council was conceded to them, and the executive Council made responsible

“ to the legislature. From that time forward the House of
 “ Assembly has acted upon this determination: no money has
 “ been granted; and the judges and officers of Government
 “ have been for more than four years without their salaries. A
 “ government commission of three individuals, with Lord Gos-
 “ ford at its head, was sent out in 1835 to inquire into the com-
 “ plaints of the Canadians; but the Assembly denounced it as
 “ an unconstitutional interference. The grant of lands by the
 “ British Parliament to the Canadian Company and the North
 “ American Land Company was also complained of by the
 “ Assembly ‘ as an unnecessary interference with the authority
 “ of the local legislature over the internal affairs of the pro-
 “ vince.’” However “ some reforms were made in the composi-
 “ tion of the Council, but they were quite unsatisfactory to
 “ the Canadians, who continued to refuse the supplies. This
 “ state of things led the British Parliament to pass an Act
 “ last session, empowering the Government to take money out
 “ of the colonial exchequer for paying the salaries, without
 “ the sanction of the House of Assembly. And this Act has
 “ so alarmed and provoked the Canadians, that they have
 “ now organized, armed, and disciplined themselves—have
 “ assembled over the whole country and declared their
 “ independence,—and are now in general revolt against the
 “ Government.”

Now, Sir, as a Member of the Imperial Parliament, I
 would ask, do you consider that Parliament has no right to
 legislate for her colonies under any circumstances? Do you
 consider that a colony has a right to starve the officers of the
 Crown? Do you consider that the Crown has no right to the
 waste lands of her colonies?

I feel persuaded that your own reply will save me the neces-
 sity of making one.

As to the state into which the revolt has brought the pro-
 vince, and by what means it has been brought into it, the first
 I know well enough, and of the second I have formed rather
 strong opinions, not required here.

It may be as well, however, to ask you for what reason, and
 on what grounds either they of the lower province, or yourself,

complain of the *Canada Company*, which belongs to the *upper province*; which has been converting the forest into glens, and in a few years doubled, yea, trebled the population?

If we are to mix up the two Provinces, (as in my opinion ought to be), what then would become of that majority which you are so strongly the champion of? for I would then boldly ask you "what the People of Canada think, feel, "and resolve."

The People of Canada! i. e. of the two Provinces, I estimate at 580,000 of British, and 420,000 of French origin—thus, then, what do the 580,000 demand? I answer fearlessly, without the possibility of a doubt, that they demand a close, an intimate, and an endearing connexion with the mother country.

Yet, Sir, large as is this numerical majority, it is nothing as compared to the majority in wealth, in intelligence, and in moral as well as physical courage; and were it not that your article is so long and so studied, and required more attention, here would I rest my case for my oppressed Brethren. I would say, shall we, by a misapplication of what is termed *liberality*, legislate for the dominance of 420,000 ignorant and deluded men. to the expulsion of the 580,000 men, in every way their superiors—men who have in great part either received the land which they cultivate as the reward of years of labour in the service of their country, or who have been led to purchase that land from the Government to whom they have sworn fealty, and to which Government they look for quiet possession?

But I must proceed. You say—"The whole body of the "French Canadians, the old proprietors of the country, of "all ranks, from the magistrate to the labourer, are united "in their opposition to the Government. A striking proof "of this is found in the fact, that of 78 members who voted "in the House of Assembly a few months since, 70 were "for the rejection of the measure of the British Parliament, "and only 8 for." Without some explanation this is a most ensnaring paragraph, and I sincerely hope that yourself, Sir, have not been caught by an ignorance of facts.

Will it be believed that this pitiful minority in the House of Assembly composed either absolutely all, or within three or four of all those Members of British origin who have seats!

The House consists of 88 Members, but the districts for representatives are so cut out that the French Catholic constituencies return for certain 72 of them, there being no opportunity for more than 16 English Protestants to get into the Assembly: and to render even that small number at all times ineffective, the House declares 40 to be a quorum for business.

Hear this, ye liberals!

As to the Magistrates, it is well known that under the 'conciliation' system, numbers have been put into the commission whose circumstances in society, whose positive ignorance, as well as suspected characters, ought to have driven them to a distance.

It is now very clear, that instead of 60, nearly double the number should have sent in their resignation, or have been dismissed long since. Many both of the Magistrates and Members of the Assembly are the greatest traitors. "It is also stated that not a few of the British and Irish, in the country districts, sympathise with the French."

This, Sir, I deny: if any British and Irish do sympathise with the rebels, they are indeed "*a few*." I have it from good authority that the Irish Catholics are among the foremost in the ranks of the volunteers both in Quebec and Montreal; and that in both cities there are only about 150 who have declined joining those corps.

When, Sir, you ask about a moral right, we must wait the millenium ere the question can be properly answered.

It is with me sufficient that Great Britain has, in one sense, a moral right, as I trust she has the physical power, to preserve the lives and properties of 580,000 of our brethren, whenever and wherever they are endangered. It appears to me, Sir, that the magnitude of our interests is so large, as by many to be misunderstood—this I mean on the score of humanity; for we must not suppose that if Government

should leave things as they are,—that they do not interfere, but withdraw their troops,—that the question is settled ; and that henceforth there will be “ on earth peace and good will ” as to the Canadas. Oh no ! Sir, far otherwise ; the population of British origin, which has by the supineness of a Government been compelled to renounce their peaceful avocations and take up arms in self-defence, will commence a war of extirpation from which nothing can save the French population. I say nothing, for the Roebucks and Chapmans, as well as some of our M.P.’s, ask for a repetition of the Texas affair ; they will be disappointed ;—and as to the ‘ *savage bands* ’ so ready to come from the “ far west,” such things are mere figures of speech.

But it does behove the Government, on the score of humanity alone, to adopt the most speedy and energetic measures to put down rebellion, and to uphold the Colonial Government in power, to keep in check all parties, and ensure obedience to law—of some sort—to bring about confidence therein, that men may no longer be interrupted or intimidated in their ordinary pursuits of life.

Alas ! Sir, much do I fear that this rebellion will have interfered greatly with the moral and social condition of the Canadian *habitans*,—a class of men for quiet behaviour, decent exterior, and domestic enjoyments, that, in my various travels, I have never seen equalled. Agitators, ye have much to answer for.

Last year I travelled through Nermandy and Brittany, from whence the ancestors of the present Canadians emigrated ; and though I saw the same shape of men, the same customs, and the same dress, I found nothing for the present race of Canadians to regret in the land of their origin.

As to their bravery, their morasses, their skillfulness in the use of the rifle, and their seignories being one of the most defensible countries in the world—he who asserts these things, has never been there. The extent of their forests and paucity of habitations I grant ; but there is nothing to lead to a supposition that they are invincible ; they are not the active

stirring people of the Backwoods of the United States or the Upper Province.

Allow me to say, that you have mistaken the feelings of our brethren in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia—as the late meetings in those countries show. Where has loyalty been more apparent, and where have the “secret dispatches” of Roebuck or Chapman been more exposed than in New Brunswick, where Mr. Howe read extracts from Chapman, the ‘agent’ of Papineau, asking him, as a leading opposition Member of the Assembly, to join in a traitorous correspondence?

Allow me to state that your observations on Col. Sir George Arthur as the—“severe head gaoler of Van Diemen’s Land,” are as much below your usual style of writing as they are out of good taste. The sending such a character with a Governor is not fair-play; the less so, as it is universally agreed that the Colony has progressed at an extraordinary rate under his Government, and that his conduct has been so highly approved by men best able to judge correctly, that those connected with the Colony have presented him with a service of plate costing £1500.

As to “the population, hating every thing British, will “refuse to consume our goods, and will do all they can to “annoy us,”—this, Sir is true; but has reference to the French Canadians, the rebels, only. Papineau has denounced those who shall use imported goods, this, too, at the recommendation of Roebuck. Of the million and half of British manufactures imported into Canada, it would surprise your manufacturing readers to learn how small a proportion is consumed by the French Canadians; their own home-spun made from wool in its natural colour, their own cottons and linsey woolseys spun and woven at home, their own shoes made out of half-tanned cow hides, their sugar procured from the maple tree—all this, *without* Papineau’s ordinance, will show that but a small proportion in bulk, and less in value, of imported goods is consumed by them.

No, Sir, it is the British population brought up in luxury as to dress, and in luxury also as to variety of wants, that

consumes our manufactures, and the produce of our other Colonies; and it is, moreover, our $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. duty on certain articles taxed from 30 to 75 per cent. by the United States, that induces a certain portion of the Americans on the boundaries to supply themselves from the Canadian markets.

Your quotations from Sir H. Parnell and M'Culloch are, I know well enough, great authorities with a certain set of commercial politicians: they have often been refuted; but as names go far with some folks, I will begin by quoting the trite exclamation of Buonaparte: "Ships, colonies, and commerce;" and a sentence from Talleyrand—"bodies politic ought to reserve to themselves the means of placing to advantage at a distance a superabundance of citizens, who may from time to time threaten their tranquillity." But what is more to our purpose, the writings of BROUGHAM, who says, "Each nation derives greater benefit from having an increasing market in one of its own Provinces, than in a foreign Country.

"The colonial trade is always increasing and capable of indefinite augmentation; every operation of colonial traffic replaces two capitals, the employment and distribution of which puts in motion and supports the labour of the different members of the same state.

"The increasing wealth of Russia, Prussia, or Denmark, can never benefit Great Britain unless by the increasing demand for British produce which it may occasion. It may, and often is, on the contrary, turned against her wealth and power; whilst the riches of colonies have a certain tendency to widen the market for British produce, and can never injure the wealth or power of the mother country.

"The possession of remote territories is the only thing which can secure to the population of a country those advantages derived from an easy outlet, or prospect of outlet, to those persons who may be ill provided for at home.

"It is absurd to represent the defences and government of colonies as a burden. It is ridiculous for the United Kingdom to complain, that she is at the expense of governing and defending her colonial territories."

To corroborate these opinions, I will just state that the official value of exports from the United Kingdom into our North American Colonies exceeds that of our exports to Russia, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and France *collectively*. We may look in vain for such a market when once lost; and we may look in vain for it when its own rough produce shall be either prohibited by any alteration of duties that may throw the supply entirely into the hands of foreigners, or when the French Canadians shall have got rid of Mr. Hume's "*baneful domination*."

Much has been said of the increase of our trade with the United States. This increase has arisen entirely from the astonishing increase of its population; but I believe that the last year's returns will show that the trade of our own American colonial population, consisting of about two millions, is very nearly equal to that with the United States, consisting of nearly thirteen millions. The imports of British manufactures into our own North American Colonies has increased above 40 per cent. in three years. In carrying on this trade, about seven thousand British vessels are employed; the tonnage of those inwards and outwards being each way nearly 1,000,000 tons annually, either to Great Britain or her other Colonies, all of them, be it remembered, navigated by *our own* seamen, and employing *British capital*; and seven-eighths of the whole produce so transported being paid for in labour to *our own countrymen*, and all the profit, agencies, and brokerages of this enormous trade divided among our own subjects. Can the possible loss of such a trade be contemplated, without apprehending consequences serious to national prosperity or to our manufacturing interests?

In four years not less than £300,000 has been paid by emigrants as passage-money to our ship-owners; and if out of the number of 170,000 who emigrated during that period, only 20,000 had become burdensome at home, and had cost their parishes only £4 per head per annum, the expenses to the community (which have been saved) would have been £320,000.

One word on "*military subjugation*." The expression, if

taken in its extreme extent, is what no man can wish to see Canada subject to ; but to a certain extent every colony, every city, every country is so kept. How is Ireland—how are our East India possessions—how the Cape—how the insignificant Fernando Po—and how even England itself kept? Without a sufficient military force the scourings of society would at all times cause outbreakings dangerous to the existence of the present state of society, and interfering with the honest and industrious occupations of the public. Are we not obliged in England to have a large and powerful police force in addition to our military? and even in your own neighbourhood have not both been recently employed?

It is impossible to read without horror the savage murderings and burnings in the United States under "*Lynch Law*," which, had that country a sufficient military force, would not take place. }

One word on your expression of "coercing a nation." Such is not the case; it is *legislating for* a Province or a Colony, and *not* coercing a nation—in the one instance called for by above one-fourth of the population, in the other by a majority; and it is the minority in the Canadas that desire to be considered *la nation Canadienne*, and for which they, and they only, are in arms.

I trust, Sir, that in these observations I have given some substantial reasons for hoping that the majority of the country will be vindicated, and that Great Britain will not consent to the independence of Canada, called for by less than half her population; also for asserting the right of England to coerce the Canadians, (such part as are rebellious); that she has the power, and that it will be to her advantage to do so.

When, Sir, the Canadas in their proper sense, viz. the 580,000 persons of British origin, in both provinces, shall call for a separation at the same time as the 420,000 of French origin, then, but not till then, will my opinion be changed.

I think I have given reasons also against the making the Legislative and Executive Councils elective; indeed, it is clear to demonstration, that the Legislative Council was intended

to be a check upon the Assembly, and not a mere register office for its deeds.

I trust that I have shewn that the French Canadians have in times past, and before they had found the British Government a "squeezable commodity," declared themselves happy under her "domination," and that it is the fault of listening to a few ambitious demagogues that they are not so now: also that the loss of such a colonial trade as now carried on with Canada is not likely to be made up by any concessions ^{or} to our Baltic friends; and moreover that it is not the French Canadians to whom your manufacturers are obliged for it.

Trusting and believing, as I do, that the rebellion will have been put down before even the advance of our troops get out, and hoping for a calm settling of the question in a manner that may ensure tranquillity for half a century at least,

I am, Sir,

Yours obediently,

A CANADIAN MERCHANT.

JANUARY 8th, 1838.

