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COMMERCE OF ENGLAND.

(From the Halifax Morning Post.)

At this moment, Great Britain is assailed by one of the most extensive and powerful combinations for crippling her prosperity, and rendering her resources unavailable, that was ever heard of in the history of nations. So exalted is the standing that she has acquired by the enterprise of her people, and the honorable dealings of her princely merchants—by the extent of her commerce, and the acquirement of Colonies—that we have seen her hitherto raising the silent envy of the continental nations; and at length eliciting their open hostility in the shape of prohibitory duties. In the short space of one year antecedent to this month of November, 1842, no less than six powers, invested with the dignified influence of nationality, have dealt out their death blows at British Commerce. It were wrong, perhaps, to call that a foul conspiracy which appears to have resulted from the individual enactments of different nations, but that each has encouraged the other in the adoption of Tariffs hostile to Great Britain, there cannot be the possibility of a doubt. When France, Portugal, Belgium, and Germany, concocted their respective schemes against the entrance of British manufactures, it were idle to say, that each did not connive at the hostility of the other, and watch with intense anxiety till the completion of an increased scale of duties was declared. Russia and the United States, too, have not acted without intimation of each other's proceedings, and the anxious cultivation of a friendly alliance between these two powers argues convincingly that in imposing restrictions on the industry of Great Britain, they have, to a great extent, acted in concert. Month after month has elapsed, since this time last year, adding new trammels to the export of English manufactures, until we find at last the following imposing catalogue of Tariffs:

I. *The Russian Tariff*, issued in November, 1841; by which the duty on worsted or woollen goods, and mixed worsted and cotton, was raised from 3s. 6d. to 6s. 2d. per lb.; the new duty being from 210 to 300 per cent. *ad valorem*: printed goods are prohibited. The King of Prussia, during his late visit to St. Petersburg, induced the Emperor to issue a more favourable *ukase* for the products of Prussia.

II. *The Portuguese Tariff*, bearing date the 12th of December, 1841, by which the duties on English woollens were raised from 360 to 600 reis per lb. The latter is equal to an *ad valorem* duty of 45 per cent. on the average qualities of cloth sent to Portugal. Before 1837 (in which year the Tariff was raised), the duties were only about 10 per cent. *ad valorem*, (though nominally 15 per cent.) A favourable Tariff is now in course of negotiation.

III. *The French Tariff*, bearing date the 26th June, 1842; by which the duties on English linen yarns and linens were doubled, and made almost entirely prohibitory,—this being by far our largest branch of export to France.

IV. *The Belgian Tariff*, issued in July, 1842; by which the duty on English linens and linen yarns was raised to the same prohibitory rate as the French duty, in obedience to the dictation of France, and with a view of preventing the smuggling of English linens and yarns into that country through Belgium.

V. *The United States Tariff*, bearing date August, 1842; by which the duty on woollens was raised from 29 to 40 per cent. *ad valorem*, on worsted goods from 20 to 30 per cent., and on cotton goods the duty was made nominally 30 per cent., but on some kinds of goods it is in reality from 100 to 200 per cent. *ad valorem*, and on many kinds of cottons, woollens, and other goods, the duty will be prohibitory.

VI. *The German League Tariff*, passed September, 1842; by which the duty on one of the largest branches of our exports, namely, worsted goods, figured or printed, is raised from 30 dollars to 50 dollars per cwt., so as to be in many cases prohibitory; and by which the duty on *quincaille* or hardware is increased probably 50 dollars per cwt.

And it is not impossible that next month the *Brazilian Tariff* may be raised very greatly, the Brazilian Government having given notice to that effect; but we hope this severe blow will be averted by the concessions which Mr. Ellis, the special Minister lately sent out to Brazil, is empowered to make on the Sugar Duties.

This is truly a formidable list of prohibitions, and well justifies the declaration that a great portion of the civilized world has declared Commercial War against our Parent Land. Russia, Portugal, France, the United States, and the great German League—carrying with them Belgium, Prussia, Bavaria, and Wurtemberg—all together form a confederacy against the Commercial intercourse of England, unexampled in her past history.—And yet, the dark clouds of hostility which seem to hang around her future career, but impart a more intense radiance to the star of her superiority. What is the cause of all this opposition? Why does nation after nation rise up to impose an almost prohibitory scale of duties on British Goods? Is not the fact alone an acknowledgment of the excellence of the very articles they tax; and which, saddled with duties at the rate of 50 per cent. can still compete with the more costly, but inferior, manufactures of the continent. And should England, in these restrictions, see any reason for despair? Should her Statesmen feel depressed with a load of despondency when they reflect upon the difficulty of reinstating the nation to her wonted position?—Will they by mean concessions seek friendship where hostility has been declared, and augment the audacity of those who are jealous of her? If ever firmness was requisite in the Councils of our Parent Land, it is all-important now. Her skill and bravery once brought her with glory out of a conflict with the world in arms; let her wisdom, enterprise and firmness now rescue her from injury by the menacing attitude of jealous nations. Let her gather herself up—survey her resources—and prepare for a conflict of interests as she formerly prepared for a trial

of strength. Let her even propose reciprocal treaties with those nations which seek to have intercourse with her on a fair and equitable foundation; but let her spurn the alliance of those who, presuming on the strength of the combination against her, press exorbitant demands as the price of their friendship. Examples are not wanting to prove how little is gained by a want of self-reliance and ill advised concession. How has the new Tariff of England been acknowledged in the United States?—When the monopoly of these colonies to the trade in the West Indies was broken down, and the American Speculator placed on the same footing with the British Colonial Merchant, did the Federal Cabinet acknowledge the favor by any relaxation of their Tariff in our favor? No! No! The principle they seem to act on is—“We'll take all you give us, and grasp for more!”—and the congratulations of American Merchants on the New English Tariff had hardly escaped their lips, ere Congress announced an addition of 10 or 20 per cent. to the existing duty on British Goods!

The Members of the Peel Cabinet no doubt feel themselves in a rather perplexing position. In yielding partially to the cry of “Free Trade!” they have met with hostile restrictions from the very government to which they more especially extended the boon of free intercourse. The withdrawal of prohibition from American Beef and Pork, has been succeeded by an almost prohibitory duty on British Manufactures—whilst our American neighbours have received an advantage in the carrying trade which will be decidedly detrimental to the prosperity of colonial shipping. Thus, Yarmouth, a port which owns more shipping than even Halifax itself—from having enjoyed the carrying trade to the West Indies—will now be left without protection. Timber and produce that can only be exported with advantage to the West Indies in British bottoms, will be taken at the same rate of duty in United States Vessels, as soon as the new colonial regulations come fully into operation. This is mistaken policy; and we trust that the Colonial Legislatures will make such representations, at their coming sessions, as will continue that protection which colonists have hitherto enjoyed.

The present War of Tariffs against England will teach her Statesmen a lesson of foresight and prudence. They are alive to the interests of her Colonies, we know; but none seems to feel an adequate estimate of their inestimable importance. When the hollowness of foreign friendship is tested, then the value of colonial connections will be the more forcibly felt and universally acknowledged; and to increase their population, to protect their commerce, to develop their resources, and turn towards their shores the vast tide of emigration that has been heretofore flowing into the United States, will become points of anxious solicitude with the Imperial Cabinet.

Is it not monstrous that the surplus of England's population should enrich and strengthen foreign States, that secretly strive to injure her in peace; and would do their utmost to accomplish her destruction in War. What sacrifice on the part of the government would be too great to induce emigrants to inhabit these North American Colonies; and raise up here, among the most loyal people of the Queen's dominions, a populous and truly British confederacy, that in peace would consume the products of home industry, and in war would stand forth as the right arm of her strength? What security can there be in conciliating the jealousy of France, or in yielding to the exorbitant concessions so vehemently demanded and so thanklessly received by the United States? Let past experience answer! And let the Rulers of England's destiny, whoever they may be, lay this truth to heart—that the only sure guarantee of their country's prosperity and safety is, in nourishing the strength—increasing the population—protecting the commerce—fostering the industry—and securing the affections of her colonies all over the world.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES.

(From Neilson's Quebec Gazette.)

The following is copied from a late English paper:—“It may be confidently anticipated, now that the boundary line is settled, and the Canadians have obtained a new Constitution, that this country will be at length relieved of the enormous expense incurred by keeping up a large standing army in our North American provinces. The troops of the line in that quarter, independent of the native militia in pay, probably exceed 15,000 men, being about one-fifth of the whole effective force of the country. Taking the pay of the militia into account, the number of desertions from the regular army, and the large sums of money laid out on public works, it cannot be denied that the mother country has a very expensive, as well as a troublesome offspring. From keeping up so many troops in Canada, Great Britain has been forced to increase her army, and has at the same time been materially crippled in her operations both in India and China. These considerations, therefore, give rise to the questions, whether, under all circumstances, the possession of the Canadas is worth the money, and whether, at some not very distant period, it may not be advisable to leave the people to erect themselves into an independent State? When the North American provinces became sufficiently strong to assert their independence, we tried in vain to coerce them into obedience, lost armies and much treasure in the deadly contest, and were at last compelled to yield. Since that humiliating event, changes have taken place which few anticipated. England increased in power—the United States increased in a tenfold proportion, and the trade and commerce between the countries now exceeds those between any two States in the world. Unfortunately, the bad feeling created by the war of independence long existed, and has not died away, notwithstanding the vast commercial intercourse between the two countries. This, therefore, ought to be a lesson for the future rulers of the country, and should induce them, when Canada is sufficiently strong to defend herself, and claims independence, to grant it without a struggle. By so doing, Great Britain would set a noble example, perhaps the only one yet exhibited in the world, of fostering a colony, protecting it against all enemies during its weakness, and at a fitting season parting with it on terms of friendship and esteem. At present, however, such an event is out of the question, as Canada is quite unable to cope with her powerful neighbour, and we are bound to protect her; but when the separation does take place, England will have no cause to complain.”

It is a pity that people in England are not better in-

formed in regard to Canada and the other North American Colonies. If this evil were confined to the newspapers, it would not be so prejudicial to both countries; but it is to be found among ministers of State and members of Parliament; and hitherto it seems incurable.

The very nature of the relation between a metropolis and its Colony, is, that the Government of the metropolis should be the Supreme Government of the Colony. It possesses a controlling power over the Colony, otherwise it would be independent of the mother Country; in truth a foreign nation, and only the connexion which exists between independent States, would exist between the two countries. But unless the Supreme power is correctly informed of the state of things in a Colony, the acts and authority of that power will be mischievous, produce misgovernment, and prove fatal to the welfare of the Colonists, and injurious to the mother Country.

It was this want of correct information, and the acts of the British Government founded on error, that produced the loss of the old Colonies, now the United States of America, as well as the events which preceded, and those which are yet to follow.

The same cause is now in operation with regard to the remaining North American Colonies. The acts of the British Government and Legislature, affecting Canada, for many years past, have shown a degree of ignorance and instability similar to those which characterized their acts before and during the American Revolution. They are still groping in the dark, in order to find out remedies for the complaints from the Colonies, and running against new obstacles. In the vexation of failure, they lose sight of the principles of constitutional freedom and natural justice; which would either set them right, or induce them to abstain, till they were sure they are right.

They have again been paying dearly for their error; still they seem incapable of mending. Canada alone has cost England, during the year ending the 1st January, 1842, about four millions of dollars! and for what? on account of boundary disputes with the United States, which might have been settled at any time during the last fifty years, on the conditions of the late treaty: to subdue disorders in Canada, occasioned by acknowledged acts of misgovernment by the home ministry; and by the provincial Executives, under their controul!

And now they talk of leaving “the people to erect themselves into an Independent State,” and are weighing the duty of protection against “money!”—“when Canada is sufficiently strong to defend herself!” Here again the prevailing sin in regard to the real state of things in America is prominent. Have they forgot the boundaries established by the treaty of 1783, which gave the United States the latitude 45, the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, for a boundary, extending more than a thousand miles, laying the whole of Canada open to invasion by a population vastly superior in numbers and in means?

If Great Britain had intended by the treaty of 1783, to guard against Canada ever becoming independent, her statesmen of that day were right. If the British Government performs what this writer says she is “bound to do,” “to protect” Canada “till she is able to cope with her powerful neighbour,” the “fitting season” will never come.

It is to be hoped, however, that in the meantime some judicious steps may be taken to secure to the Colonies “good and cheap Government,” under the authority of the Crown, and that no one on the other side of the Atlantic will ever indulge in dreams of Canadian Independence, but be assured that whenever Canada ceases to be protected by the power of the British Empire, it becomes PART OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

CANADIAN POLITICS.

(From the Montreal Times.)

The name of the *New Orleans Picayune* is redolent of wit, humour, epigrams, puns and polished satire. We turn with pleasure to its pages when surfeited with demonstration meetings, caucus conventions, and all the machinery of political life.

Our contemporary dwells in a city blessed with a motley population. National rivalries were once rife in New Orleans; but the wisdom of forbearance, long preached, gradually gained converts; and at the present day the Franco and Anglo-Americans dwell in peace together.

A writer surrounded with all those elements which, in Canada, have been played with fearful effect upon each other, by a government alternately favouring one race or the other, cannot be disqualified from pronouncing an unbiassed opinion. Distance enables him to render an impartial verdict; and prejudiced as many of our Canadian politicians are, they must bear testimony to the correctness of the following sketch of Colonial affairs:—

“The principles of free government are in themselves contagious, or like the circles made by the dropping of a solid body in the water, they keep extending from the centre till they reach the farthest bounds of society. When the outbreak of 1837 and 8 was put down in Canada, by a soldiery called from beyond the seas and quartered on and among the people for that purpose, it was proclaimed by the tory presses of Canada, and echoed by many congenial journals here, that the people wanted no change—that their institutions were perfect—that they needed no amelioration, and that those who were the instigators, abettors and actors in the “rebellion,” were anarchists, malcontents, revolutionists—who, if in heaven, would, like Satan, be dissatisfied. We will see how far these assertions were correct. Until lately, the government of Canada was a kind of nondescript or anomaly.—Those who benefited by its corruptions, called it a system the most perfect by which the social compact was ever bound together—they pronounced it the image and transcript of the British constitution—with them the *beau ideal* of governmental polity. The people, who were the victims of its vices and the slaves of its corruptions, cried out loudly against it—they asserted that it was neither monarchical nor republican—neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring—that they were governed by an irresponsible oligarchy, who ruled but to ruin

—who kept within themselves, and as an heir-loom, the patronage as well as the power of the government; and who were significantly called the “family compact.”

“The boast of those who were in favour of things as they were—that the government of Canada was a transcript of that of Great Britain—was based on the assumption, that the colony, like the kingdom, was ruled by three estates. The Canadian House of Assembly, they said, was the image of the British House of Commons—the Legislative Council reflected the form of the House of Lords sitting in St. Stephen's, and the Governor was the representative of Royalty. But they forgot to add, that whoever the wheel of political fortune threw into the Colonial Office in London, governed *all*, though he might be as ignorant of the interests of the colony as a Kamschatkan is of astrology, or a live oyster of the properties of the steam engine.

“The members of the legislative council were appointed by the Governor, and it was packed exclusively by the “family compact,” whose power, political and personal, ascended to such a height in the province, that even the Governor could not reach it. He was therefore, be he whom he might, a puppet—a nose of wax in their hands. They were the government, and controlled every branch of it. The evils of the system, however, became too glaring; and the consequence was, that general discontent began to diffuse itself through the Provinces. A few choice spirits—Papineau in the lower province, and Bidwell and others in Upper Canada—guided and directed this feeling; they demanded a transcript of the British constitution, in fact as well as in name; they insisted upon having a responsible government—that the advisers of the Governor, styled in Canada the Executive Council, should, like the ministers of England, be responsible to the country for all the measures they introduced into the Provincial Parliament—and should resign and make way for others when they lost the confidence of the people, that is, when they could not command a majority of votes in the popular branch of the legislature. It was denied them; and, to pass over many events of importance, the rebellion followed. It was crushed; but although it was, England well knew that the germ of discontent was there.—She well knew that though the tree of opposition to injustice was hewn down, its roots and fibres had taken firm hold in the soil.

“The late Earl of Durham, a statesman of the most liberal political principles, was therefore despatched to Canada, to see what plan might be devised to save Canada to the mother country. He arrived in Canada, made himself acquainted with the bearings of the question at issue, went home, and advised that the Canadas be united, and that a “responsible government” be granted to the colonists. Thus, after the expenditure of an enormous sum of money, and subjecting the colony to all the evils of a civil war, all was conceded which was originally asked for.

“Well, the advice of Lord Durham was adopted, the provinces were united, and an Executive Council, nominally responsible, were chosen by the governor. Some of the old family compact destructives were retained; some of the ultra-liberals were brought in to act with them; and to give the council a more motley hue, a slice from the neutral or *juste milieu* party was added. When produced as a whole, they reflected no principles; represented no party; and what was considered more objectionable, marked injustice was done to the Lower Canadians of French descent. Not one of them was called to office under the new order of things.

“It was now seen that the policy contemplated was to keep the promise of responsible government to the ear, and break it to the hope. The consequence was, that Mr Baldwin, the most influential of the liberal party, and one or two others, retired from the ministry or cabinet, which left it in a rickety condition. Desperate efforts were made to carry on the government, in a manner as closely resembling the old system as possible. The experiment has however failed, and we are pleased to see, as we do by the papers received yesterday, that the governor has called back Mr. Baldwin to his council. The family compact men, and all others who do not recognize responsible government in its full and true sense, have been driven into retirement; and due weight and importance have been given to the Franco-Canadians in the government and legislation of the nation.

“The foregoing is a brief review of the events which led to the present much ameliorated political condition of the Canadians: we wish it may progress rather than retrograde. It is another proof of the moral apothegm—“Truth is powerful, and must prevail.”

(From the Toronto Examiner.)

Upon the whole, we conceive that every consistent reformer has reason to rejoice in the very favourable aspect which political affairs now present. We have never yet been so thoroughly relieved from the thraldom of the Old Compact, nor witnessed such an unreserved application of the principle of Responsible Government in the administration of our affairs. The consistent and straight-forward course which the reform party pursued has led to the natural result of—power, respect and solidity. So strong a Government has never, we believe, existed in Canada, and we trust that the strength they possess will be heartily applied to the removal of evil and corruption, and the full establishment of justice, intelligence and honesty. We shall soon witness the re-assembling of the Provincial Parliament (in February it is said), and until then we must be content to trust to conjecture, founded on the former career of those gentlemen who now hold office, for the means of anticipating the course which politics will take.

It is a fact worthy of remark, that a Governor who is appointed by a British Cabinet, of which Sir R. Peel is premier, and who is the nephew of the Duke of Wellington, is the first ruler Canada has seen who would render justice to the French, or bring the theory of Responsible Government into practical application. It is especially worthy of remark, because it tends to prove, that the spirit of the English Government is becoming more liberal, and the men who administer it more inclined to adapt themselves to the opinions of the times.