

A Reason Wanted.

THE Patriot is rampant against the proposed duty on flour which another supporter of Mr. McKenzie moved for in the House of Commons! Not content with condemning the Ontario wing of the Grit Party, the Patriot tries to bring the EXAMINER into this same condemnation. It actually has the audacity to assert that

"The EXAMINER is found to advocate a duty on flour."

To this audacious assertion we give a most emphatic denial. We have never written one word in advocacy of the duty proposed by Mr. McKenzie's followers and opposed and voted against by Mr. Pope. Our position is clearly defined. We want to come—and we want the people of this Island to come—to an intelligent understanding of this trade question. In regard to the article of flour, we find that prices are no higher in the Protected States than they are in Free Trade Canada. On enquiry of our flour merchants as to the cause, the reason given is that the prices of flour in both countries are regulated and governed by the prices of flour in Great Britain. Now, we want to know how this duty which Mr. McKenzie's follower—Brown—proposes, can raise the price of Canadian flour? But the flour merchants—not being political economists—are not very clear in their answers. Like ourselves—and the rest of the people of this Province—they want a little enlightenment on that point. We appealed to the Patriot or any of its correspondents. We hoped that if the Patriot failed, Mr. W. D. Stewart would come to the rescue. We have waited a week, and still there is no answer, except the wholesale assertion that "This tax on flour, then, would cost every such family five dollars a year." We now ask the Patriot or any of its correspondents to prove this assertion. But it must not be inferred that because we ask them to do this we advocate the imposition of the tax.

The Patriot, we observe, cites the New York Herald as an authority upon the question of Reciprocity. The friendly disposition of the New York Herald may be judged from the fact that it has persistently opposed the payment to Canada of the five and a half millions awarded by the Fishery Commission and advocated a breach of the Treaty of Washington, by proposing to shut out of United States markets the products of our fisheries.

And the New York Herald is the high authority the Patriot asks its readers to accept before they do the opinions of Sir A. T. Galt, Mr. Alex. McKenzie (Premier), Mr. Workman (the Premier's supporter), Senator Fabre (the Premier's pet), and many other eminent Canadians of both political parties.

The Patriot says "the Americans are a high spirited people." What idea the Patriot has of high spirit we know not. The "Americans" deny us privileges in their markets which we fully accord to them and they accept in our markets. Would a "high spirited" people do this?

And what shall we say of the "high spirit" of Canadians if they cringe to the strongest, and while being ruined for want of Reciprocity are yet afraid to raise a finger to obtain it?

The course likely to be adopted by the "high-spirited Canadian people" has been indicated by an United States statesman, whose opinion is, at least, equally as good as that of the New York Herald. While opposing in Congress the abrogation of the "Reciprocity Treaty," and while denouncing the mean and selfish policy the Government of the United States were then about to begin, the Hon. Elijah Ward, of New York, said:—

"Until 1847, the produce of the Colonies was admitted under special privileges into the markets of Great Britain; but when these were removed, the authority of that country over the financial affairs of the Colonies was also relaxed. At that time the Canadian duties on American manufactures were seven and a half per cent. more than on similar articles made in Great Britain; but one of the first duties of their increased power was to equalize taxation on the manufactures of both countries by a uniform tariff of 7 1/2 per cent on all."

As Colonies of Great Britain, the Provinces may easily return to preferential duties in favor of the nation with which they are politically connected."

There is little room for doubt that if we rashly and persistently pursue a hostile and exclusive course most of this trade now in our possession will be divided between the Colonies themselves and Great Britain. The Provinces will be compelled to execute their old project of an intercolonial railroad from Halifax and St. John, and perhaps other ports in the interior of their country, thus completing the only remaining link in their present vast system of internal communication, and giving them uninterrupted access from Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron to the ocean through their own territory, at all periods of the year. Their people, by commercially uniting the Provinces together, may soon accomplish the development of a system of home industry which will make them independent of our

manufactures, and compete with us in every neutral market. They will become their own shippers and traders for every commodity of foreign origin."—Hon. Elijah Ward, 1864.

We give that to the Patriot as the opinion of a "high-spirited and a very eminent American," whose opinion is worthy of consideration.

The Patriot's unprofessional and disparaging remarks concerning the EXAMINER gives us no concern. Every day we receive evidence that the EXAMINER's efforts to explain the Trade Question and the position of the two political parties respecting it, are being appreciated. Only this morning we received a note from a gentleman of English birth and high education, in which he says:

ALBERTON, April 13, 1878. "I think your remarks on Dr. Tupper's speech and on 'Free Trade' very conclusive, and such as ought to meet with universal attention. There can be no Free Trade properly so called without Reciprocity."

Debate on the Abolition of the Legislative Council.

TO CHANGE the Constitution of even this small Province is a serious matter; and although we believe the people long ago made up their minds that the Legislative Council is now unnecessary, we do not blame the Government for adopting a cautious policy with reference to the conditions upon which the abolition shall take place. In making political changes it is always best to "hasten slowly." The present Government have already suffered much on account of their over-hasty Legislative action—and, we may add, the people also have suffered much on account of their over-hasty Legislative action. It is well that Mr. Davies and his colleagues are beginning to learn wisdom by experience.

We must confess, however, that it is somewhat confusing to ordinary men to hear members of the Government declaim and protest against a measure which the Government propose. Nor is it, in our opinion, much to be wondered at that the Hon. W. D. Stewart's attempt to introduce, by a speech, a resolution from the first and main proposition of which he dissented, was painfully ridiculous. Mr. Stewart is, he says, opposed to the abolition of the Legislative Council. Yet he is the introducer of a resolution which sets forth that it is expedient to abolish the Legislative Council.

Even Mr. Davies might have failed just as miserably as his lieutenant had he openly expressed his private opinions. But Mr. Davies had the wit to conceal his thoughts respecting the expediency of abolishing the Council, and to confine his argument to the qualifications property holders should possess in case the people decide at the polls that the Council should be abolished. In speaking to this point Mr. Davies for once threw off the false radical garb—the thin disguise which barely covers the high Toryism with which nature has invested him—and posed in the character of a true Conservative. We must do Mr. Davies the justice to admit that he acted the part infinitely better than he does that of the advanced radical. The phrase "conserve the rights," and "conserve the interests," and "conserve the political privileges," "held and enjoyed" by property holders fell from his lips as naturally as if he were a Conservative to the manner born. His speech, from the premises he laid down, was a good one. But, in our opinion, the premises he laid down are false. What is the ground taken by those who favor the abolition of the Council? Not, certainly, that property holders enjoy any privileges under it or derive any benefit from it. Quite the contrary. It is asserted that the interest of property holders are not conserved by the Council. It is stated that the Council has invariably failed in its duty to property holders when put to the test. It is declared that it has always been the obedient tool of the Lower House. It is said that the Council has never—since it became elective—put a check upon Legislation. It is said that since the Island entered the Confederacy, and the most important functions of the Provincial Legislature are performed by the Dominion Government—and the sphere of the Provincial Legislature is hedged about by the Dominion Parliament—and the Acts of the Provincial Legislature are subject to the inspection of the Minister of Justice and to the veto of the Dominion Government—the Legislative Council has been a useless institution. This is the contention. And if this contention be not just, then there is no reason why the Legislative Council should be abolished. The mere saving of six or seven thousand dollars a year is a ridiculous plea for the abolition of a useful factor in our Legislative machinery. It is because the people believe the Council to be useless and unnecessary in this small Province of ninety thousand inhabitants, that they clamor for its abolition. That they are right seems, in view of the circumstances, reasonable. It is remarked by John Stuart Mill that:—

"If there are two Houses, one considered to represent the people, the other to represent only a class, or not to be representative at all, I cannot think that where democracy is the ruling power in society, the second House would have any real ability to resist even the aberrations of the first. It might be suffered to exist, in deference to habit and association, but not as an effective check. If it exercised an independent will, it would be required to do so in the same general spirit as the other House; to be equally democratic with it, and to content itself with correcting the accidental oversights of the more popular branch of the legislature, or competing with it in popular measures."

We do not suppose that John Stuart Mill had the second House of Prince Edward Island in view when he made these remarks; but certainly it has been unable to resist even the "aberrations of the first,"—as witness the Legislation of last Session.

If, then, the observation of John Stuart Mill be not at fault; if the contention of the people that the Legislative Council affords no protection to property holders be a

right contention, what ground is there for Mr. Davies' argument in favor of giving to property holders two votes (in the event of its abolition) to non-property holders' one? Clearly, none whatever. To do so, would be to simply give something in lieu of nothing, to make an invidious distinction between man and man—to introduce still more generally the principle of discord which now, unhappily—owing to the Legislation of last Session—pervades the body politic.

The proper basis upon which electoral qualification should be established is a difficult and delicate question. With regard to a property qualification: We think property should undoubtedly have its due influence in the representative body of the Province. But we strongly incline to the opinion—expressed by Mr. McMillan—that property holders indirectly obtain that influence by the exercise of the influence they necessarily and legitimately possess over persons with whom they are connected. Any man of property, who is reasonable and active, and has a show of right on his side, can, without either bribery or intimidation or doing anything unlawful—influence the votes of one or two poorer persons in favor of the candidate he supports. If he is not a man of sense and has not right on his side, then there is no reason why he should possess greater weight in the community than his poorer neighbor who is endowed with sense, and has right on his side. On this point the celebrated Lord Brougham remarks:—

"If the possession of certain pecuniary means at any one time showed him to be of that class which may safely be entrusted with the elective franchise, does his loss of these pecuniary means degrade him to an inferior class, and make him who was trustworthy last year not to be trusted this? Are his industry, sobriety, information, judgment, all gone with his money? At least, let us be consistent with ourselves, and admit that, having once been proved to be a fit person, he should be recognized as such ever after. The rule, to have any color of consistency with itself, should be—'Once a voter always a voter.'"

"But it seems, if possible, more absurd to adopt such a test, or any test at all, unless there is an absolute impossibility of obtaining the quality itself directly, or at least by much easier methods. If the possession of wealth is allowed to be a criterion of sense and information, all must admit it to be liable to error, as the most silly and ignorant of men may have it. So, if it be taken as an evidence of industry and sober habits, or of general respectability, the same uncertainty must be allowed to attend it."

On the whole we must condemn the policy of the Government in this matter. If they think "manhood suffrage" is a failure in this Province of ours; if they think there should be a change of base on the matter of electors' qualifications, it might be well, perhaps, for them to consider whether they could not profitably adopt Mr. Hackett's suggestion and make the possession of education and character the qualification of voters. They rejoice in the name of the "Free School Government," and they might, we think—with a little ingenuity—invent a plan by which their Free School system would be materially strengthened and improved, while the qualification of electors would be placed upon a basis as enduring as manhood, and as high as the best interests of the Province demand—without the invidious distinctions and the uncertainty incident to the proposed "Plural Vote."

How They Do It!

The Local Government calls for tenders to manage the Ferry Steamers; and

Table with 2 columns: Name and Amount. H. sends in a tender for \$2,900. H. gets B. to tender for him for 2,300. H. gets C. do do 1,450. A. sends in a tender for 1,800. E. do do 1,490. D. do do 1,500.

When "E's" tender is opened—B. who opens the tender calls out, "H. has it at \$1,450; send for H." When "H." comes he is told that his tender is the lowest; but with a little—he contrives to get the contract at the amount of "D's" tender, viz: \$1,500.

And so they illustrate "Reform," "Economy," and "Fairplay."

Corrections.

We have no desire to do any supporter of the Local Government—or any other Government—the slightest injustice; and it seems that we did "Mr. Speaker" an injustice in attributing to him the proposal to reduce Mr. W. C. DesBrisay's salary. "Mr. Speaker" lost his opportunity to do the people of the Island a great service; but he did not—we are informed—discriminate invidiously against the efficient and popular Clerk of the Executive Council.

A report—clipped from one of our exchanges—which appeared in the EXAMINER of March 23rd, to the effect that "Messrs. Cooper, Fairman & Co., of Montreal, had put their estate into insolvency" was incorrect. We regret that the false report appeared in our columns.

The statement of one of our correspondents that Galbraith's Band received from the Government \$100 an hour hardly needs correction. Mr. Galbraith informs us that the \$100 were granted to assist the Band in obtaining new instruments.

NAVIGATION OF THE GULF.—We understand that the Straits of Northumberland are open from Cape Tormentine to the mouth of the St. Lawrence river, and that in a week or ten days the harbors along the North Shore will be free of ice and open for navigation. So far the only shipper from that quarter, which we hear of asking for tonnage from our shipbrokers, is George McLeod, Esq., M. P., who is preparing to ship a large quantity of deals from Richibucto and Buctouche, this coming season. He also ships from Miramichi, but in a smaller scale than the above ports.—St. John Telegraph.

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Under Captain Finlayson's Skillful Command the "Northern Light," well spoken of by hummers, has landed us

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THE LATEST CUT.

WORSTED COATINGS—SUPERIOR FINISH! Spring Tweed—Newest Designs!

LATEST STYLES,

—IN—

SHIRTS (white & colored), Men's Hard and Soft Felt and Fur HATS, CAPS, &c.

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RESERVE your Spring Order, and get our Low Quotations—LOWER THAN EVER BEFORE.

CARVELL BRO'S, AGENTS.

Ch'town, March 23—sw pat s jour 21

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Monday Evening next, the 22nd inst.,

In aid of the funds of the Association THE PROGRAMME

will consist of some of the best Anthem Choruses ever sung before a Charlottetown Audience, such as

"THE HEAVENS ARE TELLING," from "HAYDN'S CREATOR."

A Choir of nearly one hundred voices, comprising the best musical talent to be found in the several Churches of the City, accompanied by Piano, Organ, Violin, Flute and two Cornets, are to take part on this occasion.

The friends of the Association and lovers of music may confidently expect the best musical treat of the season.

Tickets 25 cents; reserved seats 50 cents.

By order, D. M. FRASER, Musical Director.

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CAPITAL . . \$25,000, In Shares of \$25.00 each.

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Applications for Shares to be made to Messrs. Hyndman Bros., until the Directors and Officers of the Company are appointed. April 16, 1878—

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SOLE LEATHER!

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50 SIDES New York SOLE LEATHER. For sale cheap, at

ARCH'D KENNEDY'S, Lower Water Street, Ch'town, March 29—6in

COAL! COAL!

FOR SALE,

ABOUT 300 Tons Gowrie Mines Fine A COAL, a superior article for House use and Steam purposes. Will be sold cheap for Cash. April 4—li WM. KOUGHAN.

BUY THE DAILY EXAMINER. For the latest news—local and telegraphic.

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WE will sell at AUCTION, in front of our Salesroom, on

Thursday, 18th April, inst., AT 11 o'CLOCK, A. M.,

100 Bbls. Superior Extra FLOUR,

200 " Extra

100 " Superfine

50 HALF-CHESTS TEA!

To Close Consignment.

CARVELL BROS., Auctioneers.

Ch'town, April 13—pat t sale

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COLLINS' GEOGRAPHY,

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and other School Books just received at

THE SCHOOL BOOK DEPOT.

HARVIE'S BOOK-STORE; Ch'town, April 8—eod

JUST RECEIVED, Another Supply of the Celebrated WALTHAM WATCHES,

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A SCHOONER of about 80 Tons. Apply to

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