

Royal Gazette And New Brunswick Advertiser.

Vol. 5.

SAINT JOHN, MONDAY, APRIL 20, 1812.

No. 225.

LONDON, MARCH 4.

The subject of the Orders in Council was again discussed last night, in the House of Commons. It could scarcely be expected that, after the repeated ample discussion this question has undergone, any thing very novel could in this instance arise, and the result has justified the opinion we were in this respect induced to form of it. Though we have not followed the different speakers through their various elaborate and repeatedly urged arguments, we have still given every thing either important, interesting or novel, that was advanced on the occasion; and the decision of the House, it will be seen, is in perfect accordance with the sentiments we have uniformly expressed upon the subject. The House sat in debate till half past five this morning, when a division took place—for Mr. BROUGHAM's motion 144, against it 216.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 3. ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

Mr. BROUGHAM said he rose in consequence of a notice he had given to bring forward a motion affecting the state of our commerce and manufactures, a motion which embraced so vast and so complicated a variety of detail, that if he had been aware of its extent at first, he doubted much whether he would not have consulted his prudence and relinquished his undertaking.—With such claims to the indulgence of the House, he would only preface his observations with observing, that his object was to induce the House to go into a Committee for the purpose of enquiring into this important matter. He had to address himself to various descriptions of persons, all agreeing that the voice of this country was raised in complaint, and he hoped all were unwilling, to say, that these complaints were without foundation, until they were examined. Great difference of opinion existed as to the causes of the present distress. Some disapproved of the measures of 1806, which were followed up by the Orders in Council of 1807. Others who approved of the further Orders in Council, might disapprove of the particular mode of relaxation which was adopted. Others again, who regarded the original measures as a grand experiment of counteraction to the policy of France, would wish to examine its effects. There was another class, of which he must acknowledge himself to be one, who, having condemned the whole from the commencement, were willing to shew that the predictions were fulfilled even beyond their most desponding expectations. Last of all, there was a class who, undervaluing the commerce and manufactures of the country, supposed that nothing was to be apprehended while agriculture was encouraged. To all those different classes he had to address himself, and he hoped they would all concur in giving their voices for inquiry. His object was to enquire into the result of the experiment of 1807, and to ascertain whether it had oppressed or assisted the enemy; whether it was not better that we should retrace our steps; or if we were to persist, that we should adopt a more effectual, intelligible, and operative mode of enforcing our measures against the commerce of France? Unless they were prepared to tell the people that our present evils were irremediable; that they were such as must be endured by patience, rather than by hope, the House could not refuse the proposed investigation. The system upon which we had so long professed to act, was, in the outset, retaliation. What then was the system of the enemy upon which it was a retaliation? To sum up all in one word, it was a system of hostility to commerce; a wish to sacrifice the trade of France to the destruction of the trade of England. It was true that, in some moments, while suffering under the vexation of severe naval losses, Bonaparte had expressed a wish for "ships, colonies, and commerce;" but no sooner had his mind resumed its tone, than he turned to the prosecution of his favourite policy of sacrificing his own trade to the ruin of ours. Nay, he (Mr. Brougham) was disposed to go further, and say that he had a hostility to commerce itself, without any view to us, as if there was something in its nature injurious to his views upon the liberties of mankind. The conscription itself was inconsistent with trade; it was a sacrifice of commerce to power, and the same disposition was manifested in the various measures of his Government, as well as in his answers to the petitions of his merchants.

To them he had declared that "it was too late in the day to think of trade;" that the failure of their commerce was so much the better, for "he would have soldiers and peasants alone." It was also to be collected from the publication of his minister, Talleyrand, in which he maintained the superiority of agriculture to commerce since the stormy period of the revolution; the latter having a tendency to unite men, the former to separate, to dispirit, and tranquillize them. His system was war with commerce; with commerce as with liberty; with the mother as with the child; with those principles which were favourable to the world he hated; and inimical to the power he had usurped. He (Mr. Brougham) was not disposed to believe him (Bonaparte,) or his new made Duke, upon their own bare avowal, for it was easy to suppose the case of a Prince and Minister of France presenting such a compound of villainy and fraud to the world, as to render us the more guarded in proportion as their vows and oaths were more positive and awful. But the system of Bonaparte being, from the evidence of facts, such as he had described, they were next to enquire, what system it was natural for England to adopt on the other hand. The obvious policy of England was to encourage commerce by all means in her power, and to encourage the trade of neutrals. Not of the neutrals most contiguous to France, and therefore most exposed to its power, but of that neutral which was separated from France by an ocean, impassible to her, owning the same interests, and speaking the same language with England, and being the only nation, beside ourselves, in which freedom could be found. It was lamentable to consider how entirely the reverse of those measures was adopted. We had not only not done our best to secure the neutrality of that Power, but we had adopted a system against neutrals which went to oblige them immediately to declare for one side or other. He should say nothing upon the negotiations still pending with that Country, but could not help regretting having heard on a late occasion, that the hopes of a successful issue were represented as slender. But looking to the effects of the system we had pursued, they would find by the papers laid before the House in 1809, that the whole of the imports and exports of 1808, as compared with those of 1807, fell short by no less an amount than fifteen millions. It was found necessary in 1809, to substitute a blockade to a limited extent, which was done by the measure of the 6th of April in that year. This measure he contended was in effect getting rid by one sweep of the whole principle of the Orders in Council. The principle was to cripple the French commerce, but this, by opening an inlet to their commerce, defeated the principle. As to the flourishing representations of our trade in 1809, he would set against them the seizure of our vessels by the enemy in 1810, by which upwards of nine millions sterling was lost to this country. The seven millions Droits of Admiralty which we had taken from our friends and natural allies in the course of eighteen years of war, was more than counterbalanced by this fatal seizure of Bonaparte. He denied that Bonaparte had gone on relaxing his decrees after the piling down of our Orders in Council. In 1809 we relieved the pressure on his commerce, and in 1810 he came out with two measures, ten thousand times more strict and more pressing on his commerce and our own. He ridiculed the Bark Bill as an attack upon the humanity of Bonaparte, by persons who had always denied him the possession of such a feeling. He should next proceed to state the facts on which his inferences were built, though the numberless petitions preparing in many parts of the country; the list of bankruptcies, which was doubled since the Orders in Council, the list of the poor, which had increased in Liverpool to sixteen times its former amount, were facts, which would bear him out, even in the teeth of the returns upon the table. He could not shut his ears to the cries of the poor people; he could not be indifferent to the petitions which would shortly come from Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, and parts of Scotland; nor could he look upon the returns of Mr. Irvine, as of greater authority; he might be called the saviour of the nation; the Gazettes might be represented as mistaken; the country might be held up as flourishing, commercial, and gay, but it must be in defiance of all those proofs of misery which obtruded

themselves daily before their eyes. But let them see what was the state of things in 1811, even by the documents of Mr. Irvine himself. The official value of the exports for three quarters of the year 1810, was £27,000,000. The official value of the exports for the three corresponding quarters of the year 1811, was only £16,000,000 being a falling off of £11,000,000 in the three quarters, and by calculation, a falling off of 14 or £15,000,000 in the whole year of official value; or about £21,000,000 real value. The answer to all this, it seemed, was, that there had been no considerable falling off in the exports of last year, as compared with the exports of 1809. It would appear, however, that the difference was only £2,000,000 and that the exports of the three quarters of 1810 were to the amount of £9,000,000 less than the exports of the three corresponding quarters of 1809. But he would go back to a comparison with 1808; and the House would recollect that that was the very worst year of exports. The falling off of the exports of 1808 being £15,000,000 as compared with 1807. In the three quarters of 1808 the exports were £18,000,000. In the three quarters of 1811, £16,000,000 being a difference in real value of £2,500,000. With respect to the exports to South America, the House had only the Custom-house returns, which could not be considered as a fair test of the real trade. By those returns it appeared, that the official value of the exports in 1811, to America, exclusive of the United States and the West-Indies, exceeded those of the year 1807 by eight millions. How little harmonious was this statement from the Custom-house, with the actual situation of the Country! Those who did not pin their faith to Mr. Irvine's books, when they saw the wretchedness that prevailed in the Country, could not help suspecting that those exports went to a market not open to receive them. The great excess of importation in the succeeding year strongly confirmed this suspicion. He proceeded to consider the relaxation of the Orders in Council under the name of Trade Licences, a relaxation which showed a complete want of confidence in the success of the original measures. The increase of the licences was prodigious. In 1807, 1600 were issued; in 1811, no less than 18,000, thus subjecting the whole foreign trade of the country to a new system. What was the natural result of these licences as they affected the enemy, neutral powers, and this country? With regard to the enemy, in proportion to the extent of the licences was the principle of the Orders in Council abandoned. With regard to neutral powers, the system tended to benefit those alone who were under the influence of France, and to whom France looked for the support of her Marine. With respect to this country, the effect on our shipping would be apparent, by a comparison of the British and foreign shipping employed in 1806, with the British and foreign shipping which had been employed in 1810. By this comparison it would appear that in that period the amount of foreign tonnage and foreign shipping had more than doubled; being at the first period, 567,000 tons of shipping, and 29,000 seamen; and being, in 1810, 1,138,000 tons of shipping, and 60,000 seamen. The British Ship Owners, as the memorials from Hull, Shields, &c,