

The Politician.

The British Press.

From the Illustrated London News, Dec. 2.

COMMERCIAL FRAUD.

One tendency of the present state of society, which late years have developed, with a distinctness not to be mistaken, is far from pleasant to the mind that is sufficiently removed from the sphere of action to be able to contemplate. We have recently poured out much virtuous indignation on the backsliding of the Americans, in the matter of their debts. We perceive, very plainly, the mote in our brother's eye—can we say that there is not a beam in our own? A perusal of the public journals—those portions of them that record mere facts, and do not state opinions—would lead any one to imagine that the agents of our trading and fiscal affairs live, move, and breathe, in a perfect atmosphere of fraud. If we progress at the same rate for half a generation longer, commercial dishonesty will become the rule, and integrity the exception. On every side of us we see perpetually—fraud, fraud, fraud. There are (or, we hope, in this office, we may say, were) frauds in the Exchequer—frauds in the Exchequer—frauds in the Custom house—frauds in the tea trade—frauds in the tobacco trade—frauds and adulteration in the sugar trade. There seems, absolutely, to be scarcely a branch of commerce that has escaped taint and infection. The Americans cheat their foreign creditors; we strike the balance of immortality, by plundering our Government at home. In both cases the impelling motive is that boundless passion for gain, which will accumulate at all hazards, and which, when indulged, unites every principle of honour and honesty, as with a moral pestilence. The reports of the Courts of Law during the week, exhibit the Crown as prosecutor against the members of a large City firm, to recover the penalties incurred by fraudulent dealings with the Custom house—the transactions being shared in, and connived at, by persons employed in that establishment. In the Post office, we have it stated, in the deliberate and solemn evidence of the secretary before a committee of the House of Commons, that the "robberies (of letters) are terrific!" How is it all to end? Can nothing be done to stem the torrent of corruption? or is it to sweep on unchecked, threatening to destroy the fabric of society, by shaking every confidence between man and man? It is a serious question, and some answer must be given to it.

Where the temptation to do evil constantly exist, it is generally found that the committing of that evil will be frequent in proportion to the facilities for perpetrating it undetected. The object of rulers, then, should be, taking it for granted that human nature, at the best, is frail and weak—very often wicked—to make these opportunities as few as possible, and keep a good watch that these few, if they must be unavoidably left open, should not be made use of by those they employ. By proper management some frauds could be entirely prevented. The Exchequer Bill forgeries were purely owing to the miserable management of that department. If it had been conducted with the average business tact and ability of any good banking house in the City, such wholesale plunder by a subordinate officer would have been impossible. But no one expects the head of a government department in England to know anything of the actual working of it, so his subordinate or his deputy does it, and he is a "highly respectable man," till at last it is found necessary to convict him as a forger and defaulter, and the good natured public is misled to the tune of half a million to cover his deficiencies. Such a fraud is simply bad management—a bungling in detail.

But there are other cases where the causes of the frauds lie deeper, and are more complex. The temptation is first held out by the laws themselves—the trader yields to those temptations, and seduces the officers of the Crown to assist in his nefarious schemes—of course, by admitting him to a share of the profits. Such a case as this is far more difficult to deal with than the first—but a remedy, even here, is not impossible. It is to this class of frauds belong all those cases, the details of which have caused so much consternation. But the full extent of the evil is far from revealed; the number of cases discovered are as nothing to those which escape detection. The profits are so immense, in consequence of the enormous amount of duties evaded, that the smuggling trader can afford to lose several ventures, provided he succeeds in one or two. The parties now under prosecution were only in the silk trade, but it is believed that the frauds in the tobacco import trade are quite as extensive. We hear of its being seized by tons at a time; and with an expensive Coast Guard, and a vigilant Excise, the question is, how is it landed and transported about in such bulks? *Quis custodiet custodes?* Who keeps watch on the watchers? But it is not to these we must look for the prevention of this demoralising system, for a system it has become. It must be continually enforced as a practical truth, that an enormously high rate of duty, compared with the cost price of the article itself, will always be kept down to an unproductive point by the efforts of the smuggler. The ingenuity of men stimulated by the certainty of high profit will defeat the most stringent laws; of this the slave trade is the terrible example. Governments are not much influenced by moral considerations in the regulating the mode in which they levy the necessary revenue of the state; but they must be influenced by pecuniary ones; and our present system of high duties on articles of low actual cost, is evidently a suicidal one. The Government is

losing, the people are being demoralised, and the honourable pursuit of trade and commerce is degenerating into gambling. There may thus be a sort of ethics even in taxation, though it has hitherto been a thing little dreamed of in the philosophy of statesmen. Society is evidently outraging many of the regulations and forms that were once practicable enough. London was once a trading city; it is now much more than this—it is a nation in itself; more populous than many independent states, and far richer than many kingdoms. The pressure of its enormous demands is breaking through every fetter which the rulers of other generations imposed on the sources of its supply; but the process is a struggle between the laws of the land and the wants of the people, in which it is evident the latter will prevail. Some attempt, therefore must be made to bring them more in harmony than they are at present—a thing perfectly possible—and that without loss to the public revenue, to say nothing of the more healthy state of feeling which would be produced by the change.

The Colonial Press.

From the Kingston correspondence of the Montreal Times.

CANADIAN AFFAIRS.

No man can speak of our amiable governor in terms other than those of praise. His munificent and comprehensive charities—his generous interference in behalf of the destitute and suffering—his warm hearted philanthropy, while those who differ from him most essentially upon the interpretation which should be imparted to the term Responsible Government, draw a wide line between his private and public acts. Looking at his conduct through a political medium, they believe that he acts under instructions—that he does not consult his own feelings—that he is not permitted to avail himself of the experience he has gathered during his brief sojourn. Those who pretend to a deeper and more intimate knowledge of the secret policy of the Colonial office, allege that the bores of Responsible Government was wrung from Britain at a time when a French war threatened the safety of Canada, when American demands excited the apprehensions of the Imperial authorities—that Canada was unwillingly conciliated because the people of England had become wearied with the costly expenditure consequent upon an armed possession of the soil, and the party in power were constrained from sheer necessity to adopt the only alternative which promised a cessation of the outlay. The French Canadians were invited to accept office; their adherence to the administration was followed by a cessation of discontent throughout the land.—The Upper Canada Reformers satisfied that equal justice was intended, cordially co-operated to promote tranquillity. As an evidence of their influence and power conjoined, England was enabled to withdraw a dozen regiments from the colony: an immense body of volunteers were disbanded—police and stipendiary magistrates were relieved from office. These facts speak in strong and unmistakable language the success which followed the constitutional administration of Sir Charles Bagot—but throughout the fluctuating policy of successive governors the colonial office could not forget that they were relinquishing the cherished privilege of providing for their hungry followers out of the colonial purse. They were content in the hour of danger and difficulty to abandon to abandon their pretensions and professedly resign the right of nominating to office. But when France had ceased to present a menacing aspect, and the United States were appeased by surrendering to them a large territory—the old game of the compact rule seemed facile of attainment. Such is the reasoning of the men to whom I allude. They say further that the colonial office have been deluded into the belief by the Tory press, that Canada was wearied with her ministers—that Messrs Lafontaine and Baldwin were far from popular—that the bulk of the electors, believing themselves deserted by the home government, had become apathetic—that it only required a bold and decided stand to rally a powerful majority in the Assembly, who would at once cast overboard the whole system of Responsible Government, and substitute instead thereof the ancient council, neither responsible to the house or the people.

They say that the distinguished individual at the head of this Colony, has been moved by the language of the Tory press, and induced to believe that the facts were as they stated—that hence he quarrelled with his Cabinet with the wish to offend and oblige them to resign, confident that he could command a majority. Such is the reasoning held by some who profess a deep insight into passing events.

The explanations offered by the Cabinet and Governor are now public property. They set the matter fairly at issue—and as a dissolution under any circumstances is inevitable, it is well that the freeholders should know the origin and merits of the quarrel. The Governor claims the right of nomination to office. Admitted by the Executive—but the Executive on the other hand say to the Governor: you are bound to consult us upon every nomination; if we deem your choice adverse to the public good, we resist your act, and if forced to decide, we resign. The Governor says, on the other hand, I am the sole judge, I shall decide for myself. I shall name to office any person I think proper. I am not bound to consult your wishes. Those who are familiar with Colonial affairs, will remember that Sir Francis Bond Head held the same language, although opposed to Responsible Government—consequently the question is not whether His Excellency approves or disapproves of Responsible Government in the abstract—but whether the principle of government he avows be popular. Judging from the men around me, who reflect the opin-

ions of the people, I should say the Governor must recede from his position. He cannot divide the Reform ranks—every effort and device has been tried in vain. Some of the leaders have explicitly explained to me their opinions; and taking such language as an index of future action, I should say that the next House of Assembly will be more resolute and energetic than the present. No compromise—no surrender—is the cry. They contend that were they to yield to the demand of His Excellency, that henceforward Canada would be little better than a nursery for the decayed hangers-on of the Colonial Office—that Colonists would be shorn of the only privilege they now enjoy.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

WEDNESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 10, 1844.

ARRIVAL OF THE SOUTHERN MAIL.—The Southern mail reached the Post Office, yesterday morning, at 8 o'clock. We went to press to-day at two o'clock.

CANADA.—The following, being an extract of a private letter from Kingston, in a Montreal paper, dated 12th December gives the latest intelligence from Canada, regarding the late changes in the administration:—

"I have just heard from a source that I think may be depended on, that neither the Receiver General nor the Commissioner of Crown Lands are to give up their offices—Mr. Harri-son comes into the Council but without office."

Upper Canada is coming out in favour of Sir Charles Metcalfe. The Kingston Loyalist says—The City of Kingston, the City of Toronto, the Towns of London, Picton, Belleville, Waterloo, Cobourg, Bytown, Peterborough, the Counties of Frontenac, Carleton, Oxford, Prince Edward and Northumberland, have already met, and with a unanimous shout send forth their myriad voices for British Supremacy and "No Surrender."—Every post conveys to us letters, giving the tidings either of meetings, or of intended meetings; and we venture now to assure Sir Charles Metcalfe, that instead of nine doubtful and two adverse constituencies we verily believe that every constituency in Canada will elect the "Metcalfe Ticket." The Metropolitan County met this day, all opposition on the part of Reformers was given up, and the British party, equestrians and pedestrians in number at least four hundred, proceeded in a body to Government House and presented their address.

The Kingston Statesman, of the 13th instant, has the following:—

Messrs. Draper, Viger, Daly, and Cartwright, will at present compose the Executive Council, but without salary.

This Government is but provisional, and in due time the Monarchists of Canada will have a strong and permanent Administration.

Mr. Carey will continue in charge of the Inspector General's Office, Mr. Turquand of the Receiver General's, and Mr. Bouthiller of the Crown Lands Office.

MINISTERIAL RESIGNATIONS.—In another part of to-day's Gleaner will be found the Letters of the Honbles. Joseph Howe, J. B. Uniacke, and James McNab, tendering their resignations as members of the Nova Scotia Executive Council. The Halifax papers contain the reply of Lord Falkland thereto, but want of space to-day prevents us from inserting it in our columns. His Lordship's answer to the Letters, and the reply of his late council, we shall insert next week, which will give our readers the full merits of the question without any comment from us.

THE REV. MR. McBEAN.—We are happy to announce that the large and respectable congregation of St. Andrew's Church, in this place, are on the eve of engaging the able and highly acceptable services of the Rev. Mr. McBean, of Alawick. At a late meeting of the Miramichi Presbytery, the Rev. Gentleman was released from his charge at Alawick, and will, we understand, be inducted into St. Andrew's Church, on Wednesday, the 24th inst.

THE MIC-MACS.—As Ministerial Changes are the order of the day, we cannot conceive why our Mic-Mac "Brethren," who are very numerous on the branches of this River, as well as in Kent, Gloucester, and Restigouche, should not be made acquainted with what transpires in their National affairs. In accordance with the foregoing views, we copy the following paragraphs, from the Halifax Morning Herald:—

"THE INAUGURATION.—On Wednesday last, the inauguration of the new chief of the Micmac tribe, took place at St. Mary's Church, before a numerous body of the tribe, and a number of the congregation. The Right Rev. Dr. Walsh officiated, (the Indians forming the choir), and after the solemn rites of the church were over, his Lordship invested the Chief

with the insignias of office. He afterwards administered the Temperance pledge to the tribe, and delivered to each of them the medal of the Society.

"On leaving the church, they proceeded to the Masonic Hall, where an excellent dinner was provided, and to which ample justice was done. The dinner being over, and the tables removed, several Indian dances took place, which lasted for more than two hours. The chief, who was all this time sitting at the head of the room, between Colonel Cope and another Colonel of the tribe, looked as grave as one of the sages of old.

"The next ceremony that took place, was the whole of the tribe manifesting their obedience to their chief, by kneeling on one knee, and kissing his hand, as they passed in procession before him. When this ceremony was over, they proceeded to Government house, in regular procession, where they were kindly received by his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, before whom they performed several of their dances. It was one of the most interesting ceremonies that we have witnessed for a long time; and one that will long be remembered by the Indians. The late chief's commission which is written on parchment, bears the signature of Sir John Sherbrooke, one of our former governors.

"THE SCADTINY.—The Micmac tribe, being unable to agree as to the choice of a chief, they referred the matter on Tuesday, to the Right Rev. Dr. Walsh, at whose residence a number of the Indians attended. The matter in dispute was, that the Dartmouth Indians claimed Col. Joseph Cope, as the chief, he having been fairly chosen, as they thought. The Shubenacadie Indians, were in favor of the late chief's brother, an elderly man. The two parties attended, and urged their claims in a most lawyer-like and energetic way, and received his lordship's decision in the most respectful manner. The matter in dispute, put us in mind of the scrutiny pending in the Supreme Court Room, only there was less wrangling and fewer objections raised."

MURDER AT ST. JOHN.—It gives us pain to insert the following, which we take from the St. John New Brunswick. The event occurred on New Year's Eve:—

"It appears that a number of sailors were together, and by some means got quarrelling among themselves, when one of them stabbed his companion with a Spanish knife, which entered his heart, causing immediate death. We learn that the name of the unfortunate man was John Graham. Three of the parties who were engaged in the riot have been arrested, and underwent an examination yesterday. They were committed for trial."

TEMPERANCE.—It appears that the noble cause of Temperance still continues to excite admiration among the people of these Provinces. Lectures have lately been delivered in Halifax, Fredericton, and St. John, before very large audiences. The New Brunswicker says: "The Total Abstinence cause has made very rapid progress in this City, within a short space of time. The Society now number upwards of 3,000 members! What has become of the Chatham Temperance Society? has this Institution, as well as others of a moral and beneficial character, departed from us?"

SALMON FISHERY AT GASPE.—*La Canadian*, a French journal, of the 18th ult., has the following piece of intelligence for our friends at the Bay:—"In the Assembly on the 4th Dec., Mr. Hamilton moved that a humble Address be presented to His Excellency, praying him to nominate Commissioners to meet other Commissioners on the part of New Brunswick, and proceed with them to examine the Restigouche, and other rivers of Gaspé, in order to obtain the marks [*Renseignements*], relative to the Salmon Fisheries, and make their report at the next Session of the Legislature. This motion was adopted."

BRIDGE ACROSS THE NASHWAAK.—The last Fredericton Gazette contains an advertisement for sealed tenders for "constructing a substantial Bridge across the Nashwaak, at Stanley."

THE FREE CHURCH.—The Free Church Home and Foreign Missionary Record says:—"Having understood that anxiety is generally felt to know the amount contributed to the Schemes, we beg to inform our readers that the sum actually received, during the six months since the disruption is upwards of twelve thousand pounds."

NEW BRUNSWICK AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY.—The last Saint John Courier contains some able speeches delivered at a Meeting of the above Society, by his Honor Judge Parker, the Rev. A. Halkett, A. M., the Reverend J. W. D. Gray, and the Reverend J. C. Gallaway