

daring, cunning, persuasion, and force, to go through many extraordinary adventures, and endure many hardships and persecutions. He has, besides, obtained a mass of curious information on the religion (which it seems is half Jewish, half Christian), the manners, and the government of the singular people who inhabit Abyssinia; has ascertained all that could be learned of their country, of which so little is known; and has collected all the facts calculated to throw light on geology, mineralogy, botany, and other branches of science. But what is more practically important than all, is, that he has brought with him numerous specimens of a plant, the root of which, reduced to a powder, is a cure for hydrophobia both in men and animals. Of its virtues M. d'Hericourt had a practical proof; four dogs and a man having been bitten by a mad dog, were, by application of the remedy, cured of the hydrophobia which ensued; whilst a fifth dog (bitten at the same time by the same animal) to which the remedy was not applied, perished in all the agony of that horrible disease. The virtue of the plant, and the manner of preparing it for use were explained to the traveller by a potentate of the country, who assured him that it was there generally used, and never failed. The specimens brought over by M. d'Hericourt have been submitted to the Académie des Sciences, and a committee of that learned body has been appointed to test their efficacy. If, as it is confidently hoped, they have not lost their virtue in this European climate, the world will soon be put in possession of the means of curing one of the most frightful diseases to which flesh is heir to, and M. Rocher d'Hericourt will have the glory of having conferred an inestimable blessing on mankind.

## The Politician.

### The British Press.

From the London Spectator.

#### PAREWELL TO THE COLONIES.

What is it that her Majesty's ministers mean to do with her Majesty's colonial possessions? A paper in the Times, this week, is calculated to raise that question in the most serious form. For some time past the leading journal—distinguished, among many things, for the eagerness with which official parties court its alliance—has continued to publish a series of papers tending to prepare the public mind to bear some colonial disaster without too indignant a surprise; but of the whole series the most explicit is the one published on Thursday last. Its subject is the news from the Cape of Good Hope; and its apparent purpose is, on the one hand, to make light of the course of events in that colony, as likely to have no further result, and on the other hand, in case the worst result should ensue—the actual rebellion and loss of the colony—to reconcile the public to such an event by keeping it in view as a possible and not altogether undesirable contingency. These repeated suggestions indicate some fixed idea in high quarters, and the public ought to know what is really meant.

The Times represents that the thing which gave offence to the Cape arose in the most harmless manner; but the recital is a curious and instructive sample of official encroachment. It amounts to this. In September, 1847, a despatch was sent to the Cape, stating that military convicts would be transported thither from Mauritius—an African island; and 'no remonstrance of any kind was received in reply.' Surprising fact! 'Silentia non fit injuria' is the official version of the maxim—you may go on till the people cry out. A twelvemonth later it was announced that military convicts would also be sent from Hong Kong; and in March last, that they were to be sent also from India and Ceylon; all of which was completed [in London] 'before any angry feeling arose.' Then came the affair of the Bermuda convicts; 'the sentiments of the colony on the subject were known in this country, and Sir George Grey promised that no more (convicts) should be sent in future.' That, says the Times, is all—the dispute has never gone beyond that first stage; the immensely protracted voyage of the Neptune—which left Bermuda on the 22nd of April, and reached the Cape on the 19th of September—has prolonged the suspense of the colonists; but all that has really happened, argues the Times, is, that 'the Home Government has presumed rather too much on the acquiescence of the colony in a measure of doubtful tendency—the colony, taken by surprise, has protested somewhat too fiercely.'

Simultaneously with this apologetic and soothing composition appeared a paper in the Morning Chronicle, which threw a curious light on one point—the destination of military convicts. It shows a remarkable suppression of documents. A return was made to the House of Commons, which professed to include 'copies or extracts of any correspondence on the subject of transportation to the Cape of Good Hope, of later date than the address of the House for such correspondence on the 19th of March, 1849;' but the Chronicle now publishes a letter by Mr Herman Merivale, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, asking the India Board 'to move the Commissioners for the Affairs of India to direct that all soldiers of her Majesty's army sentenced in manner above-mentioned (to transportation) by courts-martial in the East Indies, shall be sent to the Cape of Good Hope by the first convenient opportunity, until further orders.' This is followed by the reply of the Secretary to the India Board in assent, and the corresponding despatch from the Court of Directors.

None of the documents appeared in the return. On the 25th of March, Sir George Grey assured the House of Commons that the convicts to be sent to the Cape 'were not tainted with crimes for which ordinary convicts were made to undergo the penalty of transportation,' but that 'the plan' or 'system' contemplated by Government merely comprised 'ticket-of-leave' men, who had undergone a part of their punishment.' Sir George Grey said this on the 25th of March; the letter of his colleague, Mr Herman Merivale, is written on the 28th of March! If it be answered, that Sir George Grey, with his cousin and colleagues of the Colonial Office, thought the transportation of military criminals too slight a matter to take into the account, then such a notion only betrays their ignorance of the fact, so forcibly represented by Governor Sir Harry Smith, that the Cape Colony is peculiarly unfitted to receive military convicts. And what is more, it does not appear that this military conviction has been abandoned yet! Sir George and his colleagues treat it as a distinct affair; and the only disclaimer yet published has related to further transportation of 'ordinary' convicts. Will the Cape colonists then have to make a separate 'emeute,' as the Times calls it, to resist the invasion of military convicts?

The journalist has a threat: if the colonies are not to be regarded as 'integral portions of the empire, sharers in its weal and woe'—(its cash and convicts)—if they will not take off our heads some of those numerous criminal classes that embarrass us so much—if it is to be all 'give' and no 'take' as far as we are concerned; 'it is as well that it should be known and remembered, especially when the estimates come under review.' The Cape is to be fined for the festiveness of its 'prudes.' But the Times looks beyond; and here lies the darksome hint to which we have already alluded—

'Such incidents as the successful emeute at the Cape, against an imperial order, cannot fail to increase the now popular misgivings as to the value of our colonies, and the wisdom of maintaining them at so enormous an expense.'

Yes, this is the proposition—if the colonies are costly and not accommodating, opinion will grow in favor of giving them up; and this is the opinion which the successive papers in the Times, whatever their motive may be, have a manifest tendency to foster; this is the opinion which is thrown out to fortify the apology for the official conduct, which is recorded in anticipation of future apologies for the further results. The posthumous representations of the Times would be useful under two kinds of contingency: first, in case the Government were defeated by a contumacious colony—which stage is already accomplished; secondly, in case the course of administration were to result in the separation of the colonies—and already the Times is beating up recruits for that anticipatory apology, not without an eye to the Manchester gentlemen who are so hostile to colonists. It seems, therefore, that, in official circles, separation is not an impossible contingency, scarcely a distant one. Now is that so? Are we mistaken, or is such really the intent of her Majesty's ministers?

It is very necessary that this point should be thoroughly understood; because, if the colony is to be given up, it would be by much the best course to spare all further expense of blood and treasure, and jump at once to the final arrangement. If it is the deliberate intention of her Majesty's Ministers to give up the African colony, let us understand the truth, because then the public can help to bring about the separation in the best possible manner.

It is the more important to have a thorough understanding, since the same arguments which apply to the Cape, *mutatis mutandis*, apply also to Australia, whose unsettled spirit is now notorious. If our African and Australian colonies cast off their moorings, Canada would scarcely hesitate to fulfil her project of annexation, with the concurrence of her Majesty's ministers; for the main arguments apply also to Canada. And then, how long the West Indies would cling to a capricious parent state, we cannot guess.

Our colonies relinquished, a *fortiori* we should be bound to give up those false colonies, our military stations in the Mediterranean, the protected Ionian states, and the like.

Then what of India? Similar arguments also apply to India, its constantly increasing expenditure, and its constantly increasing deficit. True, ostensibly the India Government pays for its soldiers; but it does not relieve us of all the consequent cost—the permanent liabilities for so many more additional regiments to be kept in readiness, the promotions, the honorary pensions, &c. Of course, persons high in office would desire to retain India, because it is so great a preserve of patronage; but the colonies free, how could independence be refused to India, supported as that would be by the economical section of the Liberals at home?

India and the colonies gone, what of Ireland? Especially if she wholly ceased to pay, as she has in part, that large tribute of rent to residents in England which engages so many persons of high connexion to maintain the Union.

Carry out the process hinted by the Times, and you reduce her Majesty's dominions to the bare island of Great Britain. Something might be said for that sweeping deprivation, no doubt: a little island may be a great state; only the British state, would unquestionably be a very different one from what it is at present. Instead of including wide lands of varied climate to receive its emigrating population, it must let them go to be aliens. Instead of being so wide that the sun never sets upon it, the sun would set upon it every day—at this season within 8 or 9 hours after rising. It would no longer be an 'empire,' but only a kingdom, and not of the largest. Not at all self-supporting in point

of food, it must be absolutely thrown upon the alternative of thinning its numbers by starvation, or becoming really 'the workshop of the world.' At very cheap rates, too, must the workshop stand open. But a workshop does not need for its head an imperial sovereign; nor would the shrunken state need those vast official establishments which now provide so comfortably for certain families. The course of colonial separation may be justified by sufficient reasons, but these are incidents that will have to be considered.

## Editor's Department.

### MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1849.

The Subscriber having been compelled to consume a large amount of time, and incur considerable expense, in his too often fruitless endeavours to collect his far-spread Outstanding Debts, hereby notifies all persons to whom he is not indebted, and with whom he has not a running account, that orders for advertising in the Gleaner, and for Printing in future, must be accompanied with the CASH otherwise they will not meet with attention,

JAMES A. PIERCE.

**LAW REFORM.**—On the subject of Mr Needham's late lecture in Saint John, on Law Reform, the Editor of the Morning News remarks:—

Alderman Needham gave his very best lecture of the season on Wednesday evening, at the Institute, before a respectable audience, on the subject of law reform in New Brunswick. We cannot pretend to print even the shadow of the substance of this lecture. He astonished the people, more than ever he did before, in recounting to them the enormous expenses this Province was subject to for litigation every year; he spoke of the costs attending the most trifling suits, exceeding in many instances, five, six, and seven hundred per cent, the amount themselves—the laws' delay—the quirks and quibbles of the law—the unnecessary and cumbrous forms to go through with—the vexations to litigants—the enormous rates charged by Lawyers according to law—the inconsistencies and absurdities of many of the laws—the oppressions and exactions—the injustice more than the justice—&c. &c. &c.—These are but a few of the heads treated upon.

He stated that the sum expended every year in New Brunswick in the way of law, amounted to eighty thousand pounds!—and if he estimated the time of jurors and persons so connected, with the carrying out of the law, at the same sum, he did not think he would be out of the way in reckoning the actual law costs of this Province, in one way and another, at £160,000 per annum, which sum was taken from the legitimate channels of business, and absorbed by a profession which was of an unproductive character, so far as the commercial and mechanical interests of the country are concerned. He showed how the laws stood, how they might be simplified, and how enormous expenses might be saved, as well as time by the adoption of a new system, which he intended to point out, and which would effect an entire and radical change in the whole course of jurisprudence in New Brunswick. He alluded to an editorial paragraph in the last Courier, which praised up Mr Wilmot for the 'laborious' work which he was now engaged in, 'in revising and condensing' the laws of this Province. He said the whole thing was a mere 'catch.' The undertaking was nothing more than classifying the laws—that is, in bringing all the laws that touched upon one point, for instance, from a number of different books, and placing them in one place. As it is now, they were scattered over old musty volumes. There was no simplifying the laws, however, or rendering the meaning of ambiguous passages more clear and comprehensive in all this undertaking. He said he was no prophet, nor yet the son of a prophet, but he would predict that all this 'classification and condensation' would cost the Province a pretty handsome sum of money for printing, so that the Queen's Printer, through the wonderful labor of the Attorney General, would have a pretty handsome slice next winter in the way of printing this new law book and index. The people, then, he contended, were not benefited one fraction by Mr Wilmot's 'classification and condensation'—on the contrary it would cost them a few hundred pounds more—and for this he said the Courier heaped great praise upon the Attorney General for his wonderful patriotism.

The lecture was interesting throughout, and the audience were as enthusiastic as they were unanimous in testifying their plaudits, the satisfaction which they felt in listening to the subject of 'Law Reform in New Brunswick.'

**UNITED STATES.**—At the latest dates, no Speaker had been appointed, and much angry discussion had taken place in the House of Representatives.

In the course of a debate on the slavery question, Duer, of New York, accused Meade, of Virginia, of being a disunionist. Meade said it was false, whereupon Duer called him a liar.

Mr Toombs said that the South would no longer be disturbed by the North. He was for disunion rather than the present state of things should be continued. And in this state the house adjourned.

The Coroner's Inquest have found Dr. Webster guilty of the murder of Dr. Parkman. Some further particulars relating to this mysterious affair will be found under the United States head.

**UNITED STATES AND THE BRITISH PROVINCES.**—By the following short paragraph copied from a late Boston paper, our readers will be able to form some idea of the extensive trade which is springing up between the Colonies and the United States. We are sorry, however, to perceive, such a fearful balance against us, but this can be accounted for by the high tariff exacted by our neighbors on all articles we send them in exchange for their manufactures, provisions, and breadstuffs, which are admitted into our ports with trifling duties—thanks to the non-discriminating Despatch of the Colonial Office in London.

In the week concluded last Saturday, the value of the exports from Boston to the British Provinces was \$12,378 45c. in domestic products, and \$4,501 57c. in foreign products. The value of the imports in the same period into that port from these Provinces was but \$2,263. A rather large balance in favor of Boston.

**CALIFORNIA.**—We have had the perusal of the Alto Californian of October 25, with its supplement. The paper is filled with the proceedings of a Convention which had been in session for some days; the object of which was to frame a constitution for the new state. This task has been accomplished, and a late New York paper gives the following brief summary of its provisions:—

The Constitution does not differ essentially from that of the State of New York, upon which in its most essential particulars it has been evidently modelled.

By article 1, it is provided that all political power is inherent in the people:—Government is for their benefit, and they have a right to change it at will.

The right of trial by jury shall be secured to all forever, but a jury trial may be waived by the parties in all civil cases.

The free exercise of religious worship shall be forever allowed, and no religious test shall be required for civil privileges.

The writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended unless necessary in cases of rebellion or invasion.

No law shall be passed to abridge the freedom of speech or the press. In trials for libel, if the matter charged be true and published with good motives and justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted, and the jury shall determine both the law and the fact.

The people shall have the right to meet freely, instruct their representatives, and petition the Legislature.

Representations shall be apportioned according to population.

No person shall be imprisoned for debt, unless for fraud; and no person shall be imprisoned for militia fine in time of peace.

Foreigners, bona fide residents of the State, shall enjoy the same rights in respect to property, as native born citizens.

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for the punishment of crimes, shall ever be tolerated in this state.

The Legislature, by a two-thirds concurrent vote, may admit Indians and their descendants to the right of suffrage. Provision is to be made for public education—a school to be kept in each district for three months in the year; a university to be established, and a perpetual fund to be created from all lands granted by the United States, the five hundred thousand dollars granted in 1841, and the estates of all persons dying without heirs or wills, &c. Fighting a duel, sending or accepting a challenge, or aiding or abetting a duel (either within the State or out of it), shall debar the offender from holding office or exercising the right of suffrage. The property of married women is to a considerable extent secured to them independent of their husbands. All issuing of paper money by corporations or individuals is forbidden.

**FIRE.**—We are sorry to state that the dwelling house owned and occupied by Mrs Sutton, situate in Nelson, was totally destroyed by fire, on the evening of Thursday last, together with the greater part of the furniture, clothes, &c. of the family. As Mrs S. is a widow, and has a large family, this visitation must bear heavily upon her.