

with such humility, and so strong a conviction of the immense distance between him and the Almighty Architect.—*Lewis Cass.*

Communications.

THE NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES.

The present anomalous condition of the British North American Colonies demands the attention of every intelligent man—of every lover of his country—of every friend of Progress. If we compare the present condition of these Provinces with that of the neighbouring States (particularly Maine and Massachusetts), or with what it ought to be when we take into consideration the advantages we possess, the character of our people, and our many natural resources, we must at once confess that there is something wrong in the manner in which our business has been conducted—“something rotten in the state of Denmark.” The Governor of Massachusetts, in his annual message to the Legislature of that State, in 1849, makes the following observations:—

“Massachusetts has an area of 7,250 square miles, and within its limits there are now in operation more than eleven hundred miles of railroads, with a capital of fifty millions. We have a population of about one million, who are engaged in every branch of business and of industry—at home and abroad, upon the land and the sea—which holds out the prospect of a remunerative profit. The annual value of their products exceeds one hundred millions of dollars. Her credit is unimpaired, and, on ‘change, at home and abroad, her bonds are sought. The value of the School Houses in the State, in 1848, was \$2,700,000. More than two millions of that sum was raised and expended within the twelve preceding years. In 1849, there were in our three hundred and fourteen towns, 3749 public schools, in which were employed 8163 teachers, 2426 of whom were males, and 5737 were females. The amount of money raised for the support of the public schools was \$530,000. Add to this the amount paid for tuition in the academies and private schools, and the whole sum expended for education during the year, excluding the three colleges, was \$1,168,354. A thousand convenient and tasteful houses of public worship, erected by different denominations of Christians, beautify every city, town and village of the Commonwealth, and bear testimony that our people have not forgotten the God of their fathers. Our public charitable institutions, for the benefit of the deaf, dumb, and blind, the sick, insane, and the destitute, and for instructing and reforming juvenile offenders, are the jewels of the State. In our public schools, the children of the rich and poor sit on the same seat, and struggle for the prize of scholarship on equal terms. Here honest industry, prudence and economy are honorable; idleness and dissipation a reproach. It may well be doubted whether the laborer is better fed, better paid, better educated, and more respected, in any community on earth than in Massachusetts.”

After reading the above remarks, can any one avoid asking himself the question, “How is it, that Massachusetts, with an area of only about one-fifth of that of this Province, has attained such a degree of prosperity?” What is the value of our public school-houses? What amount do we raise annually for the support of education? Where are our public “charitable institutions for the benefit of the deaf, dumb, and blind, the sick, insane, and the destitute?” Have we provided any means for “instructing and reforming juvenile offenders?” and when will it be said of us, that in no community is the laborer “better fed, better paid, better educated, and more respected” than in New Brunswick.

The State of Maine does not possess a tithe of our advantages; her soil is far inferior to ours; our harbours are superior and more numerous; our lumber would command a higher price in any market; and yet, during the last twenty or thirty years, that State has outstripped us in everything which indicates a spirit of enterprise and industry, and stamps the habits of a population. Why it is so, remains for a wiser head than mine to determine; and he who would discover the means of raising us from our present depression, and restoring to our trade and commerce its wonted vigor, would be hailed as a public benefactor.

I am a working man, Mr Editor, and it therefore cannot be expected that I should be enabled to dive deep into the mysteries of government, or discover the secret springs which govern men and things. It may be thought presumption by some for me to attempt to explain my views; but although the portals of a College were never open to me, and I went from the Parish School into the work-shop, I am endowed with reasoning faculties, and think it the duty of every man to use his best endeavors to remove the evils which afflict his country, and apply such remedies as he may consider necessary.

Every newspaper which we take up, contains an article explaining the peculiar views of its Editor, setting forth the mode by which he would remove the many evils under which we labor, the obstructions which clog our trade, and the best method of carrying on public works; but they are all calculated for the meridian of one Province, and may suit one section of the country only. But no great or comprehensive plan has yet been suggested or proposed, and we may continue to drag on a miserable existence for many years, if we do not rouse ourselves from our present lethargy. Among the many schemes

spoken of for the amelioration of our condition, there is one I have not seen mooted; that is, that a General Colonial Convention, composed of men selected by the inhabitants of each County or District, be held at Halifax or Quebec; said Convention to propose such measures as they may deem wise and prudent, submit them to the Imperial Government, and demand their adoption.

I have no doubt that the project of uniting the British North American Colonies under one Government, located at Halifax or Quebec, would be proposed, and if that measure were once effected, one great step in advance would have been taken. The Provinces could easily dispense with their separate Legislatures, Provincial Secretaries, and all the other paraphernalia of power. We would then become of some importance in the eyes of the world, and our united remonstrances and representations would command that attention from the British Government, which they fail to do when presented by each Province separately.

It is worse than useless for the Colonies to attempt any measure single handed. Our past history clearly demonstrates, that some united and unmistakable effort must be made to bring our present condition more prominently before the British public, before our continued connexion with the mother country can be considered either beneficial or expedient; and until this be done, we may go on from year to year, wasting our energies in vain efforts to make our grievances known at home.

A COLONIST.

Miramichi, October 15, 1850.

[The above communication came to hand some time ago, but circumstances prevented its appearance until now.]

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI.

CHATHAM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1850.

THE COLONIES AND BRITAIN.—The Halifax British Colonist contains a letter under the signature of Mr J. Outram, wherein the writer points out the very imperfect knowledge possessed by the people of Britain respecting the North American Colonies; and every person who has visited the Mother Country is forcibly struck with the truth of this remark. Mr Outram is a native of Scotland, and speaks from experience. That something should be done to remove this ignorance, and to bring the affairs of the Colonies, their wants, and capabilities more prominently before the British Public, is very generally admitted. Mr Outram throws out some valuable suggestions, which we copy below. They deserve consideration, and we hope the time is not distant when some action will be taken on the subject. A correspondent in another page, gives a hint or two that is well worthy of consideration. It is gratifying to see the spirit of enquiry that has recently been awakened on matters affecting our interest, and we sincerely hope it will ultimately lead to measures calculated to improve our present condition. The following is Mr Outram's suggestion:—

“I would propose the immediate formation of the British North American Society, which has been suggested by a gentleman on this side of the Atlantic, no less ardent in the cause; the Boards to be established in the capitals of each of the Colonies, and in London, for the purpose of acquiring, affording, and promulgating information of the condition and resources of British America, of its immense value to Great Britain, and of the necessity of its continuation in British Connection to the Empire at large. Let Halifax have the honor of moving first. I will answer for an exhilarating response from Great Britain, and I cannot doubt that our example will be followed in New Brunswick and Canada. There is a gentleman among us, a native of Nova Scotia, whose standing in society, ability, and literary acquirements command the first respect, who has done much for his sovereign and country, (and like all other benefactors of mankind, has received too little thanks,) but who I hope will not be wanting when the opportunity offers, to come forward and take the lead here in the Association which I have mentioned.”

A VOICE FROM NEWCASTLE.—The S. John Morning News copies the following letter received from a Correspondent in Newcastle, enclosing the names of a list of subscribers for that paper. It shows the feelings that are awakening in the county, which are daily increasing.

“I am pleased that I am thus able to forward such a respectable number of new names to your already extensive subscription list in this county, and I trust ere long to see it very materially increased. In expressing this hope (I would beg not to be misunderstood) I do it, not from any feeling of private friendship, as I have no personal acquaintance with you, and know nothing of you except through the medium of your paper; but I do it because your ‘Press’ has always been the advocate of the People's rights, and has on all occasions

when the public weal required it, been the medium of defending, while it has boldly advocated the people's liberties, and has been, and now is, a most uncompromising exponent of public abuses. As an editor, your motto has been ‘Retrenchment,’ ‘Reform,’ and your efforts have been directed in promoting the great cause of a progressive Constitutional Government, in opposing the existence of family compacts, coalitions and such like absurdities, and in effecting improvements in our condition as Colonists, both socially, politically and commercially. There are various other reasons why your paper should receive public support, and which the people appreciate; but I will merely state, that on furnishing your paper at so small a cost, you have made a sacrifice of immediate personal interest for the public good, and done much to promote a circulation of cheap literature throughout the Province, and set an example which I trust will soon be followed by other proprietors of the Press. The ‘News’ has thus been placed within the reach of every family, and through its extensive circulation will be the means, I trust, of removing that indifference to public affairs, which has hitherto been too prevalent among our population, and to which may be traced many of the grievances, and much of the extravagance of the present system.

“The manly and independent manner in which you expressed your views respecting the recent attack upon the liberties of our local Press, has done much to increase the popularity of your paper in this county, and while I cannot but regret that a jury of Northumberland came to such a decision, where the liberty of the Press was involved, I do in common with a large majority of the inhabitants disclaim such decision as being the opinion of the people. In this view of the case I am fully warranted, for in addition to the many contributions and expressions of sympathy sent to Mr Pierce both by individuals and communities, he recently received the unanimous resolution of a public meeting, consisting of a numerous and very respectable body of Freeholders, sympathising with him, and expressing their opinion to their so-called liberal representative, that the damages should be remitted. That your advocacy of the political questions of ‘Departmental Government,’ Initiation of Money Votes, Municipal Corporations, &c., has also met with the approval of the people in this section of the country, you may rest assured, and of this the increasing circulation of your paper is a convincing proof. True, there are a few still opposed to those measures, but those few consist chiefly of those with whom pecuniary or private interest and prejudices are involved, or whose official dignity would be affected by the introduction of such a system; but the mass of the intelligent portion of the community ardently desire the introduction of those measures, and expect of their representatives something more than a mere negative support of them. The people of this county also feel a warm interest in the great Railway measure so ardently advocated by the Press of your City, and although we, in the Northern section of the Province, may not consider ourselves so immediately interested in its erection, or likely to be so directly benefitted as the counties through which the line may pass; still I can assure you that the importance to the province of such an undertaking, and the probable effect it will have upon its posterity, is fully appreciated here, and a favorable opinion of this great question has recently been expressed by more than one public meeting in this county.

“A large sum has been subscribed here for the purpose of extending a line of Telegraph from Petitcodiac to Miramichi, the erection of which is now more than probable, and we may reasonably anticipate, that but a short period will elapse after the erection of the Halifax and Portland Railway, ere steps are taken to connect by a branch the northern shores of the Province with that great undertaking.

“I have thus freely expressed my opinion, respecting the conduct of your Press, and need not, I hope, apologise for the liberty I have taken, as I conceive it to be the duty of individuals when important questions arise, to countenance the conduct of the Press when it may be entitled to support, and by their approval of its sentiments and views encouraged to further efforts for the benefit of the People.”

The same paper has the following paragraph copied from the Philadelphia Ledger.

“A Paragraph for the Miramichi Gleaner.—* * * Such being the rights and duties of the Press and the liabilities and remedies of candidates, the next question is, how or when is this right of the press abused? Is it authorized to represent a candidate as a gambler, a drunkard, a debauchee, a seducer, an adulterer, a cheat, a liar, a demagogue, a traitor, an idler, an associate of bad men, a seeker of office for bad purposes, ignorant, unskilful in anything appertaining to public duty? It is, if the statement be true; and it makes the statement under peril of suit or prosecution for libel, if unable to prove it. We may add that if the assertion can be proved, the publisher is not guilty of slander or libel, however gross the style in which it is made; though he is under the highest moral obligation to prefer his charges decorously, and professedly for public good.”

The Liverpool Courier contains the following:—“On Wednesday last, as Mr Rankin, of the firm of Rankin, Gilmour & Co., was in the act of entering the hold of the Princess

Royal, in Brunswick Dock, Liverpool, the ladder by which he was descending gave way, and Mr Rankin was precipitated below. He received considerable injury on the back and side, but we are happy to say, is progressing favorably to convalescence.”

NOVA SCOTIA.—It will be seen by the following paragraph, copied from the Nova Scotian, that the inhabitants of the sister Province have at length determined on a measure which has surprised every person has not been effected long since—namely, the connecting the Capital with Ports to the Westward by steam.

“It affords us much pleasure to learn that a company is in course of formation to unite the capital and the Ports on the south and western coast by steam. We understand that it is proposed to place a boat on this line of not less than one hundred horse power, early in May, and she will touch at Lunenburg, Liverpool, Shelburn, Barrington, Yarmouth, Brier Island, Digby, Annapolis, and Bridgetown—completing the voyage between Halifax and the latter place in thirty six hours. To ensure the confidence of the public, a boat of sufficient size, strength and power to buffet the storms of winter, well-officed and well furnished, must be put upon the line. The fare for passengers and freight should be moderate—the old maxim of small profits and quick sales being as applicable to the running of steamboats as to the disposal of merchandise. Such an enterprise as the above—if entered into in a liberal spirit—cannot fail to recommend itself not only to the travelling public but to the public generally.”

STATE OF TRADE IN CANADA.—We would call the attention of parties who are engaged in ship-building and the timber trade, to the following article copied from the Quebec Morning Chronicle of the 13th inst. It is gratifying to perceive that the two branches of trade on which we, very foolishly, mainly depend, are looking up; and care should be taken that in our future operations, such an amount of business be transacted that the Mother Country be not overstocked with a supply. This, unfortunately for us, has been too frequently the case. No sooner has the prices in Britain for ships and timber afforded a remunerating profit to the manufacturers in the colonies, than most strenuous efforts have been made to send parties into the woods, and a very natural reaction takes place. Large quantities of timber are shipped for home—the market becomes glutted, and prices fall. The same remarks apply to ship-building. We should be careful to avoid this evil. We are glad to perceive by the remarks we copy below, that the people of Canada are more alive to their interests than formerly, and that care is being taken to regulate the supply in proportion to the demands of the market.

“It is a gratifying fact that the timber trade is now in a healthier condition than for some years past. The reason of this happy result is explained in both circulars. It is said to be attributable chiefly to a demand which had sprung up during the past season for White Pine for the American market. Messrs. Wood & Petry caution their manufacturing friends, however, against placing too much reliance on this source of consumption, which has sprung up during the last three years, and has since been steadily increasing, lest the Quebec Market may be glutted, prices be brought down, and ‘those natural evils’ caused, which ‘an overstock is always sure to bring along with it.’ Messrs. Forsyth & Bell, on the other hand, advise the people of England to prepare themselves to pay more for White Pine, as ‘our merchants will not be able to contract at prices of late years current, as independent of the competition among themselves, they will be met with one much more severe on the part of American buyers.’ The recommendations of both houses should be attended to; and indeed as attention is paid by the lumberer to the advice of Wood & Petry, will there be a greater necessity for the English merchant to prepare himself for the advance in prices anticipated by Messrs. Forsyth & Bell. On the prudence of the manufacturer possibly more depends for the healthiness of trade than even on some accidental increased demand, or on any new source of consumption. It cannot be forgotten that a glut is but too frequently the effect of previous good prices and a fair demand. This can be guarded against only by prudence and watchfulness on the part of both manufacturer and merchant. During the season just closed, it will be observed by a third circular, 1054 vessels, almost exclusively employed in the export of Timber, have cleared at this port for ports in the United Kingdom, and that the arrivals were 1479, being 415 more than in 1849; but among these there were 96 foreign vessels, Norwegian, American, Prussian, Russian, Portuguese, Hanoverian, Swedish and Dutch. By this circular we perceive also that our trade with Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, and Labrador, has more than doubled within the last six years. Although the in-