

## Communications.

MARCH 27, 1851.

To the Editor of the Gleaner.

Sir,—I do not propose to trespass much upon your space, in noticing the remarks of your correspondent of the Reform Party; I only wish to say that I meant no offence to him or his party, myself being one of that respectable body, that I traduced the character of any man or boy, I deny.—That my remarks apply with any peculiar truth and emphasis, is evident from the fact of his taking them in such high dudgeon.

I wish now, Mr Editor, to draw your attention to that precious Protection Revenue Bill of ours, and also to call the attention of the farmers to the manner in which they have been bamboozled by it.

Protection may be all very well, but a Revenue Bill which protects the few manufacturers at the expense of the many producers, cannot be too highly condemned and reprobated as unjust and tyrannical, and therefore subversive of the best interests of the Province. That this Revenue Bill is such I will now endeavor to show. Should I fail making myself as intelligible as I ought, I hope you will bear in mind that I feel the necessity of putting these letters into as few words as possible, in consequence of the numerous lengthy communications which you are requested to publish.

It may perhaps be well to remind farmers that all breadstuffs, meal and grain, are admitted duty free from any part of British America, under Proclamation. The bill imposes a duty of three pence per bushel on oats, six pence on buckwheat, and six pence on barley, as if any oats, buckwheat, or barley could by any possibility be imported into New Brunswick from the United States. Farmers, I may be wrong, but it does appear to me either that the House of Assembly take you for a set of fools, and think that you will be satisfied by seeing on paper that you enjoy such a protection, or else they are the fools, and think that you really do enjoy such a protection. The next article upon which the farmer enjoys a protection is wheat. Now, Mr Editor, mark the distinction between the farmer and the miller. The one has a protection of two pence per bushel or nine pence per barrel on flour, while the miller enjoys a protection of three shillings, or four times the amount. Now the millers and farmers, in point of numbers, will stand in the proportion of about one to one hundred. The next article, I think, is meat. Eighteen shillings and eight pence on Pork, I admit may be some protection to the farmer on the southern shore of the Province, but certainly none upon this, inasmuch as merchants here can as easily import from Canada as the United States. On the other shore, to import from Canada, they have a long voyage which causes an additional outlay of money for transit, insurance, interest, &c., and that is the amount of protection which the farmers in that part of the Province enjoy on that article. The next is fresh meat, upon which I think it imposes a duty of 8s. 9d. per cwt.; and be it remembered, this applies only from the United States. And now, farmers, do you think this splendid Protection will have the effect of raising meat to something like a remunerative price. There are many other things upon which, on reading the Revenue Bill, farmers who know no better might think that they actually enjoyed a Protection; but now, Mr Editor, I, as a farmer, would not care so much about our interest not being protected were I not so dishonestly compelled to pay two and a half per cent for the protection of the men who pretend to tan leather, and twenty per cent. for the benefit of the shoemaker, waggon-maker, &c., and ten per cent. for the benefit of the tailor, which latter, by the bye, I do not pay.

I have heard it said, Sir, and I can believe it to be true, that supposing the tailor were to begin making a coat, and I were at the same time to set a man to thrash oats, to pay him with, that I would not at the relative price of oats and tailoring, have as many thrashed by the time the coat was made as would pay him, I losing all the original value of my oats. Now I ask, Sir, is it fair play to the farmer to tax him with 10, 20, and 30 per cent, on every article which he consumes, while every thing which he can produce is admitted to his natural market free of duty. He is even taxed 30 per cent. for his very implements, for the benefit of a manufacturer who can purchase every thing he requires, in the shape of produce, from just whom he pleases, free of any protective duty.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

A FREEHOLDER OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

## THE FISHERIES.

Mr Editor,

Sir,—It appears by the St. John Courier that the Committee on Fisheries is now sitting "to receive testimony as to granting Bounties." From this, and the answer of the House to His Excellency's Speech, that they "should be prepared to give such Legislative aid (to the Fisheries) by bounties or otherwise, as would lead to their steady and successful prosecution"—it appears that the House are determined to "beard the lion in his den." Will they be able to convince Earl Grey that his theory of political economy with regard to Bounties, is wrong; that however well it may apply to an old country like England, it is ill suited to a new one like New Brunswick. If they should not be enabled to convince him of this, and induce him to withdraw his instructions, in what position will they place themselves? Would it

not be better and wiser for them again to remonstrate, and point out to His Lordship the reason why they think that Bounties would be beneficial in this Province, than to pass a Bill, knowing that the Governor must refuse his sanction, and bring themselves into collision with the British Government upon a question on which the constituency are much divided. Earl Grey may be wrong, but there are many persons in this Province who agree with him, and many more would do so if they did but give the subject of Bounties their deliberate consideration. The Despatch says—"Experience has so fully demonstrated the impolicy of artificially directing capital and industry into channels which they would not naturally flow, that I must request that you will withhold your assent from any law which may hereafter be passed by the Provincial Legislature, involving a principle of this objectionable and impolitic nature." Earl Grey does not give his own opinion, or the opinion of Her Majesty's Government; but he speaks of experience having fully demonstrated the impolicy of bounties. In former years Great Britain granted a bounty on the exportation of Corn. This was repealed in 1815. She likewise granted a bounty on the exportation of Linen, and in 1829 the bounty on that article amounted to £300,000, or to nearly one seventh part of the entire value of the article exported that year. She also granted a bounty to the Herring Fishery, and as far back as 1759 the bounty was 50s. per ton, and in that year each barrel of merchantable herring cost government £159 7 6. During the continuance of this bounty, Joint Stock Companies were formed for the purpose of prosecuting the fisheries, or rather for catching the bounty. Nearly all of them lost the whole of their capital, and the fisheries are now prosecuted by private adventurers, without the aid of bounty. This bounty was found of so impolitic a nature, that it, with all others, was repealed in 1830, since which period Great Britain has paid no bounties.

It has been said that in a young country like this, the same principle will not apply, and that therefore we should be allowed to follow the example of Great Britain in former years. So thought our House of Assembly, and in the session of 1850 they addressed Her Majesty upon the subject, pointing out the difference that exists between an old country like England, and a new one like New Brunswick. In reply to this address, Earl Grey says, "They state that in a new colony, where capital is scarce, and the resources of the country little developed, the granting of bounties may be not only consistent with good policy, but in many instances necessary. But this argument appears to lose sight of the principle that the scarcer capital may be, the more necessary it is that it should be applied to the best advantage." \* \* \* "The effect of the bounty would be to induce individuals to give up some business, naturally remunerative, in order to embark in some other in which they would have a bounty in addition to the natural and legitimate return. And this bounty would of course be derived from the taxes levied on the general industry of the Colony."

All writers upon political economy agree upon the impolicy of bounties. Dr Adam Smith, in his Wealth of Nations, says, "The effect of bounties, like that of all other expedients of the mercantile system, can only be to force the trade of a country into channels much less advantageous than that in which it would naturally run of its own accord." "The natural effort of every individual to better his own condition, when suffered to exert itself with freedom and security, is so powerful a principle, that it is alone, and without any assistance, not only capable of carrying on society to wealth and prosperity, but surmounting a hundred impertinent objections with which the folly of human laws too often encumbers its operations." Dr. McCulloch, writing on the same subject, says—"A trade that cannot be carried on without the aid of bounty must be a naturally disadvantageous one." "It was formerly customary to grant bounties on the exportation of various articles, but the impolicy of such practices is very generally admitted. It is universally allowed that bounties, if they be given at all, should be given only to the exporter of such commodities as could not be exported without them. But it is plain that by granting a bounty in such cases, we really tax the public in order to supply the foreigner with commodities at less than they cost."

Let us see how this will apply to ourselves. It is admitted that we have an abundance of fish on our shores; therefore a bounty is not necessary to develop this branch of industry. But it is said we require it for the purpose of encouraging a trade; that is, to export the article, and afford the fisherman a fair remuneration for his labor. The complaint is, that the price of fish is so low in foreign markets, that the trade will not pay, and that the duty imposed in the United States is so high, that we cannot compete with the Americans in their markets. A bounty would enable our fishermen to send fish to foreign countries at a less rate than they can do at present. The effect of this would naturally be an increase of the article in the market, consequently a diminution in price, and therefore the Foreigner would actually be consuming it at a reduced price at our cost. The same reasoning will apply with regard to the United States. If we grant a bounty equal to the duty imposed by them on our fish, for the purpose of enabling our fishermen to compete with theirs, we and not the consumers pay the duty.

But who is to pay this bounty granted to the fishermen? Earl Grey says, "it would of course be derived from the taxes levied on

the general industry of the colony." There can be no doubt this is correct. The farmer and mechanic would have to pay it, and this would not be so hard a case if it would be the means of providing them with fish at a cheaper rate than at present, which I think it would not do; and if it did, the profits to the fisherman would be diminished—consequently the bounty would be of no advantage to him.

It is contended that as the United States grant a bounty to their fishermen, we should follow their example. It has become too much the custom of late for us to desire to follow the example of the Americans, without considering the differences that exist between them and us. With regard to our fisheries, we are very differently situated from them. They prosecute their fisheries at a long distance from home; they have a market within themselves, and by far the larger part of the fish caught is consumed by their own people. The bounty is raised from thirty different States, while only seven catch any fish. Of these seven Massachusetts takes the largest quantity, viz. 390,000 quintals, next Maine 279,000, next Florida 69,000, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and North Carolina, 36,000. In 1840 the produce of the fisheries of the United States was 774,000 quintals, of which quantity there was only 211,000 exported, leaving 563,000 to be consumed within the Union, so that the persons who were taxed to pay the bounty received back the amount of the tax in a cheap article of food. Our Fishermen also have a decided advantage over theirs, not only in catching and curing the fish at their very doors, but also in being freed from the payment of duty on nearly every article they use, while theirs have to pay a high duty. Salt, for instance, pays a duty of 20 per cent., Molasses 30 per cent., lines and twines 20 per cent. During the revolutionary war, the Cod fishery of the United States was nearly extinguished. In 1799 the Legislature of Massachusetts represented to Congress the embarrassed state of the fisheries, and the fishermen of that State petitioned Congress for relief. In that petition it was estimated that the duty paid on articles necessary for a vessel of 65 tons, and eleven men, amounted to 138 dollars. This petition was referred to Mr Jefferson, then Secretary of State, who reported the next year, and concluded his report with an explicit recommendation "that the fishermen are not to draw support from the Treasury." In consequence of this report, a bounty was granted by the general government on the exportation of salt fish, by way of drawback of the duty on imported salt. Afterwards an allowance in money was made to vessels employed a certain number of months in this fishery; and by the tariff of 1846 the bounty granted on the exportation of fish is only equal to the duty paid on salt.

From the above extracts it would appear that not only the British minister in 1850 regarded bounties as impolitic, but the American minister in 1790 regarded them in the same light, and was opposed to the fishermen drawing any support from the Treasury; the very thing that our legislators are contending for. There is another reason for the Americans granting a bounty. Theirs is a great maritime country, and as their fisheries are prosecuted in schooners, at a long distance from home, it affords an excellent nursery for seamen.

As far back as 1790 Massachusetts employed 3,300 men in the Cod fishery alone, and she alone has now employed in her fisheries 16,000 men, including the whale fishery.

But, Sir, the question of bounties is no new thing in this Province; we have tried it, and paid a large sum of money from the Treasury without any beneficial effect. In 1832 we exported 17,800 quintals; in 1837 our export increased to 27,400 quintals; it then began to decrease. In 1839 it was 23,600, in 1840 16,500, in 1842 13,500. In 1844 the Legislature granted a bounty on cod and scale fish, herrings, mackerel, and shad, for two years; but this bounty had not the desired effect of increasing our exports, for in 1845, the second year of the bounty, we exported the smallest quantity that we have done for 20 years, viz., 8,800 quintals, and in those two years there was paid from the Treasury for bounties on fish £5,500. The year after the bounty ceased, our exports increased nearly one half, the export in that year being 12,900 quintals. It has steadily increased, and in 1849 amounted to 19,000.

From the authorities here quoted, and the facts enumerated, I think there can be no doubt that bounties are objectionable and impolitic, and that our Legislators would do well to pause before they tax other branches of industry to bolster up one that already possesses advantages over all others. I will conclude this communication by again quoting from Dr. McCulloch: "We do therefore hope that a speedy end may be put to this system; and that our legislators and patriots will cease to torment themselves with schemes for the improvement of the fisheries. The very best thing they can do for them is to let them alone. It is not a business that requires any sort of advantageous encouragement."

Yours,

A COLONIST.

Chatham, April 2, 1851.

## Boots and Shoes,

The Subscriber has received his usual supply of Children's, Misses', and Boys' BOOTS AND SHOES, suitable for the season. Also Ladies' and Gents' METALLIC OVER-SHOES, and a small assortment of Ladies' Cloth and Prunella Boots.

WM. J. FRASER.

## Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI,

CHATHAM, MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1851.

## MR. HOWE'S MISSION.

The Halifax papers put us in possession of several letters connected with this gentleman's important mission to Britain. The first is a very long letter written to Earl Grey, pointing out the necessity there exists for a work of this kind—and the advantages that will result from its construction, to the mother country as well as to the Colonies. It is an able document, but its great length, and the late hour at which the mail arrived, prevents us from publishing it entire; we have, however, given a portion. Also his letter to the Deputy Secretary of Nova Scotia, an extract from another letter briefly reporting the proposition of the Home Government, and the Hon. Mr Howe's Letter, which gives the views of the British Government on the undertaking, and what they will do to facilitate its construction.

It is a pity that these important documents had not been received at an earlier date. The Home Government, it appears, does not tender any assistance from the Imperial Treasury towards the construction of the Railway, but will advance the money at a low rate of interest, or will guarantee the interest to parties who may provide the means, provided the Legislatures of the three Colonies will pass laws, "making the loans which they are to raise, a first charge upon the Provincial Revenue, after any existing debt, and payments on account of the Civil Lists settled on her Majesty by laws now in force, and also that permanent taxes shall be imposed (or taxes to continue in force until the debt shall be extinguished) sufficient to provide for the payment of the interest and sinking fund of the loans proposed to be raised after discharging the above prior claims." The terms perhaps, are fair enough, but we apprehend neither New Brunswick or Canada will accede to them. Had the British Government, as we anticipated, looked upon the construction of this work as a national one, tending to bind the Colonies together, open up the country, and furnish homes for her redundant population, and aided it by a liberal donation, we think the residue might have been provided for on the conditions specified by Mr Howe; but we have no hopes that the work will be undertaken on the terms now stated. Mr Howe is expected out in a few days, and we hope he will bring with him more liberal conditions.

## LEGISLATIVE NEWS.

The Lieutenant Governor came down to the Council Chamber on the 28th ult., and gave his assent to the following bills passed the Legislature the present Session:

An Act imposing duties for raising a Revenue.

An Act to repeal the third section of "an Act to grant a bounty on the destruction of Bears and Wolves in this Province, and to make other provision in lieu thereof."

An Act to alter and amend an Act intitled "an Act to incorporate the New Brunswick Society for the encouragement of Agriculture, Home Manufactures, and Commerce throughout the Province, and to regulate and provide for the same."

An Act to facilitate the construction of the European and North American Railway—with a suspending clause.

An Act to facilitate the construction of a railway from St. Andrews to Quebec—with a suspending clause.

An Act to alter and amend the fifth section of an Act intitled "an Act consolidate the laws relating to Buoys and Beacons, so far as relates to the County of Restigouche."

An Act to incorporate the St. Stephen's Railroad Company.

An Act to incorporate the Avestock Falls Canal and Mill Company.

We give Mr Barbare credit for his perseverance to effect the transmission of Newspapers and Pamphlets through the Province postage free. He brought the subject under the consideration of the Assembly on the 29th ult. The Morning News Reports say:

Mr Barbare's bill for the free transmission of papers and pamphlets by mail, was again brought up. Messrs. Ritchie, Steves, English, Gray and Johnson spoke in favor of it.

Mr Hanington thought it would be well if persons paying subscription in advance got papers free.

Owing to some difficulty regarding papers from the United States, progress was reported. The Bill will pass.

On this subject the Head Quarters of Wednesday remarks:

"Our readers will see by the proceedings in the Assembly, published in this days im-