

LONDON, MARCH 4.
HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 3.
ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

DEBATE CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST.

Mr. ROSE was anxious to make some statements of fact, which, he was persuaded, would do away all the effect of the arguments so ably urged by the Hon. Gentleman. He did not deny that the manufacturing districts of the country experienced much distress, particularly Birmingham, the trade of which place depends materially on the connection with America. But when the Honorable Gentleman contended, that that distress originated in the Orders in Council, and was a ground for their repeal, he would ask him, what were the facts on which he founded that statement? He would refer to the papers on the table; and he must observe, that the Hon. Gentleman questioned the accuracy of Mr. Irvine's figures, only when they opposed his statements, and not when they seemed to support them.—For his part he never knew the correctness of the Custom-house accounts doubted, nor could he allow that they were at all liable to the objections of the Hon. Gen. What did those accounts state? The Orders in Council were issued in 1807? The accounts stated that in 1807 the general exports were £35,800,000; that in 1808 they were £34,800,000; that in 1809 they grew to £50,000,000; and in 1810 they were £45,000,000. All this was official value, so that the increase in real value was near £30,000,000. The Hon. Gentleman however, contended that although the general exports might be increased, yet that the particular exports to America were decreased. How was this borne out by the accounts? In 1807 the whole of the exports to all America and the West-Indies amounted to £14,800,000. In 1808 to £15,800,000. In 1809 (in which year the Non-Intercourse Act took place in America) to £19,200,000 and in 1810, to £20,418,000 making a difference between the years 1807 and 1810, of £6,000,000 sterling in the exports to all America, and chiefly attributable to the increase of exports to South America. Did he thence mean to infer that we ought to be indifferent with respect to our connection with the United States! By no means. On the contrary, he had always said that the interests of Great-Britain and the interests of the United States were closely connected; but it was too much to expect that we should allow America to treat us in a manner different from other countries. The Hon. Gentleman had been very witty in his description of the people who he supposed were consulted by the Board of Trade. He could assure the Hon. Gentleman however, that he was completely mistaken with respect to the company which he (Mr. R.) kept; nor was the assortment of cargoes the morning's occupation of his Noble Friend and himself. A considerable portion of their time was taken up in considering what articles it would be safe and proper to allow to be imported into this country. The Hon. Gentleman asserted that the British shipping had been injured by the system of licences. The accounts on the table however showed that there were 200,000 tons of British shipping, and fourteen thousand British seamen employed more than when the Orders in Council were promulgated. He admitted that the foreign shipping had increased in great proportion. But if foreign shipping had not been employed, what would have become of our commerce?—How could it have been carried on with those ports which were shut against British shipping? Would Government have been justified in letting the manufactures of the country perish in warehouses rather than allow and sanction them to be transported to those ports in foreign shipping? That the British shipping was completely employed, was evident from the increased rate of transports. In 1807, the rate was 19s. a ton; at present it was 25s. He understood also that at Hull, a place the most likely to be effected, there was not a ship which was not either actually employed, or about to be taken up. In this respect too, the trade with the Spanish and Portuguese Settlements in South America would be more advantageous to this country than the trade with the United States, only from a 7th to a 23d part of which was carried on in British shipping. When the commercial treaty of 1797 was concluded with America, it was on the footing of reciprocal advantage. By that treaty it was provided that the duties in each Country upon the importations from the other should be diminished 10 per cent. upon the existing duties. No sooner, however, was this treaty concluded, than America doubled her duties, which amounted to nearly a prohibition of British goods. By trading with the Spanish and Portuguese Settlements in South America, this country would get navigation and it would get mercantile profits. Nothing could be more clear than the disadvantageous situation in which Great-Britain would have been placed but for the Orders in Council.—France would then have had the benefit of that trade from which we should have been excluded. She would have amply furnished herself from America with all that she required; with raw materials for her manufactures, and particularly with cotton, for the importation of which she had recently shewn the greatest anxiety. What had been the origin of the Orders in Council? France said that there should be no trade to England. Our answer was (an answer which we had the power to enforce) that nothing should go to France that did not come from her to England. We had a right to say to neutral powers, that if they tolerated a regulation of one of the belligerents inimical to our commercial interests, they must tolerate a regulation on our part in defence of those interests. Nothing hostile was intended towards America. On the contrary, every degree of attention and kindness was shown to her by Great-Britain. The conduct of France towards America was directly the reverse. Not content with the Berlin Decree, she proceeded to burn Ameri-

can property at sea, and then issued the Milan Decree, which subjected to confiscation all neutral vessels that permitted themselves to be searched. It has been said, that the French decrees had been revoked; but on no foundation. In a recent prize cause, on a vessel called the Catherina Augusta, it was allowed that the Berlin and Milan Decrees had not been rescinded. An American vessel in ballast, from Charleston had also been carried into Calais; and no longer ago than November last, the Captain and owner presented a petition to Congress, praying their interposition, and alleging that the vessel so captured was taken on the sole ground of a supposed infraction of the Berlin and Milan Decrees. But the House was told, that there had been no condemnations in France under those Decrees. Of this he could not speak; but no one would deny that there had been sequestrations to a considerable amount.

It was pretty nearly the same thing. Every syllable which the Hon. Gentleman had uttered on the subject of simulated papers was applicable to the period before the Orders in Council and the Trade Licences were issued; and he would state, without fear of contradiction, that the latter had very much checked the perjury and fraud complained of. Before the Licences were issued, it was necessary for every Captain of a ship to take an oath at the Custom-House, relative to the size of his ship and the number of his men. This was discontinued, and he knew of no oath substituted. To all those shocking perjuries which were formerly frequent in Doctor's Commons, there was now no temptation. He had enquired particularly into the subject, and he was assured, by Masters of neutral vessels, that they were not called upon to make any affidavits on the other side of the water. Under these circumstances, was it fair for the Hon. Gentleman to come down and brand the national character with the imputation of systematic perjury? Were the Orders in Council and the Licences abolished, then indeed the country would return to that system of neutralization under which perjuries were formerly so frequent. Reverting to the distresses of the manufacturers, he expressed his persuasion that great arts had been used to make the suffering individuals believe that their evils originated in the Orders in Council. Those persons had certainly borne their distresses with a patience and a fortitude which entitled their present complaints to the most indulgent attention; but it was impossible to convince him that the greater part of the individuals who put their names to a petition against the Orders in Council, were at all aware of the mode in which those orders operated; and of this he was assured, that their sufferings would be materially increased were those orders rescinded. He then took a view of the exports of the current year, which, however depressed, he contended, still considerably exceeded what had been their amount in the years 1803 and 1804. From this circumstance he thought he had a right to assert that the depending statements which had been made with respect to the present state of the country, were in a great measure without foundation. The country could not be ruined while such a comparison could be made. Would it be contended that England was not a great country in 1803 and 1804? That at that period she was such, had never yet been denied; and what grounds, then, could there be for asserting that she was ruined now, because her trade was depressed; since, though it was not what it had been, her exports still exceeded considerably what they were in the years he had named. The Hon. and Learned Gentleman had said, that the goods exported in the year 1809 had not been able to find a market. There he was obliged to contradict him. He would tell him, that they did find a market; and yet more, that our goods continued to find a market till the month of March in 1810. Under the head of imports, he presumed he need not inform the Hon. Gentleman that the produce of our colonies and fisheries was included. This stated, however, it would be seen, that our exports, compared with our imports, did not determine the balance of trade. With respect to what had been said of the excessive issues of Bank paper in England, he had to say, that our Bank notes had increased within the last two months by the exchange at-Hamburg, from 10 to 15 per cent; and he had no doubt, if things continued as favourable as at present they appeared, that a still farther rapid improvement in the exchange would take place. He had also to state, that the price of gold was falling, and these facts gave a flat contradiction to what they had heard from the other side, on the Bullion question. He contended that the conduct of this country had been conciliatory towards America, and that the Berlin and Milan Decrees were not repealed by the Proclamation of the Duke of Cadore. The Orders in Council, is therefore followed, they were not of right called upon to repeal. The effects of their repeal, under existing circumstances, though beneficial to America and France, would be most injurious to England, and all the former system of perjury would again be revived in our Courts of Admiralty. The trade of this country had flourished under the Orders in Council till last year, when it was crushed by the adoption of a measure on the part of the enemy, which, he believed, no nation had ever before made use of against another. The effect of this unprincipled conduct was now recoiling on themselves. In ordinary cases, it was but little comfort for one nation in distress to know that another was suffering in the same manner, but in the present instance it was satisfactory to know that the measures adopted by the enemy to do us mischief, were now acting against himself. The revenue of France had been greatly injured by these measures, as he could prove from official documents. In 1807, the French customs amounted to about £2,400,000 sterling.—In the year 1808, after the Orders in Council had been issued, it sunk £740,000 and in 1809,

£460,000 more. In 1810 they had got up again, it was true, to £2,000,000 but this increase arose from the proceeds of the vessels seized in the Prussian ports. The customs only arose in consequence of the robberies committed there on individuals. The discounts of the French Bank were in 1810, £30,000,000. In 1811, they were reduced to £16,000,000. The profits in 1810 were £10,000 in 1811, £4,500. It would thus be seen that the profits of the French Bank were reduced to so small a sum that there was hardly a Bank in England conducted by individuals on their own account which did not divide as much. The view to be taken of the effects of our hostilities on the manufactures of France was equally unfavourable to the enemy. The Right Hon. Gentleman then proceeded to defend the practice of granting licences; and concluded by expressing it to be his conviction, that to repeal the Orders in Council would be the most mischievous thing that could be done, and he therefore hoped the House would not agree to appoint the proposed Committee.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

BY AUTHORITY.

Acts passed at the last Session of the General Assembly.

CAP. XIII.

An ACT to authorise the Justices of the Peace in the City and County of Saint John, in their General Sessions, to levy an additional Assessment for the purpose of finishing the Gaol of the said City and County, and to discharge the debt already contracted in adding to the said Gaol. Passed the 7th of March, 1812.

The Justices in Sessions are authorised by this Act to make a further Assessment of any sum not exceeding £500 for the purposes mentioned in the Act.

CAP. XIV.

An ACT to establish a Winter Road from Bate's Mill Pond to the River Kennebec at or near the site of the old Court House in King's County. Passed the 7th of March, 1812.

The sum of £30 having been granted for the purpose of opening the intended Road mentioned in the title, this Act vests the Commissioner, who may be appointed to expend the money with power to lay out the Road.

CAP. XV.

An ACT to alter and amend an Act, intituled "An Act for the further regulation of Fisheries, and for preventing their decay." Passed the 7th of March 1812.

WHEREAS in and by the second Section of an Act made and passed in the fiftieth year of His Majesty's Reign, intituled "An Act for the better regulation of Fisheries, and for preventing their decay," it is among other things enacted, that no drift net be used for the purpose of catching fish in the harbour of Saint John, and whereas it is just and reasonable that the privilege of catching fish in the different rivers, coves and creeks of this Province, should be equalised where no infringement is made to existing laws, no injury done to individuals.

I. Be it therefore enacted by the President, Council, an Assembly, That from and after the passing of this Act, it shall and may be lawful for the Freemen and inhabitants of the City of Saint John, to use drift nets for the purpose of catching Shad only, within the said harbour, from the first day of May, to the first day of June, in each and every year, from Navy Island, to lower ferry point, under the direction of the overseers of the Fisheries, and according to the Laws and Ordinances of the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the said City, any thing in the herein before recited Act to the contrary notwithstanding: Provided always that no nets used for drifting as aforesaid, shall exceed thirty fathoms in length, or be made use of within a less distance than thirty fathoms from each other, under the penalty of ten pounds.

II. And be it further enacted, That hereafter no drift net shall be used below Worden's tavern, at the head of the Long Reach, after the first day of June under the penalty of ten pounds, for each and every offence, any law, usage or custom, to the contrary notwithstanding.

III. And be it further enacted, That all penalties incurred by virtue of this Act, shall be recovered and applied in like manner as penalties are recoverable in the herein before recited Act: And whereas the provisions made in the fourth Section of the said herein before recited Act, have been found ineffectual for the purposes thereby intended.

IV. And be it further enacted, That no net shall be set in any river, cove or creek in this Province, for the purpose of taking Salmon at any time between the first day of October, and the first day of April, in each and every year, under the penalty of ten pounds, for each and every offence, to be recovered, paid and applied in like manner as is directed by the third Section of the said herein before recited Act, and every such net shall also be liable to seizure, and sale in the manner, and under the conditions and regulations prescribed for the seizure and sale of nets, by the first Section of the said herein before recited Act; and that all the penalties inflicted in and by the said fourth Section, of the said herein before recited Act, shall be also recovered, paid and applied as thereby directed in the same manner as if this Act had not been made.

CAP. XVI.

An ACT authorising the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of Saint John, to make regulations for the more effectual prevention of fires within the said City. Passed the 7th of March, 1812.