

Colonies. The Imperial Government, for weal or for woe, presides over the destinies of 150 millions of people. But when scanning her commercial policy we are apt to believe that the North American Colonies comprehend the whole of her vast dominions.—The protection hitherto given to our staple exports in the home markets, has been withdrawn very gradually. Let us recur to a few important facts. In 1831 it was plainly intimated in Parliament, that the duties on Baltic timber would be reduced. Hundreds of petitions were in the early part of that year sent from these Provinces praying that the evil might be averted. In the excitement and indignation of the moment, some roystering lads in this City burned Powlett Thompson in effigy, but to their credit be it said, that in seven years afterwards they made the *amende honorable* when the same person visited Saint John as GOVERNOR GENERAL! The demonstration made in Parliament in 1831 was one of the many solemn warnings from the British people at home to their trans-atlantic brethren. Again, in 1841, a similar effort was made by the Imperial Legislature, and we all recollect the petition to the Home Government, beautifully engrossed on parchment—praying against the measure—which lay in the market house for signature, and ultimately bore several hundreds of the autographs of us poor ruined Bluenoses across the broad Atlantic. Here was another of the many timely warnings. Since 1831, what number of steam saw mills has been erected, in spite of similar intimations! Nay, since 1841 the high and low pressure machinery which has been constructed for the same purpose, very plainly reiterates, "that there are none so deaf as those who *wont* hear, and none so blind as those who *wont* see." These facts are ample to prove that the protection of Great Britain has *not* encouraged the erection of saw mills and the outlay of capital in the building of ships. When protection was greatest we had the fewest mills and the smallest number of ships belonging to these Colonies, and in inverse ratio, as protection was gradually withdrawn, the mills increased and colonial built vessels lined our wharves and crowded our harbours. Protection at best is but an artificial and erroneous system. The true policy of England—and which the great majority of her people well comprehend—is opposed to it, and the signs of the times induce the belief that her course is onward, and that it will never be retrograde. The repeal of the Navigation laws also, establishes the conviction. Besides, the home government never held out at any period to the mill owner and ship-builder of these colonies, that the people of Great Britain would purchase from us more timber than they actually wanted, or turn our colonial vessels into pleasure yachts, when they had no use for them for commercial purposes. The cause of mercantile depression can readily be found in our own folly and criminal desire for the sudden acquisition of filthy lucre. Our principal performers on the commercial stage, have attempted to make fortunes in one or two seasons, instead of toiling patiently like their progenitors, for twenty or five and twenty years, before the coveted event was realised.—The number of names on *Certificates of registry* has by no means been warranted by previous bank deposits, and hence, during even temporary depression, New Brunswick ships have too frequently changed hands, at such diminished prices, that even the hurried transfer of the "best hacmatac built," would not discharge more than 20s. of a 50s. debt, that was previously existing—contracted by the liability incurred *at home*, in the construction of the sacrificed Argosy. For how much of this justly punished ambition, is the Imperial government to be held responsible?

When His late Majesty William the Fourth uttered the memorable declaration—"The Canadas must not be lost or given away," he merely reiterated the common sentiments of the British people. When Great Britain within the last ten years, incurred an extra expenditure of over one million of pounds sterling, merely to put down a rebellion in lower Canada, and to annihilate "*republican sympathy*" forever; memorable instances were thus furnished that the policy of the home government is *absolutely* opposed to a severance of the ties existing between the parent state and these colonies, and that that government evinces an inflexible determination to retain us at all hazards, as the subjects of Great Britain.

3d. Considering the fact, that the interests of 150 millions of subjects must be advanced by Imperial measures, even if a corresponding detriment ensues to the disadvantage of a few hundreds of thousands, the recent policy of Great Britain only enunciates a principle which has ever been maintained by the wisest and most paternal governments of the civilised world, that is, "to ensure the largest amount of happiness for the greatest number." Yet it by no means follows that Great Britain is desirous of "severing the ties," because this policy has of late controlled her administrations; let us for a moment recur to two important facts in proof of a contrary feeling. The Colonial Secretary has told us that we are bound to impose precisely the same duties on articles of importation, whether the same are brought from Great Britain, or from any foreign country, and he thus virtually said, "buy where you can," "buy the cheapest, and no jealousy will be manifested by the people of England, if your interests lead you to give a preference to the produce or manufactures of foreign countries, even to the virtual exclusion of their own." Again, when a petition, emanating from the Reform Club of this City, which merely asked our local government to interfere in such a manner, that the reciprocity of the Grinnell or Dix bill, might be extended to New Brunswick, Earl Grey on receipt of the original document, does not wait for a similar one to be addressed to himself, as the ordinary and long established rules of courtesy would require, but without loss of time and without hesitation, the Cabinet of England, instruct the British minister about to proceed to Washington, to make the matter of request of

318 persons in this City, a subject of negotiation between the American and British governments! Whether these facts substantiate the charge that the government of England is either *illiberal* or *contracted*, I will leave the annexationists calmly to determine. The *hot house* protection which has hitherto nurtured us is withdrawn, and we are now like the naturally hardy plants, which have been forced in a conservatory to an unwholesome rankness, and which placed in the open air, pine at first and show an inclination to droop, but in the end gain much by the transition, and ultimately flourish in all their native vigor.

INEXPEDIENCY OF ANNEXATION.—I think it is abundantly clear, that if our export trade to Great Britain is prudently and wisely conducted, the country will again flourish, yet there are other matters which require attention to ensure our permanent prosperity, and it appears to me that they are partly summed up in the following paragraphs addressed by the Committee of Management to the Members of the New Brunswick Colonial Association:—

"A commercial agreement with the United States, establishing a reciprocal coasting trade, and a free exchange of the natural products of the two countries:

"The development of the various resources of British America, by encouraging in every practicable way native enterprise and home industry:

"To agitate a reduction in the salaries of our public functionaries to a scale commensurate with our population and resources; the placing Schools and Bye Roads under municipal management, and the necessity of *rigid economy* in the future expenditure of our local government:

"To inculcate a feeling of nationality and pride in this our country, to the exclusion of all sectional prejudices and local jealousies."

If these results are obtained, and they are by no means impracticable, our position as Colonies will be far better, and the people will be more happy, than they ever can be by being annexed to the United States: And for the following reasons—

1st. We should always be looked upon after annexation as a set of *turncoats*, and at least as quasi traitors, recognizing loyalty at one time as something substantial, having height, depth and breadth, and from which we derived our meat, drink, washing, lodging and clothing; and at another time spurning it from us with abhorrence and contempt; our feeling and passions being wholly influenced, in the maintenance or abandonment of a *principle*, by the figures in a Liverpool price current, which denoted the quay, or yard prices, of baulks, lathwood and deal ends.

2d. It might suit the *general* policy of the American people to adopt such a system as would be absolutely ruinous to this wooden country, and then being one child out of a family of some thirty three in number, our influence would be weak indeed; whereas we are now aware that Great Britain will concede to us every *natural* privilege which we can reasonably expect, mainly because being distant from her, our commercial prosperity may not militate against her own; but if we became part and parcel of the same nation, whose territory is confined to the same continent, a widely different state of things would often present itself.

3d. The sincerity of political as well as of religious apostates is always suspected, and therefore, for probably a century to come, or until

"The foul crimes done in our days of nature  
Are burned and purged away,"

we should be looked upon with a jealous and suspicious eye, and precious few if any of the offices in the gift of the Federal government would fall to the lot of us, poor helpless renegades. Thus would be heart burnings and discontent engendered, and there would be no help for them. The treason of General Arnold was rewarded, but the traitor was hooted in this City, insulted before his Sovereign, and execrated by every man of correct principle to the end of his days. It is a very comfortable reflection to be assured, that when some lucky fellow in our midst is appointed to an office, upon the income of which he can support himself and his family, that unless his office is a political one, he enjoys it during good behaviour and his competency to discharge the duties appertaining to it, and that in old age he is not thrown upon the cold charity of the world, or into the Alms House, for the support and comfort required by his declining years. But, when our Province, which derives its name from the Royal House of Brunswick, becomes a State, bearing then an *incongruous* appellation, what will be the case? Even if a miracle were performed, and a Bluenose obtained an appointment. Let a late Canadian journal answer the question:—

"There is a regular clearance in the United States, on every change of Administration, in all the Departments. At the present time, to use the figurative language of the political writers on the other side the line, the *axe* is vigorously at work lopping off one official head after another, and making sad havoc all over the Union. Our neighbours have no idea of letting a political opponent fatten at the national expense. In England the axe cuts off the heads of none but the big ones, and the example is at present followed in Canada, unless under peculiar circumstances; but in the States the heads fall by scores and by hundreds. This will be one of the blessings of Annexation—when gained!"

4th. Our local revenue will all be subject to drafts from Washington. We must support our *State* government, build our bridges, make our roads, maintain our College, Academies, and Common Schools, and defray all other State contingencies of a similar character, by direct taxation. Are we or will we be for a long time to come, prepared for this burthen? As proof that it is of a most