

A
L E T T E R
TO
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
FREDERICK J. ROBINSON,
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE,
&c. &c. &c.
ON THE
SUBJECT OF THE PROPOSED DUTIES
ON
COLONIAL TIMBER,
AND ON SOME OTHER COLONIAL SUBJECTS;
AND ON
THE RELATIVE SITUATION OF THE
BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN POSSESSIONS,
WITH THE
United States of America and Great Britain;
POINTING OUT
THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE NORTH BRITISH COLONIES
TO THE PARENT STATE, AND THE MEANS OF INCREASING
THEIR MUTUAL PROSPERITY.

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A
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RIGHT HON. FREDERICK J. ROBINSON,

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

HAVING received from some Nova Scotia friends, now in England, and other persons, interested in the trade or welfare of that province, a request that I would furnish them with my ideas on the subject of the projected colonial timber duties, at present pending in parliament, and an account of the resources and population of that colony; instead of returning an answer directly to my personal friends, I have preferably taken the liberty to address the information I happen to possess to you, Sir, as a gentleman of high rank in the State, in order, that through so respectable a channel, not only those persons who are immediately interested, but his Majesty's other ministers also, may derive some information not generally known to them. The following particulars *may perhaps* be found amidst the forgotten records of the Board of Trade, still the narrative will save a great deal of research, at all times irksome, and more especially at a time so variously occupied as the present. But, though, in respect for your and their convenience, I mean to compress my statements as much as possible; yet, in justice to the subject, I shall venture to extend this address until I have given my opinion on the general affairs of our Northern Colonies; but of Nova Scotia, with which I am best acquainted, in particular. To this view of their affairs, I propose to add some observations on the relative situation of the Northern Colonies with the United States of America, and with Great Britain; and will, as I proceed, endeavour to exhibit the several interests of the three countries, under an aspect very different from that in which his Majesty's ministers and the public generally, have hitherto been accustomed to consider them. The whole, as I think, will tend greatly to

determine the propriety or the impropriety of laying any burthen on colonial timber imported into the united kingdom, or of taking off any part which exists upon that which is imported by foreigners, under the present distressed situation of the North American dependencies.

2. I shall not, perhaps, be refused some credit for liberality of sentiment, when advocating the interests of the colonies, if, previously to discussion, I adopt these two maxims.

1st. That no colonial appendage is worth retaining, unless it can be rendered of use to the parent state; or,

2d. Unless it would become a means of annoyance to that state, if the possession were transferred to a rival country.

I hope to be able to prove that both these maxims apply to the reciprocal affection of Great Britain and her colonies equally; that the prosperity of both is essential to each; that the surest means of retaining the affections of the colonies, is by adopting a liberal and steady policy, founded on correct information; but which must all be attained by a system widely different from that which prevails at the present time.

3. The settlements of all the Southern British Colonies of North America were chiefly effected by private means. The colonization or conquests of those yet under the British dominion were made, without a single exception, at the cost of the British nation. Canada, Prince Edward's Island, and Cape Breton by conquest; but the settlement of Nova Scotia, including that of her offset New Brunswick*, was in the year 1749 exclusively produced by the invitations of the British government to her native subjects, earnestly soliciting them to step in to defend a frontier, through which the then most implacable of her enemies continually assailed the thirteen, now independent, colonies†. If Great Britain did originally so settle Nova Scotia, and that she did, the page of history, and every document extant or on record will attest, surely such an appendage, which has never, in a single instance, swerved from its allegiance, ought not to be visited with that cold arithmetical calculation, with which some would estimate protection on a balance of revenue between such a colony and foreign rivals.

4. There are many other benefits which, as we shall see, Great Britain derives from the greater part of her numerous colonies, besides *direct* revenue; but though it is confessed that from the sugar colonies, *now at their ne plus ultra*, her ex-

* New Brunswick became a separate province in 1784.

† See paragraph 51.

chequer is greatly supplied by the duties on the imports from thence; yet we, at the same time, know that the amount of the exports from Great Britain to the sugar colonies, from which revenue is derivable, and the intrinsic value of such exports are very small; consisting, principally, of some mill-work machinery, articles for agriculture, and coarse negro clothing; but, comparatively speaking, of very few fine goods. On the contrary, the imports from the Northern Colonies, to the mother country, produce, by comparison, very little, though some, direct revenue; but every supply of clothing, luxury, conveniency, much of food, and every article of manufacture in use within an *increasing* colony, of well educated Britons, is supplied to them by the exports from the British Isles to a very great amount. They also, as well as other colonies, thus furnish a portion of *direct* revenue, and employment is given by their industry to many thousands of those manufacturers in Great Britain, who, at this moment, are soliciting protection from parliament, on account of their deficient means to procure a living; which deficit will, no doubt, be still further increased, should the foreign traders be relieved by the sacrifice of our own colonies, and they by any means whatever be disabled from going to the market of the parent country. Surely these colonial advantages, when thus fairly considered, are worthy to face a part of that *direct* revenue derived from the sugar plantations; but this is not the whole amount of the commercial benefits which the mother country derives from her Northern Colonies. They have much trade besides that to Britain, their fisheries, their supplies to the West Indies, their trade to the United States, and their intercourse with each other. All the capital and profits of this accumulated commerce are expended in exportations from Great Britain, and far exceed the calculation of any person who is not very intimate with their affairs; much less can those estimate this amount, who are now deciding upon this most important interest of the Northern Colonies, without having, as we believe, examined those representations which were made to government by them upon this very subject, several years ago. We may thus begin to perceive, that though all the colonies have not the same properties in common, and though the advantages arising from them are not equally prominent and obtrusive, that yet they possess various excellencies, some one, some another, necessary to the health of the whole body.

5. I will now endeavour to exhibit some of the consequences likely to arise from the proposed measure of timber duties; but I must, previously, take the liberty to protest, for the sake of British as well as colonial interests, against the principle of

supposed equality in placing British colonists and foreigners upon the same footing*: nothing in nature or politics being more unequal or unjust; for not only have the former a natural claim to a preference, but the colonists, in some degree, partake, in common with the domestic subjects, of those increased expenses incident to the national debt, and the consequent amount of taxation, not experienced by foreigners; but which, though the full weight does not fall upon the colonists, is so far felt in their trade and navigation, that they can, in no respect, compete with those aliens who, in any instance, are admitted to the same market with them, though upon apparently equal terms. Foreigners and domestic British subjects, also, have free access to *every* port; but the colonial trade is limited in so many instances, and the monopoly in some cases so wholly assumed by the parent state, that, strictly speaking, no adequate calculation can be made on this subject, and the operation in profit and loss, can only be appreciated by experience. The duties of customs in Britain, are also, in some instances, heavier upon the goods of the colonists, than upon the same article imported by the native subject; and, in others, a total prohibition takes place against the colonists to the benefit of the mother country. Generally speaking, the colonists are under such great restraint, that it would not be a very difficult task to prove, that the accumulated burthen, by means of legal, customary, direct and indirect causes, is such, that colonial commerce is, in effective profit, greatly inferior to that of any foreign trade, or of that of the mother country itself. But still, the present colonists, unlike the old, when under British rule, do not complain of this state of things:—knowing how to appreciate, they take the average good and evil of their stations; they know that their domestic and agricultural blessings are such as, in their aggregate amount, and by comparison, form a happy counterpoise to many disadvantages; but also, feeling their commerce to be generally almost annihilated, they in-treat, that before a measure so injurious as that of the timber duties, now proposed, takes place, the full scope of its effects may be maturely considered; and that they may, as appendages of the empire, be dealt with liberally.

6. The direct consequences which, in every probability, would ensue, should additional disabilities be placed upon the colonial timber trade, are various. If in this case an accurate calculation should, by possibility, take place, as is proposed, and the duties should even become so nicely arranged as to comprehend and fit the difference of the voyages made in one season, be-

* As proposed by a noble lord in the last session of parliament.

tween the colonies and the mother country on the one hand; and between foreign European states and Britain on the other; unless some other circumstances are considered and provided for, this description of arrangement will still operate unequally against the timber colonies. We know many persons assert but others deny, *that though the timber of North America answers many good purposes, yet it is inferior to that of the Baltic**. Admitting this for the sake of argument, by the preference, in that case, which would naturally be given to the latter, when price at the same market was equal, the colonial trade would inevitably suffer; but though the colonial trade would thus become injured, if not annihilated, the United States, in the identical same article, might still, in default of better business, be able to adopt what the colonists would lose, because, as just above stated, they, as foreigners, are competent to navigate cheaper than the British colonists; and thus the effect would prove a transfer of the present vast amount of colonial shipments, in this article, to the United States; who, by means of this addition, would, if any essential burthen were taken off from the imports of foreign timber, if not prevented by counter effects, immediately employ their idle shipping; and be encouraged, yet more than at present, to complete the canal now in progress from Lake Erie to the River Hudson, a distance of between 4 and 500 miles through the state of New York, which direct line also communicates with branches of such extent of woods, as will aggrandize the wealth of that and the neighbouring states beyond calculation; and, in this respect, injure Canada, especially, in like proportion; for you may, Sir, be assured that the Americans are not a people to expend such a sum as this canal will cost (seven millions of dollars) without some such object as this in view, though government may not be able to penetrate into it at present.

7. In the mean while, if the colonial timber trade with England is made to fail, how are the Atlantic colonies to procure salt to cure the fish now supplied to the West Indies? for so defective are the profits, even at present, that nothing sustains the timber trade so much as the outward cargo of salt, which (such is the distressed state of the fisheries) cannot bear a double freight. If the fish supply to the West Indies should be destroyed or impeded, as it was in the year 1804,

* To discredit this assertion, I need only state a well-known fact, viz.—That St. Paul's church in Halifax was built in the year 1758, and that when it was enlarged in 1817, and the tower was taken down for that purpose, the body of the church was as sound as when originally built.

how are the other numerous articles which form the miscellaneous cargoes from the colonies to the West Indies to be conveyed there, when not aided by the staple article of fish? If fish, lumber, and agricultural produce were withheld from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, &c., then, indeed, would the inhabitants of the West India Islands have reason to complain of a deficient supply, as they formerly did; and, with more justice than before, claim from government a free trade with the United States of America, whose vessels, when admitted with less restraint than they are even at present, would clandestinely furnish all the British West India possessions with a numerous list of articles of their own manufacture; others from the East Indies, and many more from the European continent, to the almost total exclusion of the *native* British merchants; whose exports would then sink even below the present curtailed supply, already, in a great degree, forestalled by the American smuggling trade, carried on through the foreign islands of St. Croix, St. Bartholomew, St. Eustatia, St. Thomas, and St. Martin.

8. In case the fisheries of the Northern Colonies should, by such circumstances, be so discouraged as to fall off from their progressive state; and by further depression, about to be explained, than that they at present labour under, become again inactive or insignificant, as they formerly have been; and the government of the United States, in a fit of ill humour, as is their usage when disappointed in their greedy expectations, should enact an embargo law, or declare hostilities, how are the British West India Islands to be supplied with those weekly importations (for they must be frequent) which they now receive from the Northern Colonies? There is no doubt that, pressed by distress, the islands would tease the government, as they did formerly, with their complaints, and again reflect upon the *insignificance* of their northern fellow subjects; because, as before, they failed to revive, when suddenly required, those fisheries and that trade, which the mistaken policy of the parent state had ruined; and this would probably take place at a time when the capital of those colonies was withdrawn and dispersed in far distant investments; and when experience of the past would make them revolt against placing confidence in any assurances of protection, let them come from whence they might. Thus it will be found that, in the commerce of the Northern Colonies, the prosperity of the whole depends upon each branch; and that timber, salt, fish, and agriculture are of mutual support.

9. Were this measure of the timber duties to pass against the colonies, it would fill up a dark catalogue of events which have been made to operate against them, and against Nova

Scotia in particular, at divers times, but especially during the last two years; and which are sufficient to disgust any candid mind, and to render the colonists, as the sufferers, peevish and discontented. That I do not complain without reason, let the following particulars evince; but keenly as I feel, I would not now state them, were I not apprehensive of the serious consequences which this timber duty will occasion; if, when added to the following other matters, they should, altogether, ultimately prove a burthen too heavy to be borne.

10. In the year 1785, soon after the American revolutionary war, the government gave permission to certain whale fishermen, then become aliens, to remove from the island of Nantucket to Halifax, in Nova Scotia, for the purpose of teaching the people of that province the art of fishing for sperm whales, in which the inhabitants of that island are greatly skilled. The provincial legislature, to encourage the new settlers, purchased lands in the harbour of Halifax, and built fifteen or sixteen houses, which were given to them in fee. This fishery prospered so much that, in 1791, it consisted of twenty-seven ships, brigs and very large schooners in that trade: there were also connected with it two spermaceti works, and an unknown number of cooperages and other trades-people employed in consequence. The West India trade and the agriculture of Nova Scotia flourished; and, in short, the harbour of Halifax, during the greater part of the year, was like a bee-hive. In 1791, the ministry allowed a person from Milford Haven, in Wales, to go to Halifax under their sanction, and by sowing discord among the whalers, tempt them to remove to Milford. By offering adequate *parliamentary* pensions and other accommodations, those settlers were induced to comply, and did actually quit Halifax and go to Milford; and their widows have enjoyed the reversion of those *national* pensions until very lately. The consequences were, that this noble establishment was completely broken up in Halifax; the loss to individuals was very great there; and so discouraging the whole of the circumstances became, that as one proof among many of greater consequence, the two story houses and their lots were, in some instances, sold at only forty pounds each. How any British minister could, for a moment, listen to such a proposal is astonishing; but how he could afterwards give his *personal* aid, and *deliberately* influence that of *the nation*, unless it were attested by the *parliamentary* grants themselves, would be beyond belief; neither would I dare without such proof, though I should even believe it myself, relate the fact. Imagine to yourself, Sir, if, as a gentleman, you can force your mind to suppose such a case, that you possessed a favourite servant,

and that a neighbour, in whose friendship you reposed the most implicit confidence, should, by an offer of higher wages, inveigle that servant to quit your fostering care; what epithet would you bestow upon such a neighbour?

11. Under these circumstances, however, when the late French revolutionary war and the late American hostilities ceased, an application, *detailing the above events*, was made through our worthy governor, the Earl of Dalhousie, to government, to suffer a wealthy person to remove to Halifax from Nantucket, for the like purpose as those persons invited in 1785, *to restore that fishery* of which the province had been so *ungenerously* deprived. This application (with one omission that was readily acceded to by the applicants) was received by ministry with the most *unqualified approbation*; but, after a tantalizing suspense of two years it was finally refused, on the plea, that the wealth of the proposed *individual* would probably become too formidable a rivalship to the *whole* capital of the *British merchants* engaged in the South Sea fishery!! This application had been referred to the Board of Trade; and by means of the report of the Board of Trade, *we* received the official approbation, in the first instance. To favour those individuals who possessed more patronage than his Majesty's faithful but injured colonists, the Board of Trade inverted their own previous recommendation: "And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the way-faring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him." And, &c. " &c.; but I must leave it to you, Sir, to draw the inference.

12. About the same time another unwarrantable interference of ultimately serious consequence took place with these colonies. During the American revolutionary war, a considerable number of *people of colour* were collected by the British forces; and, at the peace, they were removed to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. These people were, with very few exceptions, born in America, and were as much naturalized to the climates of that continent as the white inhabitants were; and being dispersed in various parts of those provinces, became, in the course of six or seven years, very good settlers; as domestic servants in particular, and, as inferior mechanics, they kept down the price of labour very considerably. Under the sanction of government, these coloured people were tempted by flattering promises to suffer the Sierra Leone company to remove them to the Coast of Africa, where (I believe it remains uncontradicted) *nine* hundred, out of the total number of fifteen hundred embarked, died in the first year; the other six hun-

dred, it is said, did not survive five years, a very few excepted. The poor wretches ultimately, as appears by the printed report, became the bitter fruits to the Company of their imprudent zeal, by extravagant demands, endless complaints, and finally by insurrection; and, in the colony of Nova Scotia, the price of labour instantly increased, till at length, from the reasonable rate of two shillings a day, it rose, within a short time, to four and five shillings.

13. These were certainly both acts of very great imprudence, and became unproductive in their effects; for the whale fishery *did not* succeed at Milford, and the black people *did not* live to reward the expenses of their protectors:— yet both cases having occurred many years ago, I should not have revived them at this late period, were it not, that by placing them with transactions of a very recent date, I wish, in pursuance of my plan, to show that, unhappily for both countries, the colonies have not, *at any time* since those transactions, received that permanent attention from their rulers, which can naturally have a tendency to excite affection between them, and which can alone produce harmony, good will, and mutual prosperity. Those recent transactions we will now proceed to develop and explain. Every person in the least acquainted with the British Atlantic colonies, and with Newfoundland in particular, knows that fish is one of the staple articles of the former, and wholly that of the latter:—the eastern sections of the United States of America are also so interested in this very article, that they thereby become the most formidable rivals these British appendages have. Well knowing how eagerly the Americans in their immediate neighbourhood wished to obtain these invaluable sources of wealth, the colonists, after they became alarmed, never ceased to express their superior claims to the fisheries, and repeatedly endeavoured to convince His Majesty's government of the importance of the prize, the keenness of their apprehensions, and the character of the common enemy, with which they had to contend*. Still, in the face of the most respectful, earnest, and reiterated memorials from the colonists and the Newfoundland merchants, at a time when the people of the united kingdom were in the utmost distress for want of adequate employment, was that fatal treaty concluded, which has struck deep at the prosperity of the colonies, and has induced the Newfoundland merchants seriously to contemplate the idea of gradually abandoning a business which has been occupied by British subjects, principally, during more than three hundred years; has employed a capital of three millions,

* See note (*) to paragraph 36.

and a nursery of thirty thousand seamen. The history of this valuable fishery, as far as it concerns the present subject, being important to the discussion, I give it briefly as follows:

14. The cod-fishery of Newfoundland, and that of Canso, on the peninsula of Nova Scotia, commenced soon after the discovery of the former, by Sebastian Cabot, in the reign of Henry the VIIIth., and in the year 1497. All nations, however, long resorted to the banks and coasts of that island. Some time in the reign of Elizabeth, she sent Sir Humphrey Gilbert to take possession and claim the sovereignty of both those countries, in the name of his mistress, under the right of original discovery. The persons found at Newfoundland acknowledged the right there; but it is very uncertain whether any of Sir Humphrey's ships reached Canso; but the French government, notwithstanding, always disputed that claim, or resigned it, in the degree in which they were successful, or otherwise, at the conclusion of each succeeding war between the two nations. When New England was settled, the inhabitants entered largely into the cod-fishery, and pursued the trade with great success; but with continued interruption from the French nation, when in possession of the peninsula of Nova Scotia, or of Cape Breton Island. The former, yielded by treaty to Queen Anne, but not colonized effectually by Great Britain till 1749, and the latter conquered by the British in 1758, enabled the people of New England quietly to pursue their wonted occupations, exclusively with other British subjects, on Brown's banks, and the other banks of Nova Scotia; and on the great banks of Newfoundland, in common with the subjects of every European nation. And they also, with every other British subject only, resorted at pleasure to every part of the island of Newfoundland, and also to the Labrador coast, as soon as the French were expelled from Canada in 1759, to which government Labrador then belonged; but it had not been the custom of France to permit any foreigners to resort to their coasts to fish, or for England to permit alien vessels to do the like, or to traffic with their colonies, unless being in distress, and then they were only permitted to refit: the French, however, were accommodated with the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, and the N.W. side of Newfoundland, in time of peace; but were dispossessed of the whole concession in time of war. When the American revolutionary war took place, it so deranged the fishery of New England, that at the peace of 1783, the government of the United States was compelled, in order to revive it, to grant bounties, which have been found so necessary to their prosperity, that they have been continued ever

since. It is, therefore, by no means surprising that the people of those eastern states, should be able to undersell the British merchants, who, independent of many other advantages possessed by the Americans, have no bounty to support their sales at foreign markets. When Nova Scotia was colonized, in 1749, the British government gave very great encouragement towards forwarding the fisheries of the new settlement; but they languished notwithstanding: principally because the merchants as well as the working people were poor, though there were other essential causes then existing, which contributed to the same effect. During the American revolutionary war, the Nova Scotia fisheries seemed to rise from their lethargy, and, at the close of it, they had become very respectable; but so soon as the Americans returned into the market, an injurious change took place against the British colonists: but still, as they were supported by some capital, the New England advantages could not completely suppress them. They continued sinking, however, till they were again reduced to a very low ebb, brought to this state by the unauthorised admission of the American vessels into the West India islands. Shortly after the peace of the revolution, the then Captain Horatio Nelson stood up against this practice of admission to foreigners; he made several seizures; was prosecuted in a court of law; but the then ministry stepped in to shield him from the consequences; *the principle of alienship* was established against them; and, for a while, the United States vessels were excluded from the West India British Islands; but as soon as Captain Nelson quitted the station, they were allowed again to resort there, until the year 1804; when, in consequence of the colonial representations in that year, the Americans being once more in a great measure excluded from the islands, the colonial trade again revived; and the congress of the United States being goaded into high resentment by the members of the eastern part of the union, and having in consequence adopted the embargo system, and persisted in it, the fisheries of the northern colonies prospered more than they had ever done before, and were enabled to supply the islands at the same low prices, at which they had before been furnished by the joint importations of both countries. Documents to this effect were transmitted to government in the autumn of 1813, when the United States had thought fit to declare war against England in the year before. These documents were brought as proofs of the capability of the colonies to supply those islands with their whole demand when they besought government, *that should a peace take place the article of the treaty of 1783, admitting the Americans to resort to the*

*coasts and harbours of the British Colonies, should not again be revived**. There can be no doubt, the arguments used on the occasion, and the proofs brought forward in support of the declarations of injuries which the colonies had so long suffered from the treaty of 1783, were considered to be valid and of some importance, because in the treaty of Ghent, the subject of fisheries was not brought forward; and, still more, because, shortly after the peace took place, an order was issued by government to the commanding officers on the stations of Halifax and Newfoundland, to the effect of a total exclusion of foreigners from those coasts. During the three or four years which ensued from the commencement of the treaty of Ghent, the eager feelings of the Americans in the eastern states, expressed such great uneasiness, as indicated some scheme which did not seem to accord with the interests of the British Colonists; and it was recollected, that, in the year 1801, or thereabout, the United States, and their good ally the French republic, entered into a treaty, by which they mutually guaranteed their fisheries in all parts of the world, and particularly any possessions *which they*

* This inconsiderate article of the treaty of 1783, has always been held to be the greatest misfortune that the administration of that day inflicted upon the North Atlantic colonies; for so infatuated, so ignorant, so indifferent, or so culpable was the British minister who negotiated that treaty with Mr. Benjamin Franklin at Paris, that by one of the articles of it, the vessels of the United States were admitted into all the harbours of the Atlantic colonies, under some apparent, but under no real reserve; and their conduct towards the British subjects, as might have been expected, from the period of their acknowledged independence, was so tantalizing, outrageous, injurious, and insolent, as to occasion continual quarrels between them and the native fishermen and settlers, the particulars of which have been fully laid before government by the suffering colonists, not by assertion only, but those representations have always been supported by the due solemnity of affidavits. That of Mr. Haman, of the Jersey-house of Janvren and Co. which accompanied the petition and memorial of October, 1813, was, as far as I recollect, the most pointed and respectable; but of what avail all the labour we have bestowed during so many years!!—new people come into office imperfectly acquainted with our affairs, and with the stroke of a pen perform acts which not only confirm but *extend* former injuries, and the colonists are left to writhe under their new difficulties and to conjecture the cause; which *if they knew it to be a case of state necessity*, they would submit to it with patience; but when they *are* reduced to the necessity of conjecture, the mind of man under affliction becomes strangely wild and jealous.

might in future acquire to the eastward of the United States, (that is, Nova Scotia) or within the Gulf of St. Lawrence, (that is, the Magdalen islands.) To use a Seaman's phrase, it has invariably been the practice with republican America and with revolutionary France, through their public prints, to *lay an anchor to windward*; a considerate politician will always, therefore, be able to form a surmise of the designs of such governments, by their popular publications. With well-founded jealousies on the part of the colonists, the ministry were in the autumn of 1813, by the Halifax committee of trade, put into possession of all circumstances as they arose; and were earnestly supplicated in the event of a peace or treaty with either nation, to guard against any proposal which might infringe upon what the colonies considered to be their most invaluable birthright, (the principal means through which they gained a living for themselves and families, from the highest to the lowest)

—THE FISHERIES.—And finally, in the spring of 1818,—I beg, sir, you will please to advert to the time,—but without any decided knowledge of their imminent danger, but as it afterwards turned out to be on the very eve of this ruinous treaty, (it could not be more than two months before the treaty commenced), an application was made to the ministry on this subject, through the Earl of Dalhousie, the Lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, who strongly recommended it to the consideration of government;—the representation was accompanied with a memorial, particularly detailing the history of the fisheries, and elucidating their fall and rise on those occasions when the New Englanders partook of, or were excluded from them; and which, in the proportion of their interference, invariably marked the poverty or the prosperity of those colonies. The apprehensions entertained on this occasion were immediately originated by a speech delivered in Congress, by a very popular member of that body, which denounced something very like a threat against Great Britain; and which, in every probability, set the government at Washington in motion; and finally gave such an electric shock to the members of the British Cabinet, that a negotiation, as it seems, on the subject of American claims, but principally of the fisheries, took place very shortly after. These fears on the part of the colonists were not singular;—the people resident at Newfoundland also petitioned government; the merchants of London engaged in that trade, likewise, in two several petitions, the one when the peace with France was expected, the other at the treaty of Ghent, well knowing the wishes and designs of the Americans, gave warning, where such notice was most likely to produce effect, of the intentions of those powers;

and, under the existing symptoms, which were so generally perceived by those who were interested in the event, an honourable member of the House of Commons, in the session before the treaty took place, put a question to the ministers on the subject, who answered, "that there was nothing in contemplation which had any relation to the object of the honourable member's question;"—yet, in the face of all these warnings and solicitations from the Atlantic colonists and Newfoundland, the fatal treaty of 1818-19, was *proposed, agreed upon, and completed*, with such perfect—such *studied* * secrecy and celerity, that no person interested was acquainted with what had been actually pending, until the fatal conclusion was inserted in the public prints in the spring of 1819; by which it appeared that the Americans were admitted into the harbours of the Atlantic colonies on still more dangerous terms to the colonists than they had been by the treaty of 1783; and, in addition, they are allowed to enter the southern harbours of Newfoundland and the Labrador, and dry their fish in the same manner as the French are permitted to do on the north-west coasts. The Newfoundland merchants and the colonists very justly consider *that* coast to contain the very best fishing-ground of the island, and that those of St. Pierre and Miquelon were amply sufficient for the domestic and the colonial supply of that nation; it was also perfectly well known that the French, aided by a high bounty and by an extended trade, with which the possession of the north-west coast would supply their merchants, must become the rivals of the British merchants in the Mediterranean, as they possessed besides greater advantages of close neighbourhood to a market in that sea, and more frugality in outfit, manner of living, and other expenses, than British subjects do. But we now well know that these concessions to the French nation furnished to the American negotiators a plausible pretence to gain the same indulgencies, though the same reasoning does not apply to the Americans as to the French; who, when fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, are at a great distance from their own country, and the Americans are, by comparison, very near to theirs;—but may not the same argument apply in favour of every nation in Europe, by this indulgence to the United States; and, if applied for, what but partiality is to refuse it? I wish, sir, some person would show what quality it is in the disposition of the United States towards Great Britain that gives them a title to become the most favoured

* *Studied*, because it is notorious the Americans, as diplomatists, are the greatest babblers on earth.

government on this globe. But they have in very numerous instances been treated as if they were actually so entitled, and that policy has been inverted, which any reasoning person would suppose ought to have influenced our conduct, under the impression that, leaving the colonists for a moment out of the question, the complaining millions of our own nation required the first attention; but certainly in preference to a set of insatiable foreigners, who, as Mr. Bristed, one of their ablest writers, emphatically declares, *hate and detest the British Nation with all their soul and with all their strength.*

15. There can be no doubt that it is a prerogative vested by the constitution of these realms in the sovereign, to alienate any portion of the empire at his pleasure; at least of his foreign dominions: the conquests of this nation on the continent of Europe have been yielded repeatedly: in like manner have the West India and American continental possessions:—lately the islands in the bay of Passam-Acadie*, and many others that might be enumerated; so that to question the right would be absurd, not so the expediency, and therefore, as it is a subject of the highest interest to the colonists, and we shall subsequently endeavour to show, *to the nation at large*, I will, in this place, offer a few remarks upon it. We will suppose two cases, (not hypothetical, because the parties on one side of the several questions have often made proposals, and would again do so, were their hopes of accomplishment not become desperate), suppose the British ministry to advise His Majesty to give up, by treaty to the Dutch the islands of Scilly, or Gibraltar to the Spaniards, and His Majesty was to accede to such measures, as Charles the Second did in regard to Dunkirk.—Parliament might punish the ministers for the time being, who gave such injurious counsel; and no doubt they would do so: but they could not restore to the nation what it had thus lost, unless it resorted to such measures as no parliament ever did resort to. It is, however, within my recollection that, during the late French war, a merchant of Boston said, that the people of New England would cover the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, on the coast of Newfoundland, with dollars in payment for them: this, no doubt, was speaking hyperbolically; but he certainly meant that those States were so interested in gaining possession of some spot contiguous to the cod-fishing banks, that they would give a vast sum for such a possession;—they would, in short, do that which the United States actually did when they

* This is the true name: the more customary one is, Passam-a-quoddy: the vulgar term, among the Americans is, Quoddy.

induced Buonaparte to force the distracted court of Spain to yield to them Louisiana, for which they paid *to the French*, I say, sir, to the French, not to the proprietors of the country, fifteen millions of dollars, and a further sum of three millions. It must be confessed that a very minute argumentator may be able to start a debate between the *giving up in perpetuity* a territory, and yielding what some persons may deem to be nothing more than *a loan or an indulgence of it*; but such a plea would, in this instance, amount to a distinction without a difference; for the fact is, that this *loan* to the Americans, if such it be termed, has ruined both the colonists and Newfoundland, whilst the possession continues, and has rendered war with that nation much more probable than ever;—for should the government wish to redeem the pledge, nothing but a superior force will enable them to effect it; for every person acquainted with the American character, knows them to be a people more than any other disposed to convert an indulgence into a right. At any rate, whenever the advisers of His Majesty thought proper to lead him into such an act as that of alienating his territory in fee or by lease, as it mainly affected the interests of his loyal subjects, there can be no doubt of the policy and justice too, of calling those who did so advise, to account for their conduct; and such an investigation was naturally to be expected from that body in whom the interests of the people are in a most especial manner invested. Should a ship of His Majesty's navy be lost, no matter under what circumstances, a court martial is held with as little delay as possible, and a very strict investigation made therein; yet compare the loss of any ship in the navy with that sustained by the colonists and Newfoundland on the principal subject of this most injurious treaty, and the importance of the former sinks to nothing. But when we come to reflect upon the impolicy of suffering such a case as this to pass almost without notice, as it has done in the great council of the nation, those who are suffering under the severe infliction, though, alas! they possess no remedy, are lost in astonishment. For myself, I was in London at the time, and daily watched the public prints, with eager expectation, that some motion would be made in parliament for papers, preparatory to any debate upon the consideration of the bill which was introduced “for the purpose of more effectually carrying the treaty into effect,” for I well know the lively feelings on the subject, among the merchants of the Newfoundland trade, and those of the British colonies; but soon discovered the causes which made the former quiescent;—1st. the utter impossibility of breaking the

treaty ;—and 2d, therefore, the hopes they entertained, by submission, of inducing the ministry to consent to grant a bounty upon their fish, in order to make up for the disadvantages to which the treaty must inevitably subject them, or enable them to withdraw their capital. I had not then, nor can I ever have, any personal interest in this affair beyond an unalterable affection for the colony of Nova Scotia, with which I have been long connected. As chairman of the Halifax committee of trade, such was the secrecy of the transaction, as well as the celerity of it, that I could not have received any instructions from that colony. But had an inquiry taken place, I should, notwithstanding, have then considered it to be my duty to offer any information I possessed on the subject, and, at least, to have pointed out the numerous documents which had relation to the case.

16. This last transaction, though a very great injury to the prosperity of the Atlantic Colonies, as it affects their fisheries and those of Newfoundland, is not the only mischief which has arisen from the admission of foreigners. We shall perceive from the following statement, that the loyalty and morals of the people, and the revenues (as far as they can be affected by smugglers) of the provincial government, *as well as those of the parent country*, are very greatly injured in consequence of this inconsiderate inversion of ancient principle. The interference with the fisheries is of a pecuniary nature ; that which I am about to display bears, I fear, a deeper and more fatal consequence. As the feelings upon which this branch of the colonial statements were made, must display in a very favourable point of light the attachment of the colonists to the British government ; I will, as briefly as I can, endeavour to explain those sentiments which occasioned such an accordance of their loyalty with their pecuniary interests ; for to suppose that *loyalty*, unsupported by *interest*, can find place in the breasts of a community of civilized freemen, is to imagine that which never did nor never can exist. The Halifax committees*, sincerely desirous that the colonies should continue as far as possible, and as far as it was in their power to ensure such feelings, in habits, sentiments, manners, and affections truly British, assumed, in all their representations to government, a maxim directly opposite to the ancient turbulent propensities of the old thirteen revolutionized provinces ; *that the resort of foreigners, in general, but of those of the United States in par-*

* The Halifax committees were instituted in 1804, and have been since annually renewed by ballot among the inhabitants.

ticular, was injurious to, and subversive of the allegiance of the colonists as subjects, and to their morals as men. In the former instance, the Americans, when they became aliens, were in the habit of instilling into the minds of the inhabitants of the colonies the seeds of political discontent, by an incitement to imitate their successful example and shake off their connexion with their parent country, a practice which has never ceased to the present day; and it is not many years since a provincial act was revived for the purpose of sending aliens away from the province, who should be detected in such unwarrantable attempts. Profligacy and drunkenness usually accompanied, and do now more than ever, a certain description of people from the states; who, under the pretence of fishing, carry on a very different traffic. The real New England fisherman is a hardy, laborious, saving and good citizen; always dangerous, it is true, as a political companion to a loyal Briton, though exemplary as a moralist. The others, of whom we now complain, are the off-scourings of New England; and these are the people who have been introduced to the colonies, and who, under a variety of pretences, bring an endless quantity of American, European, and East India goods, which tempt the lower class of the colonists to barter for such articles their colonial produce, even green and pickled fish, when to be procured at an under price. In this way the merchants are often despoiled of their property; when after having trusted the fishermen with salt and a variety of other necessities, they come for more goods with a plausible story of some accident or deficiency in the *catch*, which has no foundation but in the most perfect deceit. The extent of the sea coasts, full of harbours, and the very few revenue officers which government affords, suitable for checking smuggling, has always opened the most advantageous means to an illicit trade. I will cite an early, and rather an interesting, instance of it.

17. Immediately after the independence of the States was established, such was the eagerness of the manufacturers in England and Scotland to get rid of their goods, that any youth who could procure an introductory letter, might obtain a cargo of them to a considerable amount; and such was the quantity of every article of British manufacture shipped to the new States, that there was not a sufficient sale for one half of the importations there. The war had deprived the States of almost all their specie: but had overspread the whole country with depreciated paper money of various properties: the best of these currencies did not exceed in value 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound for cash. On the contrary, the war had furnished

the remaining colonies with abundance of specie, chiefly in Spanish dollars. At this period, in consequence of a recent and fortunate speculation in the China trade, these dollars were in great demand in the States. Accordingly, every means which American ingenuity and contrivance could devise, was resorted to, to collect them from every quarter; and amongst others, that of smuggling British goods of every description into the colonies; which being sold at public auction for what they would fetch, brought together the dollars to a great amount; and those being remitted to the States, purchased the paper money in most estimation, from 1500 to 2000 per cent below the denomination, and then in the hands of those who very reasonably distrusted the worth of it. On the other hand, every influence of those who bought this paper was then put in practice to enhance its value by means of the public press; that effectual instrument of infinitely varied notes, for the most gross or the most refined intrigue, and no where so well understood as it is in the United States; energy was not wanting to "seize the glorious golden opportunity;" public faith soon became the daily theme through which the dulcet music of vanity and lucre reached every portion of the new and exulting republic. Glory and riches being decreed by fate to become the happy lot of the infant Hercules, a vast metropolis was the select object and noble ambition of the *southern* States; riches the golden meed of *northern* emulation. To bring these two prizes to perfection, and to unite so many discordant interests to obtain them, was no easy task; but as

"Great actions are not always true sons
Of great and mighty resolutions,"

the prime hero of the United States, the noble-minded president of the confederation, without completely perceiving what he was about to accomplish, yet with his accustomed good fortune, placed one leg of his compasses in the middle of a swamp in the close neighbourhood of Mount Vernon; and, first stretching the other south-west, and then bringing it north and a good deal east, he most luckily discovered that the said spot had accidentally become the accurate centre point of the new dominion; thus primed *with the most perfect disinterestedness*, but with every energy of influence and eloquence, he exhibited the same as being, in his *unbiassed* opinion, the destined seat of Columbian empire. The perch of the federal eagle was, at that auspicious moment, at New York; but that branch of the liberty tree being deemed too slender for the growing strength and importance of the imperial bird, after many wise debates,

she hopped to the *then* acknowledged superior station of Philadelphia. Although seated so much nearer, than before, to southern expectation, it was still much too distant for northern influence; the further removal, therefore, of the seat of empire became the fierce subject of frequent and eager debate in the general congress. This state of things most admirably suited the eastern policy; a fair bargain and sale became the consequence; the northern portions of the United States, in the end, absolutely refused to suffer the seat of government to be placed south of the Potowmack, and thus oblige themselves to catch trout in Mr. Washington's pond; but they cheerfully agreed *to fish in any troubled waters* on the banks of Goose-creek. The southern States, not able to effect the full extent of their desires, concurred, in compensation for this limited condescension, to fund, as a national debt, the aforesaid depreciated currency, at the par of twenty shillings in the pound; by which operation the most desperate bankrupts, of the division north and east of the Potowmack, realized immense fortunes; in many instances, exceeding a million of dollars. But, to return to the British colonies, whom we left exchanging their specie for English and Scottish manufactures; which, luckily for the eastern States, thus produced the early and the first dawn of their prosperity.

18. This traffic had not continued long, before it was perceived that many inconveniences were about to follow a practice so difficult of detection, especially when aided, as it then was, by the treaty of 1783; for the smuggled British goods were no way distinguishable from those which had been legally imported; and the Halifax custom-house, at that period, was not so well supported nor so well officered as it is at present. Complaint, however, was made there; but the answer returned intimated that "the officers would readily do their duty, provided they could receive adequate information." This was known to be a mere subterfuge; however, a very spirited newspaper controversy took place at Halifax; and in consequence a public meeting having been convened, and this answer stated, a proposal was adopted to appoint a committee to advertise for and convey information to the custom-house, a measure which relieved individuals from the odium of turning informers; but, strange as it may seem, imposed upon the officers a duty it was more than generally believed they reluctantly performed. Vessels and smuggled property, however, to a large amount were seized, though late, and matters returned to their former routine. Whether this transaction was reported to his Majesty's ministers I know not, but I have a personal knowledge that the

then lieutenant governor was informed of every particular. One thing, however, is most certain, that no efficient measure was adopted to check a practice which every one who will take the trouble to read the history of the American colonies, during the early part of the reign of our most estimable sovereign George III., will be convinced was the principal, I had almost said sole cause of the American rebellion; for had it not become a favourite system of the British government effectually to check the practice of smuggling in the colonies, there was not a single article of complaint brought forward at that time, which might not have been amicably settled; but the government had too long shown a supineness which tended to encourage the illicit trade, and then adopted imprudent means to impede a torrent which had gained strength from their own neglect. The minds of the people at large were become, through the almost universal prevalence of smuggling along the whole sea-coast, tainted with every prolific vice unfriendly to order and good government. The measures adopted were such as suited the intentions of the ill disposed leaders, and also the minds of the interested multitude, which required but slight persuasion to follow their wicked propensities, and even to justify a resistance to support a practice, they reconciled to themselves under the subterfuge that *the law having fixed a penalty, the payment on detection wiped away all stain.* In like manner the same feeling is, in the present colonies, "growing with their strength," and of this the Government has been lately fully informed; for if the Halifax Custom-house correspondence on this subject, from the autumn of 1816 to the date of the late treaty with the United States, is examined—and I earnestly recommend it to serious attention—it will, I am of opinion, give some intelligence of which those in power appear to be unacquainted. A short time before the late war with the United States, pending the embargo system, the traders of Halifax generally, not believing their Committee of Trade to be sufficiently energetic, presented a memorial to the then Lieutenant-Governor, complaining that many of their goods, teas especially, which they had imported from Europe, were spoiling in their stores, by reason of the supply which the town and country parts of the province received through an increasing contraband trade, and requested that his Excellency would be pleased to recommend to his Majesty's ministers, to adopt preventive means to suit the evils under which they laboured. But the truth was, that the committee had then already made several representations on the subject, and that in a variety of ways, which had not been attended to; nor

has the committee failed frequently to repeat them since. During the last American war, an erroneous apprehension existed, that the army and navy would suffer for want of flour, and the ministry opened two free ports in the colonies, St. John's and Halifax; but though the Americans availed themselves of this licence only in a very slight degree, those provinces never felt any distress, nor even inconvenience, during a long period, but were generally sufficiently supplied, in our own vessels, from the States, notwithstanding the severity of their prohibiting laws, or from England when the price paid the expense of importation, which I believe never happened but in one instance*. The principal reason why the Ame-

* There is no colony belonging to his Majesty which now so abounds in live stock as Nova Scotia; and yet in the years 1783-4 and 5 attempts were made to persuade the people that they must inevitably depend upon the United States for their principal supply. A few spirited persons opposed this impudent piece of interest in certain individuals, for it was connected with the transactions just mentioned in paragraphs 17 and 18; and the farmers by temporary high prices consequent to the stoppage of the illicit trade just detailed, were induced to increase their stock; which, as soon as the great influx of new settlers who came into the province at that time were supplied, increased so much that the greatest abundance took place; and the accounts in his Majesty's treasury will prove that contracts were never wanted for the army, navy, and hospitals, both in port and out, during the whole of the French and American wars; and I can very well recollect in one year of the latter, the contracts amounted to 1,500,000lbs. We have, in like manner, been told that the province of Nova Scotia will not produce grain sufficient in quality or quantity for the use of the inhabitants, but I have never doubted that this assertion, like the other, has originated partly in interest, for the permitted importation of flour is a ready introduction of illicit articles: but at length a great effort is now making to improve the agriculture of the province, and if persisted in, without relaxation, will finally succeed; but there are abundance of idle and interested people will make difficulties without recollecting that all parts of England, even, are not equally suited for grain, and yet it may, with skill, be said fairly enough, to be a grain country. I am so convinced that skill alone is wanted to bring to perfection the present laudable and interesting pursuit, that if the system of the Holkham agriculture were adopted, the province of Nova Scotia would become as fine a grain country as any in America; but I am ashamed to say that his Majesty is never made to issue a proclamation for the admission of grain without inserting the article of *potatoes*; he might with equal propriety do the same with respect to Ireland, or favour the importation of *rum* into Jamaica.

ricans themselves resorted to the free ports in so limited a manner, was occasioned by their inability to practise the smuggling trade, on account of the great number of British cruisers on those coasts during the war, which rendered them liable to continual detection. The returns made upon this first experiment, to destroy one of the most salutary of the colonial policies, are in the hands of Government; yet with all this information, *only three years ago*, the measure of opening the same two free ports to the Americans in time of peace was repeated. What the effect produced has been, I am *personally* unacquainted, because I left the country before the measure had received a fair trial; but of this I am certain, the experiment was rash, and not founded on the experience of the past events. It was, and is, also entirely uncalled for by any real necessity whatever; it originated in private interest, and was acceded to from a partial and hasty inquiry—the result is, as I understand, a complete disappointment to those who were personally interested in the measure, and to those also who flattered themselves in some advantages to the trade of the country which they had conjectured but did not clearly perceive; and, finally, has scarcely left a silver dollar in the provinces*. I have already said, that among those persons who avail themselves of the indulgence of resorting to the colonies, there are many artful desperate strangers from the United States, bound by no ties of decency but those connected with pecuniary interest;—a set of wretches well known to the officers of the British navy, who, during the late, and even in the revolutionary, war, could at any time, from among them, procure pilots to guide British ships into any American port they wished to enter, for any purpose of assault they chose; in like manner, by encouraging such people to resort to, and examine, our harbours in time of peace, they are sure to improve in every facility to annoy us in time of war. In short, if it had been the wish of Government to disarm the country—to wean the colonists from their political and their moral duties—and to render them in thought, word, and deed, complete Yankies †, it was impossible to have contrived more certain expedients than those which have been adopted, *by admitting, under various devices, the*

* This act is now about to expire.

† I should not have adopted this term if I could have found any other equally applicable. It means a New Englander exclusively; but one of the lowest class, gifted with properties the most worthless, but totally different from any thing to be found elsewhere.

citizens of the United States to hold free intercourse with his Majesty's colonial subjects.

19. Government, within the last two or three years, have been in the habit of dealing very harshly with the northern colonies;—indeed, it has been the practice, as the foregoing statements will prove, whenever it became convenient to stop a gap at the importunate solicitations of a foreign power, or of a superior domestic or even private interest in England, that the colonies have been resorted to as a satisfaction to intrigue or interest; their establishments, which have existed during many years, and been erected at a vast expense of labor, risk, and property, have been stripped without mercy, or suffered to consume in inaction. The removal of the careening-yard establishment at Halifax, for instance, is generally thought to have been effected by complete misrepresentation. Had the object been that of economy, in such times as these, no one could have complained;—had it been a measure of *justifiable* resentment for the misbehaviour of a town which had grossly conducted itself, as happened a few years ago in the case of Falmouth, no murmurings against the punishment could have had any weight upon the mind of any candid person: but if it did become a proper measure to shut up the careening-yard at Halifax, why select the island of Bermuda as a preferable spot at which to renew it? that is, why go from a healthy to a sickly climate—from one of the very best and safest harbours known in the world, accessible in every season of the year, to an open roadsted, in the most turbulent of all the latitudes*—

* We know that Government has been told in the face of truth, *that the harbour of Halifax is inaccessible in winter.* The fact is, that there is no harbour in his Majesty's dominions more accessible in every season. The entrance from the ocean is well buoyed, and roomy between; it may almost be said never to be closed with ice, for that circumstance never took place between the winters 1788-9 and 1816-17. In the former instance it was shut up above George's Island only (and that is a league within the beach) during some weeks; in the latter instance the same took place during ten days, when every other harbour in America as far south as Cape Fear was shut for two months; and yet, in the midst of the severest weather of that winter, a sloop of war forced its way through the ice; and, at that time, any vessel could work up, and anchor in safety within Major's Beach. There are but two harbours in the world ever set in competition with that of Halifax:—Trincomalee in Ceylon, and Cromartee in Scotland; but the former is very inferior to Halifax in several respects. Yet the packets are not suffered generally to go to Halifax, direct, during the months of

from a country abounding in every necessary of life to one where every article of the market is scarce, dear, at an advance of two hundred per cent beyond the other, and, generally, deficient or bad in its kind? But to conclude a long catalogue of ills adopted and advantages abandoned,—for the Halifax yard is a very complete one, and from the beginning of its establishment to the present time has cost a great deal of money,—the persons who have advised this measure, have led the government into an immoderate expense; have, at the best, put the result to a great risk; and have injured the private property of hundreds in Halifax, who had placed their confidence in the stability of the institution. I am very far from mentioning this last event as a reproach; if those who projected it really have brought themselves to a conviction that it is a measure of propriety, it is well for the nation that his Majesty possesses such zealous, faithful servants; but it certainly is very fairly made to range with other cases, to prove that the northern colonies have not been spared when it suited the conveniency of Government to inflict misfortunes upon them, be the motive what it might. The province of Nova Scotia, however, in general, and the town of Halifax in particular, have no permanent cause to distress themselves on this subject; it will not be long before the advisers of the measure will discover how grossly they have been imposed upon; and then the establishment,

November, December, January, and February, but proceed immediately to Bermuda or New York; but, in the last American war, necessity obliged them to go to Halifax in every month of the year; and, in no single instance, did they meet with any difficulty in going into that harbour; but still this experience did not in the least affect the old inveterate practice on the return of peace. It is, in all things, very difficult to induce the British ministry to profit by experience: that the mere man of office should act thus, is not surprising, it belongs to such people; but when gentlemen at the head of departments continue in error only because others have done the like, it then becomes rather derogatory to their character and superior stations.

The fact is that the climate of Nova Scotia is greatly altered within the last forty years, and has little resemblance to the accounts given of it in former times; it is, upon the whole, a very fine climate, and gradually still further improving. No experienced seaman will contend against a keen north-wester on any part of the American coast; but if he will yield to it, and bear off into deep water, he is almost sure to be favored with a southerly wind in the course of forty-eight hours, and can then make his port with a leading breeze.

under some pretence to save appearances, perhaps under some affliction, will be restored to the original spot, from whence it has been a national injury to remove it.

20. It is a very great misfortune that, from a very early period of colonial history, except in a very few cases, the colonies have been governed by no uniformly regulated system. But system, subject to as little vacillation as the affairs of sublunary beings will admit of, is a sort of colonial charter of great importance in the government of colonies, and the more uniformity there is practised in the execution, the better will it be received. When persons choose to take up their residence in the colonies, they know, or are supposed to know, the terms they have voluntarily adopted: but if a changeable policy and practice are to be left to the discretion of any persons whomsoever, an injury may be sustained by any change, unless adopted upon the greatest circumspection. Were the ministry, on the settlement of a new colony, to beat up for volunteers, and to announce, at the same time, "that those must understand that it was his Majesty's gracious intention to infringe at pleasure all the fair promises contained in his proclamation; and that whenever they, by perseverance, industry, and economy, with due allegiance, loyalty, and attachment, had attained opulence and all the advantages of civilised life, his said most gracious Majesty would deem it to be proper that his ministers, for the time being, or those of his royal successors, should, at their option, perform, or cause to be performed such acts as would deprive them, the said colonists, of every benefit they, by their said perseverance, &c. had obtained; and from time to time again restore and again rescind, whenever it appeared to suit themselves or their friends, &c. &c."—I am of opinion, Sir, that a new settlement made under such an invitation would meet but with very few volunteers; and yet, this practice, but without the due notice of such intention, has actually taken place within the colony of Nova Scotia. I believe I am correct in asserting that the only uniform practices ever established for the government of the colonies, and, until of late years, steadily persevered in, took place so early as the reign of James the First; and were threefold:—1st. A monopoly to the mother country of colonial trade; this, in some articles, has undergone a relaxation. 2d. A prohibition of the resort of colonial vessels to foreign ports; this has, at various times, in a degree been allowed, and is found, by experience, to be attended with no injurious consequences, but is still very properly confined to parts south of Cape Finisterre. 3d. An exclusion of foreign vessels from the

colonies ; no administration before the present has ever ventured upon an infringement of this most salutary regulation. This very limited system in the government of the colonies, we have reason to suspect is occasioned by a most deplorable want of inquiry into the state of them ; and, thus, one evil begets another. I am borne out in the assertion, by a variety of facts, that the proper offices do not possess the necessary information for the good government of the colonies, and, in a very high degree, by what has fallen from Mr. Cumberland (and higher authority there cannot be), who, during more than half a century, was the agent of Nova Scotia, equally long an officer in the Board of Trade ; and, at one time, secretary of it. In his *Memoirs*, speaking of his first introduction to office (8vo. edit. 1807, vol. i. p. 137) he says as follows :—“ Having been told “ to inform myself about the colonies, and shown some folio “ books of formidable contents, I began *more meo* with the dis- “ coverers of America, and proceeded to travel through a mass “ of voyages which furnished here and there some plots for tra- “ gedies, dumb-shows, and dances, as they have since done ; but “ in point of information applicable to the then existing state of “ the colonies, were most discouragingly meagre, and most op- “ pressingly tedious in communicating nothing. I got a sum- “ mary, but sufficient, insight into the constitutions of the re- “ spective provinces ; for what was worth knowing was soon “ learnt.” This want of information I have suspected during many years past. It appears that in the affairs of the colonies, the former ministries, though less than the present, have generally acted from the spur of the moment ; and that, considering this part of their duty peculiarly dry and irksome, they have seldom regarded either any fixed principle of action or precedent. This neglect, if I am not greatly mistaken, originated, and then gave permanency to the errors which caused the American rebellion ; it is also under this laxity of research, that the United States have acquired, by the late treaty, the possession of the colonial fisheries. This paucity of means, in attaining the history and value of each colony, and where there *are* documents, the want of proper method to save time, and the exertion of patience in the research, is, to every person concerned, a very great and varied evil ; but the consequences must be endured by the public, as long as matters remain as they are ; for it induces ministers to act on private information, which is generally partial and imperfect, often interested, improper, and unsafe. If they act on their own immediate feelings without a private guide, and without documentary pre-

cedent, they are liable to become involved in a labyrinth of politics the most discordant to the interests of the parent state, to the dependencies, or to foreign countries. In the colonies, unheeded practices are established for want of a timely check ; instead of legislative uniformity throughout all the colonies, the practice is become so variable even in the different assemblies,—ever obstinate and tenacious of their own imagined rights, and whimsically intrusive on those of others,—that disputes about forms and privileges, the most ridiculous and arbitrary, are continually producing dissensions between the several chambers or the governors, though the British Parliament *is* professedly, or ought to be, under a parity of circumstances, the sole guide of legislative forms and privileges. Neither the amount of population, trade, and cultivation, nor the local properties, natural and artificial,—neither those which actively exist, nor those which are latent, whether available to the parent state or the colonies themselves, are sufficiently regarded, or even known where they should be so ; but, however intrinsically valuable some colonies may be by nature, they are often rendered by neglect a burthen, and entail an unnecessary waste of money, as is notoriously the case with Cape Breton and Prince Edward's Islands, which are suffered to remain (though sixty years in our possession), in a state bordering on dereliction ; a prey to internal confusion and discord—an eternal thorn to those who have to listen to their trifling complaints, and to reconcile and redress their real or their imaginary grievances. This state of things is endured for the sake of the little patronage they produce, and the monopoly their lands are under ; and yet both these islands are very extensive and beautiful spots, and might be rendered, if properly managed, and unshackled as to grants, of great and varied worth*.

21. This catalogue of errors on the part of government, and of patient suffering on that of the colonies, might be much extended, but those already detailed are of so obvious a tendency, that I flatter myself they will sufficiently show the impolicy of making any addition to them by the projected timber duties. Were the colonial trade otherwise generally prosperous, those proposed duties, though inconvenient, might be borne without serious injury ; but in the present distressed state in which the commerce of the country is generally placed, and the dependency of the fisheries on that of timber, absolute

* Paragraphs 27, 28, and 29.

ruin to the colonies must prove the consequence of further depression ; and as it is not in human nature that a people can see their hard-earned property melt and disappear from their view with every day's expenses, without alarming apprehensions ; it must be expected that their thoughts in private, and debates in public, will turn to subjects not very conducive to public tranquillity ; and when our rulers allow themselves to recollect that such numerous instances of errors, or misdirected authority, have been exerted towards the Atlantic colonies in so short a space as that between the independence of the United States and the present time, and inform themselves of the now universally acknowledged truth that the American rebellion originated, and Mr. Oswald's treaty was concluded, in the same species of mismanagement and want of information *, I do anxiously hope they will review the facts here detailed—the proofs of which are all within their own reach—with the necessary candour and liberality ; and recollect, before it is too late, the value and force of public opinion when favorable, and the danger of general prejudice when adverse, to the measures of government. It is in vain to confide in *power* when opposed to *feeling* ; the fiercest tempest will never blow a man's coat from his back ; it may force him, indeed, to wrap it closer round him, but it is the benign influence of the sun that will alone induce him to lay it aside. Should affection favor any cause, inclination has the power of enchantment.—The Canadian militia, so impressed, set the vain boasting American general and his threats at defiance. Had it not been for the favorable dispositions of the mass of the colonial people in the late American war, I need not ask what would have become of that country under its then Governor-General ? The benefits, however, once received, the duty of a return is forgotten.

22. The cause of the colonial misfortunes will, upon inquiry, be found to consist partly in the misinformation actually received, and partly in the want of some safer species of intelligence to which Government should direct its chief attention. There is also still too much of that feeling remaining, which induced the first Lord Chatham, when minister, to say, though so contrary to his latter policy, “ that he would not suffer the Americans to manufacture a hobnail.” It is, however, the duty of those who, in these modern times, officially direct the

* Note to paragraph 14.

affairs of the colonies, not only to disdain *using* such weak but irritating sallies of eloquence (which I confess they do, for no where is official civility so prevalent as it is in every government department); but to show by their actions, which the simple ideas of the colonists value very far beyond mere politeness, that they are no longer *guided* by such narrow and confined maxims. To this end it is their duty (for the impression is gone abroad) to make themselves acquainted with the several properties of the colonies throughout the empire, that they may bring them into action, for the mutual benefit of those dependencies, and of the parent state.

23. The Board of Trade has it in charge to report not only on the affairs of the colonies, but on every commercial transaction referred to their consideration by the Committee of Privy Council, which, together, form such an enlarged and miscellaneous duty, that it is not possible, at this day, when the commerce of the empire is so extended, and the colonies are become so increased in number, that one and the same board should be able to attend, with sufficient effect, to such infinitely varied and such continually multiplying subjects. Would it not, therefore, become an improvement worthy the serious consideration of Government, instead of the present commixed mass, to establish a pure plantation office, having the colonies *only* under its supervision? Such an office, having certain objects common to all the dependencies of the empire in view, and adding to those objects others peculiar to each, might, under its high and general influence, be able to collect from the necessary reports, required from the several officers in each settlement (and especially when countersigned, *under due charges of caution* by the governor himself), materials for a perfect narration of affairs within each colony, even comprehending its original as well as its progressive state, but unquestionably that which now exists. Such reports, if properly managed at home and abroad, would, in the course of a few years, contain a general and topographical view of each dependency; its minerals, other natural properties, and history; the extent, state of improvement or deterioration in trade, agriculture, and fisheries; its population; its other capabilities; and how far all these were applicable to the benefit of the parent state and of the colony *. Were the colonial legislators made sensible of the liberal and benevolent designs of Government, in procuring such information, if pains were taken

* Paragraph 2.

to impress them with an opinion that it was intended, after strictly enquiring into the accuracy of the statements to be procured, to apply remedies to evils, and promote improvements, I think there can be no doubt the several legislatures would furnish the pecuniary means which would be considered necessary to carry such a plan into execution, provided they could, at the same time, feel assured that those enquiries would be so guarded that they would not be converted into *private jobs*; and that it was the design of Government, not only to apply the information received to the promoting of the general prosperity, but, to what is also of very high importance to the colonies, *the dispatch of public business*, which now, at times, languishes almost beyond any hope of attaining the object in view.

24. It has become a very recent policy of Government to endeavour to induce the provincial legislatures to pay the civil expenses of the several colonies. How far it is their design to proceed in this scheme, I know not; but if, Sir, you will take the trouble to enquire, you will, I believe, find, that in conformity with New England CONTEMPLATED independence, their legislatures, from a very early period, insidiously endeavoured to tempt the British ministry to accept an offer to support the governors and chief justices of the colonies; but "*timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes*"—they wisely declined a boon which would have placed weak human nature too much under the temptation of interest; and in hands, too, which might use it to improper purposes. But the above plan of procuring pecuniary aid from the colonies is by no means of this exceptionable description; and when his Majesty's ministers shall have made up their minds to adopt a more steady policy, and a more liberal system towards the British dependencies than that which now unhappily prevails over the North Atlantic possessions in America, I would recommend this pecuniary means of effecting the hoped for improvements to their consideration; and with such generous motives they may be confident of success.

25. I will now, Sir, in pursuance of the plan I have proposed to myself, proceed further to show how far the present colonies are an advantage to the parent state, in WAR and in PEACE.

26. The British Government has never consented to view the island of Newfoundland as a colony; for the leading feature of all the Acts of Parliament, under which it is governed, supposes that the inhabitants quit it at the end of the fishing season, and return to the parent countries within the British Isles in Europe, a few storekeepers only excepted, who are

placed to take charge of the storehouses and other property left behind as useless during winter, and only resumable in the five open months, from the middle of May to the middle of October. But, notwithstanding this projected system, Newfoundland, in the face of Acts of Parliament and partial usage, has in fact long become, and is yearly becoming, more and more *colonial*. Yet the population, though numerous, as it is said, to the extent of 70 or 80,000, is generally very poor and miserable, far beyond the proportion of other settlements, which are avowedly colonies. This state is partly occasioned by the climate, which, though not wholly *incapable*, is, to say the best of it, *unfriendly* to agriculture. But the chief cause of this misery is attributable to the half-way state between the one and the other system. However, the only observations I shall now make are these:—*First*, that the people who remain upon the island during the winter are, by want of employment between one fishing season and another, and of adequate supervision from more opulent and better educated persons, so generally uninstructed, that they never can, under existing circumstances, become better than they are. The *second* observation I have to make is, that unless Government will consent to change the old system from that ancient original state to some other, better suited to the present circumstances and feelings, people of property, decent education, and moral habits, will never adopt this island as their home; but, as fast as they make an independency, will quit Newfoundland as a place of exile, and return to their several native countries, leaving the poor, the wretched, and the profligate behind: and, *thirdly*, that the late impolitic treaty having given to the United States' fishermen the ascendancy in every European and other market, a different mode of fishing must be adopted from that just now prevailing, in order to put the chief article of Newfoundland commerce upon a footing with that of their rivals; else the former great capital employed in the British American fisheries must be withdrawn; for it is not possible, otherwise, to contend successfully with the people of New-England, who fish *upon shares**; I believe never upon *wages*. I will draw no further consequences from these three observations at present, though I have much more to say upon them, because I am well aware there are two opinions entertained respecting two very nearly equal and opposite sides of the question, *whether the OLD or NEW state of things should be*

* The American practice of fishing is fully explained to Government in the Memorial from Halifax, in the spring of 1818.

suffered to prevail. On this axiom, however, I do most firmly rely—the discordance that exists, and long has done so, between the Newfoundland merchants of the several fishing ports of these kingdoms, ought, under the present exigency, to cease and harmonise into a united plan of common benefit. Had such discord not unhappily existed, his Majesty's ministers never would have ventured upon such a treaty as that of 1818-19; but it is to be hoped, that a spark of liberal feeling will be allowed to operate, and that a patriotic effort will yet be made to save from destruction a branch of commerce peculiar in its properties; gained wholly from the sea by means of outfits only, and returned to the parent country, chiefly in bills of exchange; employing a vast capital; and the greatest nursery for seamen the nation possesses; and which, in this period of asserted distress, becomes an object of the highest national importance.

27. But as long as Newfoundland exists in its present state, every article of food, except fish, must be brought to it from abroad; it must, therefore, at times, be subject to that distress which arises from want of a sufficiency or a proper variety of provisions; because seasons being variable and often unusually severe and early, no human effort can ensure an abundance of even all essential articles, as the ports will, at times, become unexpectedly closed with ice. The chief part of the salted provisions imported arrive from Europe, but fresh provisions can be imported from the British provinces and islands alone. None are so capable to furnish this market as Cape Breton and Prince Edward's islands; though, if Newfoundland should ever become colonized, it might partly, perhaps altogether, supply itself with potatoes, other vegetables, and hay. These two lesser islands possess every capability to which the fisheries and agriculture can be applied; and if proper regulations were adopted (even those only which require no additional expense from Government) they would, with the other colonies, contribute to supply the West Indies, as well as Newfoundland, with every necessary article of food in abundance, and at a cheap rate.

28. The soil of Prince Edward's Island is admirably adapted to grain and pasture: the whole of it is a loam, more or less prone to clay or sand; generally an even plain, without a single broken or incapable spot on it, but possessing much very rich land, very like, upon the whole, the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk, by no means inferior, but which it resembles more than any country that can be mentioned. But those agricultural advantages, to which may be added the

unlimited quantity and variety of fish that surround its coasts, and occupy its numerous small but convenient harbours, are all rendered inert, by the injudicious manner in which the lands were originally granted, and are now principally held. The whole island was laid out, in 1763, in tracts of from 10 to 40,000 acres in each; and was divided among, I believe, not more than fifteen or twenty opulent English families, many of whom do not, at this day, know that they own such property. Surely, after such a lapse of time, the unsettled parts should be brought under some regulations, calculated to accommodate the present increasing surplus population of this kingdom.

29. Cape Breton Island, though equal as to fisheries with Prince Edward's Island, is of a very different complexion; though situated so near to it, the two possess, in common, no other property, except the fisheries. Cape Breton abounds in coal and gypsum, free-stone and lime; it possesses large tracts of extraordinary rich upland and meadow; not mountainous, nor in many instances level, but generally waved; very accessible from the salt water, to which its singular shape (nearly approaching to that of a horse-shoe) gives a very convenient passage; and the basin, called the Bras-d'Or, in the heart of it, forms a convenient, extended, and safe harbour for small vessels, abounding, *the year round*, with fish, which take refuge there in winter. Open by nature from the eastward, it may be easily rendered so likewise, by a cut, without a lock, from the westward at Arishot, being there only a few hundred yards across from the sea to the Bras-d'Or. When Louisbourg was possessed by the French, the people of New England teased the then ministry with the most persevering clamour (a privilege which they think they have a right still to practise, though one would suppose experience should have rendered it less successful than it proved formerly) until they involved the two nations in the *seven years' war*. When they had fairly got rid of a troublesome enemy and rival, they adopted his friendship, to procure, with characteristic policy, their own independency; and are now endeavouring, by slow degrees, to worm themselves into possession of that same territory*, of which they were the means to deprive the French. Since the surrender, the island has been suffered, though abounding with the means of wealth more than any other spot of the same dimensions in his Majesty's foreign dominions, to become almost derelict; yet this noble possession, which, if it were

* See paragraph 41.

the will of Government, might, *without a sixpence of national cost*, become a garden; would take off the redundant population of the British Isles during several years; contribute largely to the West India supplies by its woods, as long as they lasted; and by its fisheries and its agriculture, in perpetuity.

30. To speak of Canada extensively would be superfluous; because so much has been written about that country, that if his Majesty's ministers are unacquainted with its known properties, it is less than any other persons of inquiry and information are; but having, several years ago, proposed a plan, on the principle of an *inclined plane*, to connect the lakes Erie and Ontario, and that not being, as far as I hear, at present contemplated, though a survey was once talked of; I will here suggest the expediency of a *SLOPE*, on the principle of that which was actually executed, and successfully used, for the conveyance of timber of every dimension along a tract of many miles from the mountains of Switzerland to the Lake Lucerne; a plan that is sufficiently explained in vol. 1st, page 201, of the New London Magazine, and for which the peculiar shape of the land, called the *Grand Slope of Niagara*, between Erie and Ontario, is by nature rendered most highly favorable. Should this address, Sir, produce, with other causes, the effect I sincerely hope it may, and save the extensive capital which the Canadians and the other colonists have vested in their timber trade, from ruin, I do seriously recommend this obvious and spirited plan to the consideration of the merchants of Upper and Lower Canada.

31. In touching upon Nova Scotia, I must do it upon the like cursory scale as the other northern colonies; but as that most valuable province possesses some peculiar features of a political tendency, requiring very little other proof than that judgment which belongs to almost every person of information—I will, in this concise address, dwell upon those properties with more stress than upon its agriculture and commerce, not, however, omitting such of these as are relevant to the subject. The peninsula, which now alone bears the name of Nova Scotia, is but a part of the large tract yielded by the French to Queen Anne, and is nearly circumscribed by the Atlantic, the bay of Fundy, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I believe it to be about three hundred miles long, by from forty, eighty, and one hundred wide in different places; and yet it is said to be, like Cape Breton, in no spot twenty miles from a navigable salt water. It possesses, like that island, a very singular inland bay, called the Basin of Mines, about forty or fifty miles in

length, by about fourteen in the greatest width, which enters it from the bay of Fundy, with a tide, that rises, at times, and in places, sixty feet. This bay is terminated at Cobequid, by a river that there empties into it, called the Shuben-Acadie, communicating in its passage from south to north, by means of extensive lakes, to within a third of a mile of the head waters of Halifax harbour on the Atlantic. The real passage way of a canal would not, altogether, occupy more than four miles, and that a very practicable course, requiring about seven locks, besides one inclined plane of about seventy feet rise. The total expense, independent of the navigating requisites, would probably be within ten thousand pounds. This inland navigation from Cobequid bay to Halifax harbour, a distance of about fifty miles, even now floats boats about nine-tenths of the distance where it is, at present, impracticable for vessels, and passes through a fine timber country and much rich land, abounding with gypsum, free-stone, marl, and lime, and with coal in great abundance near the mouth of the river; the whole forming an accumulated gift of nature unusually great: but the timber being, at present, the principal object, the undertaking must primarily depend on the event of the project to impose duties in Great Britain and Ireland on that article. A large portion of the Atlantic coast is barren, being greatly surcharged with rocks: with this circumstance before them, the reports of inconsiderate visitants, having copied errors from each other, or seen it partially, have given to Nova Scotia an ill character, when the very reverse would have been the truth; for in the midst of this rocky coast there are very large tracts, and others of various lesser extent, equal in quality to any spots in other parts of America. But the most valuable lands of the peninsula of Nova Scotia, are those which are situated towards the northern portion of it, and may be distinguished from the others by drawing a line beginning within twenty miles of Cape Fourchù, in the western extremity, to within twenty miles of Antigoniche, in the east; and thence, at both extremities of that line, south to the sea. The eastern, western, and northern portion of these lines will generally delineate the lands of the best quality. Of these, the salt water marshes are of a most singular property, and unquestionably the superior class; because, even without the aid of any manure, and with the most debased agricultural practice, they are inexhaustible. The lands, now dyked at a great expense, were formerly overflowed by the sea, and are formed of a compound of clay, sand, dissolved gypsum, marl, and salt, which have been deposited together for ages, and, by time, become so mollified, that a short exposure to the air, by means

of the plough, causes a fertility beyond the imagination of those who have not witnessed the effects of such combinations out of the ordinary course of native lands, and no where to be found, that I know of, in England. Very ill usage will certainly deteriorate even these lands; but deep ploughing instantly restores them, in unceasing rotation, to their original quality. These extraordinary tracts are situated principally at Cumberland in Chignecto bay, round the Basin of Mines, and up the rivers of those waters where the sea ebbs and flows. These upper branches of the bay of Fundy, being alone impregnated with gypsum, are solely benefited by the solution; for by the time the salt water has got low down that great bay, the mixture is too much weakened to produce any beneficial effects upon the salt marshes there, though they continue superior to other lands. The whole peninsula at present contains about 105,000 inhabitants, including the town of Halifax at nearly 12,000;—we may estimate one-tenth to be English, or their descendants—three Scotch, two Irish, one German, two American, and one-tenth to comprehend the French-acadians, and the other descriptions. Being a most healthy climate, yielding *with the same pains and skill* every agricultural article which the British Isles will produce, this population affords twenty-seven battalions of as fine a militia, and as high spirited, as ever appeared in arms in any country on earth; *and if His Majesty's ministers will take the pains to inquire*, they will find them to be a race of people well worthy encouragement and conciliation. Such is the real character of the scandalously traduced Nova Scotia, which, after an experience of forty-six years on that continent, I venture to denominate, when taken altogether, the most beautiful country and finest climate in North America.

32. As it depends upon the skill with which these people are treated, that their present well disposed feelings can alone be preserved, it is necessary I should show the relative situation of foreign North America and the British countries, of which, I have just given so concise a sketch. To perform this task properly, whatever my private opinion may be, (and that will soon appear) it is no invidious anticipation to suppose a war with the United States at any time possible, and now or lately near at hand; because, if we believe their daily prints, especially the one avowedly under the influence of their government, and the opinion of one of the most eloquent of their writers, published but two or three years ago, envy, hatred, and malice against the British nation, are trine sisters, ever seeking occasion of quarrel, and never to be diverted from acquiring new territory, wherever situated within their neighbourhood; but which,

by extension, thereby finds more means, and an ever increasing appetite for indulgence. So greedy is that government to acquire and retain territory, that at the time the United States were negotiating for the islands in the bay of Passam-Acadie, which they once had the effrontery to seize upon in time of peace; (but to which they *then* had no more title of right than they *now* have to the Floridas) they refused to give up, to our conveniency, an awkward nook of barren land at their northern boundary, on which there is not an inhabitant living; but so situated; (and that an inspection of the map will evince) as to intervene between the direct line from St. John's, in the bay of Fundy, and Quebec and Montreal. The fact is, that it is a principle with the government of Washington, as it was with regenerated France, to grasp at every thing, but to give up nothing; and this the boundary negotiations, to judge from the present aspect, will fully evince.

33. And yet there is not on the globe a dominion so little able to defend itself against an enemy (if that enemy but knows its advantages) as the United States of America. Were this to become an acknowledged truth on both sides the Atlantic, there is nothing whatever which would generally so benefit the two nations, and, at the same time, be so likely to keep them in peace and harmony; for the British cabinet would not think it necessary to submit to what Mr. Fox termed *the Corinthian brass of America*, neither would the American government venture to irritate those feelings which might probably end in its own inconveniency. With that good will towards both nations which actuates this address, I will, Sir, endeavour to prove to the one that diplomatic cowardice is not sound policy; and to the other, that in the end excess of avarice, impudence, and disingenuous cunning may not only, perchance, prove immediately disastrous, but may ultimately make wreck of that good name upon which honest men and upright nations must ever principally depend for support; and which, as one of our ministers, who, among them, seems pre-eminently to understand the American character, told Mr. Pinkney, constitutes the great strength of this kingdom.

34. It is a misfortune that the American character is not sufficiently known in these British dominions; in all other countries it is generally estimated too low, because it is there that every one forms a judgment of it from the acts of the government, or the strangers from America who visit them, principally in the capacity of traders; but in this country, our rulers, (according in this instance alone with a certain party which gave to the Americans their independency, but with an

inversion of principle to others perfectly unaccountable) act, at least, as though they thought too favorably of them. They may, perhaps, have discovered some powerful motive which has induced them to give a preference to the American States, over the interests of their faithful colonists, which to these is not so very obvious; and I sincerely hope the result may prove to the immediate sufferers, as well as to the nation, that the treaty of 1818-19 may become the last sacrifice to which they have to submit. Whatever character other persons may have affixed to the Americans, the mercantile class of this united kingdom can indeed, and do, in commerce at least, judge of them with tolerable accuracy, by means of that trusty guide, their ledger. But the inhabitants of the United States are neither to be fairly estimated by the practices of some of their traders, nor by their rulers at Washington. I have the happiness to have formed friendships in that country of which any Englishman might be proud; but I must confess they are not among the most prominent characters. Those persons, in general, who are considered *public characters*, are such as have usually not been able to succeed in other capacities; persons of considerable natural abilities, who are willing to accept small pay and high popularity, with a chance of thereby acquiring an increase of practice in some profession to which a retired name is not quite favorable. If, by any means, such persons can contrive to fill a public mission, their fortunes are made, upon a return to private life, by the mere force of celebrity; but such characters may, in the United States, still continue to be orators at public meetings, and at the same time increase their professional profits by the exercise of their eloquence. Whether that profession be law or physic; whether the party be a justice of the peace, the owner of a shop, or the keeper of a tavern—if he be ambitious of honors, and if he be active, cunning, noisy, and *glib*, whatever be his education, moral principles, or condition in life—he may, by dexterity at a *caucus**, through the activity and zeal of his pot-companions, become a senator, or delegate to the state legislature, or to congress, or the governor or president of a federal state; and though these honors, when acquired, can be enjoyed for a period extending, according to the diverse nature of the respective states, from six months to two years only; and though the party is liable then to return into private life, and, according to some constitutions indeed, must do so; yet the éclat of such a short-lived choice clothes the aspiring patriot with, at least, a rag of influence during the remainder of his days.

* A cant term for election management.

There is, therefore, a redundancy of orators in every village and town in the union, to assay their pin feathers upon every hustings, from the election of a constable within the hundred, to the choice of electors of the president, for the extended period of four years at Washington. The accumulated mass of such talents is sure to furnish a succession of statesmen, capable of devising and executing any plan of policy that may well astonish the sober understandings of the common diplomatists of this country, who, in general, have not been celebrated for skill in the *art diplomatique*. An Englishman, at the best, is but a clumsy negotiator; he possesses neither the versatility of the Frenchman, nor the persevering, undeviating, obstinate assurance of the American. He brings forward his *sine-qua-non* at the first interview, or nearly so, as at Ghent, which, ere long, he virtually abandons, in substance, in order to save the shadow*. The Americans are dealers from an early period of life. An English boy, who should at school accustom himself to buy and sell beyond the common incidental barter for marbles or such trifles, would be despised and hated by all his fellows; but in America the practice of traffic among boys of all ages, in almost every article whatever, is so general, that a youth, when he comes from school into mature life, is too frequently already an adept in every refinement of jockeyship and dealing; can chaffer, cog, and waver, with any Jew in Christendom. If such early tuition can abundantly furnish the political world in America with adequate characters worthily to support the interests of the government at home and abroad, the more humble classes in trade are equally stocked with those talents which have rendered them so distinguishable in every country in Europe, not less than among the British manufacturers and merchants in this kingdom. I wish to be understood as speaking *generally*:—it is no question but that there are men of great worth in the legislatures, in the government, and in the foreign commerce of the United States; but I do assert, that the education and the habits of the youth, in many other particulars besides those I have mentioned, are unfriendly to those feelings of the mind which constitute the most valuable quality a nation can enjoy; and that the British negotiators, from not having sufficiently understood these circumstances, have not been aware of those snares into which they have fallen. The moral worth of the United States of America is to be found among the great mass of the people, who take but a

* I could, were a concise address like this a proper occasion for such a display, give some ludicrous instances of this method of saving time, and smoothing over the sacrifices made by our negotiators.

distant interest in the government, or who, at least, attend to their dealings (for almost every person has some traffic or other) without that individual interference in it which is too apt to warp the integrity of the mind, and the urbanity of the disposition. This effect is particularly observable in the United States, where the sovereign people possess more decided influence than they do in other countries; and where the orator who can deign to pander to their base passions, is he that will obtain the largest share of those favours, of which, in that country, a larger share than in any other, appertains to them to bestow*.

35. Thus educated and thus practised, it has hitherto been the fate of this infant government, to find a succession of suitable characters to fill the various departments of state; and who, though collectively not devoid of system, yet possess in their politics a certain versatility, a species of flexible attachment to that system, which, more than any other, knows how to advance or recede according to the exigencies of *interest*, which all writers confess is there the principal spring that guides the national councils. The government of Washington accordingly always makes great pretensions, and talks high to support them; yet it has shown in every instance in which it has tried the same experiment with the powers of Europe, except that of

* My own experience in this opinion of the government of the United States, has been greatly assisted by the reluctant testimony of Mr. Bristed; who, in his work on the *resources of the United States*, has enabled me to draw out causes which he has endeavoured to hide amidst a great deal of bombast, exaggeration, and false inference; but which is a work of great value to that British statesman who knows how to make use of it. A British subject may thereby appreciate the amount of the good will which the citizens of that country bear towards this nation; the ambitious projects which that government has formed to itself; the danger there is to this country from neglect, and the caution which the ministry should use towards it, if they expect to render these kingdoms and their colonies prosperous. That this view of the case is sanctioned by the opinion of others, I am convinced; and His Majesty's ministers will also, I believe, agree in the same, when they recollect that at the time Mr. Bristed's work first appeared at New York, in the spring of 1818, at the very eve of the treaty of that year, one of the British consuls thought the work of so much importance, that he sent several copies of it to the office of the Secretary of State. What conclusion can we draw from such facts? I beg, also, to recommend the address of the elegant, learned, and reverend Mr. Buckminster of Boston, published with his sermons.

Great Britain, that when its claims were withstood, it knew how to abandon them. A feeble or a timid government will alone ever be subject to its importunity; for, whether it be by force or by cunning, it invariably pursues, with republican principle, the object to its probable attainment. If the United States conceded to the French during Buonaparte's reign whatever was required of them by him, it was because they knew there was more to gain than to lose by that most abject submission. If they made war against these kingdoms in 1812, it was because they supposed and hoped the British isles were about to submit to the French power. If, after they found themselves mistaken, they pursued that war, it was because they perfectly understood the character of that commander-in-chief who was opposed to them. If they threatened the Neapolitan government, it was occasioned by its present weakness and late misfortunes; and if they finally abandoned their silly and unjust pretensions, it was because they unexpectedly found that that government was better supported in another quarter than they calculated upon. If they persisted in their unjust claims upon Spain, that revolutionary ally, to whom any moral man would suppose *they*, at least, rested under some degree of obligation, it was only because they confided in the weakness and distracted state of that country; they accordingly first obtained Louisiana;—and how?—by giving a vast sum in public and a large sum in private to *France*, to induce the then miserable court at Madrid to yield the immense country at the mouth of the Mississippi to them; a country which, agreeably to republican policy, they had previously revolutionized;—they afterwards encouraged Miranda to revolutionize the Spanish provinces of South America, then prosecuted Colonel Smith for assisting Miranda, and finally abandoned that prosecution in consequence of the memorial of that gentleman to Congress, published to the whole community in America, and never contradicted; but if they denied to the court of Spain, alone, their participation in that transaction, they did it against the conviction of every honest man in the United States, blushing for the disgrace which such conduct inflicted upon their country; they finally invaded the Floridas, murdered two British subjects with a cold-blooded indifference, which excited universal horror in these kingdoms, and in our two houses of parliament, and no less in America; then threatened ill-fated Spain as long as its weak government had existence; but as soon as the Cortes of the Spanish peninsula seemed to promise some better times and more energy of action, the cautious invaders of the Floridas took the alarm, and, having quietly withdrawn their pretensions in the first

place, will, probably, finally abandon or renew them as expediency or interest suggest*.

36. Had we at all times known these our old dependencies, now converted into the most inveterate enemy we have, many errors and misfortunes would to this day have been avoided; and much vexation and immense loss of treasure spared; and, if we are still capable of learning by experience, the nation may yet escape many fatal snares now laid for us, some of which, though but in embryo, are warming into life, and will, as assuredly as the crocodile in the egg, be hatched into mischief†. I think it probable that I may be laughed at, be turned into ridicule, for uttering such apprehensions, perhaps abused with acrimony, for I know those States once possessed the patronage of a very numerous party in this kingdom, which from the period of their revolutionary struggle, and in a lesser degree on every opportunity since, have come in to their support; and have at times held such an ascendancy as to carry their prejudices almost by acclamation:—were this predilection in favour of the States as powerful as it was formerly, I would not waste my time in offering such a precious gift as reason upon the hopeless effort. At that fatal period, (but that delusion, thanks to Heaven, has gone off like a passing cloud, and few persons recollect it) we were with confidence told, that the mighty British empire,—and I speak it not in irony, for I know she

* I forbear to comment upon the kidnapping and the delivery of my friend General Bowles, the chief of the Creek nation, to the Spaniards at Havannah—that is a tragedy which I hope at some future day to hand down to posterity, for their sympathy and execration.

† When the treaty between the French republic and the United States, for the mutual guarantee of their fisheries, was concluded, in the year 1801, as mentioned in paragraph 14 of this address, few people foresaw, or very transiently, what those governments were aiming at; but as soon as the Halifax committee of Trade was formed, they took the earliest opportunity to put His Majesty's ministers into possession of their apprehensions on the subject of the fisheries; and whenever an opportunity offered either to the governor of the province or the agent, whose zeal and assiduity can never be forgot, this guarantee treaty was never omitted by the committee as one of those anticipations which most assuredly meditated mischief to the colonies. The government of the United States is not composed of idle people, who do any thing without design; the treaty of 1801 was executed in 1818-19. And many another such exploit is now in training to the discomfort of these kingdoms and the British colonies.

would indeed be highly so, were her counsels directed by her true interests—I say, sir, the time was, when we were told that the fate of this empire depended, both in its commerce and in its political existence,—I can scarcely whisper it without a laugh,—
ON THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. But when that bulrush becomes the staff of such a giant, bowing with decrepitude to his fate, I fear the reed, weak as is the support, will go into his side and pierce him. There are no greater errors in politics or common life than terror and presumption; in the one we invite, in the other we glide into misfortune. America, as an enemy, is neither to be feared nor despised, for she possesses both her weak and her strong points;—as a friend, her government is neither to be confided in nor contemned; in the former instance, it will surely mislead or overreach; in the other, it will as certainly remember and requite; but a certain dignified, civil, but cold reserve will check and often defeat that importunate solicitation to which the plain and straight forward propensities of John Bull are too apt to render him the dupe. If our negotiators are prudent, in dealing with the American government, they never will hastily complete any treaty; and more especially if they are pressed, they may fairly suspect that there is something behind the scenes which does not meet the eye; but if they will consult the records from their colonies when they have any*, or the experience of various friends who are most likely to be uninfluenced; truth, or a reasonable conclusion may, by a comparison of facts and sentiments, be formed; or, at any rate, gross errors may be avoided: but impatience and headlong negotiations are almost sure to be succeeded by injury somewhere, and repentance past remedy.

37. There is not a more trite maxim than that which says, “*that to pay aggression is to encourage wrong*.” nor is there in politics a more useful one, or of more universal application; but it emphatically applies to the United States of America, to whom concession becomes the most effectual appetizer; it reminds us of the wit of a lord lieutenant, who in giving to George II. the character of a certain gentleman in Ireland, said that “if his Majesty would bestow upon him “the crown of his three kingdoms, he would ask the Isle of “Man for a kitchen garden.” In like manner, the Americans having originally received a more extended boundary than reason could have granted, seized upon the British territory west of the Mississippi; then treated for a free access to our

* See paragraph 20

West India Islands, and rejected the same with disdain, because a limitation of tonnage was proposed; obtained a more free access to our East India possessions than our own subjects then enjoyed; seized upon Moose Island in Passamacadie Bay in time of peace, and by the unaccountable indifference of the British negotiators, lately received that island, Dudley, and Frederiek, in the face of every remonstrance from the legislature of New Brunswick; at the same time laid claim to Grand Menan; obtained Nootka, a part of Newfoundland and Labrador, and after thus securing our fisheries, now in a manner under another form, became their own; are endeavouring also, by some means or other, to secure the timber trade of the colonies; for I do highly suspect them, as every person acquainted with the subject must do so, of having united their interests with the Prussians and the other northern powers to this very purpose*; and by placing these in the fore ground, and by thus, as it were, ploughing with other men's cattle, they expect to gain as much or more behind the curtain, than they could do under the recollection of that recent attainment of the fisheries conceded to them by the late treaty.

38. Being left to imagination alone to conjecture the cause of the late concessions, and no other admissible motive occurring to my mind, but that which arises from the prevailing report, though many invidious ones are abroad, I am led to suppose that his Majesty's ministers were induced to grant to the demands of the United States, the fisheries of Newfoundland and the colonies, by the fear of involving Great Britain, at this inauspicious period, in a new war with that country; and as other acquisitions are contemplated by that insatiable republic, it becomes a very desirable object to exhibit the position in which the country of the United States stands, in case they should again have the temerity to hazard so dangerous an experiment as that of going to war with a superior naval power, under the *fallacious hope*, that she may again throw away that superiority, as Great Britain has done in all her contests with that country. By exhibiting *their* weakness and the superior advantages which may be opposed to them, I hope to convince his Majesty's ministers, whatever delusions the Americans themselves or their friends in this country may throw out, that every military and nautical advantage is on the side of Great Britain. I am very far from wishing to attract any credit to myself for a discovery which I know does not

* Paragraph 6.

belong to me, but will freely own that I derive the system, here only sketched, from the received opinions of some of the most zealous friends of these kingdoms, who as military and nautical men, could in both the contests perceive advantages overlooked by their superiors, and which system is recorded to have been approved by our great naval hero, when he was no higher in rank than Captain Horatio Nelson*. I will also in the second place touch upon some financial effects, which I derive from personal knowledge, confirmed by Mr. Bristed's obliging communications to the public†; and in the third place, hint at some commercial means of retaliation possessed by Great Britain, which in the wrathful philippics delivered by the orators of the American republic‡, against this country, have not been so prudently attended to, as might have been expected from persons so experienced, as they usually are, in commercial affairs. The whole of these hints, capable of great enlargement, will, I hope, operate as an inducement to the government of the United States to "seek peace and ensue it;" and to that of Great Britain, to take courage; and, by showing on this side an affection towards our colonists, rely, as we then safely may do, upon their faith and allegiance.

39. For the purposes I have in view, I will divide the country of the United States into three portions, and draw a line from the head of Delawar Bay, at Wilmington, due west, to the foot of the Allegany mountains; which, under various names, run south-west from Cat's-kill, on the Hudson River, in the state of New York, till they lose themselves in Georgia and Florida. The country west of the Allegany will comprehend one division; that south of the Delawar line the second; and that north of it the third. From Long Island, in the state of New York, to Augusta in Georgia, thence down the river Savannah, 230 miles to the sea, and thence along the Atlantic shores back to Long Island, incloses a triangular tract of sandy land, in its nature so barren, that the spots capable of advantageous cultivation are like islands in an ocean, and form exceptions only to the general character of miserable

* I do not pretend to insinuate that the plan here laid down was not *attempted* in the last war; but, alas! how wretchedly! My fears are that the failure may be attributed to the *system* instead of the general execution of it by *commanders in chief*, who withered the laurels of a Wellington and a Nelson; and by *statesmen* who, at the distance of 3000 miles, spoiled what was well devised by imprudent interferences.—(Note (*) par. 45.)

† See paragraph 43.

‡ See paragraph 34.

sterility; the rest of this vast wilderness is absolutely incapable of a thick population; and even what these bounds do contain, are rendered, in a considerable degree, inert by their situation as slaves, or, as slave owners, indolent, not improveable nor hardy: it is a mistake to suppose them warlike; independent of my own observations on these points, I have Mr. Washington's opinion, as well as that of every other author who has written upon the subject of this general character of the southern people; not, however, without many exceptions of great merit; but from this general character I infer, as their revolutionary leader did himself experience and bitterly lament, they are not enduring of privations, nor capable of subordination. Their young men may be induced to arm on an emergency and go through a short campaign: yet their habits and weakly frames are utterly averse from any thing approaching to a laborious, protracted warfare. The inhabitants of those states, which are situated north and east of the Delawar are, on the contrary, by comparison with their neighbours, an enlightened, improving, keen, (rather too keen) active, spirited, and enterprizing people; capable of fatigue, and generally speaking form a good militia, if well commanded. The country south of Long Island, especially the Delawar and Chesapeake bays, is assailable every where, by the means of *suitable vessels**, through its immense waters, which will shelter the fleets of an enemy, anchored beyond the reach of the shores. These waters are also studded with islands, that afford shelter to the small vessels, so convenient to a fleet, and peculiarly so in the warfare here recommended. The whole navigation of this part of the American coast furnishes great facilities to an enemy; for the paucity of the inhabitants on its barren lands, renders the defence of the numerous open cities and towns (located in this miserable country for the conveniency of foreign commerce) a matter of great expence, labour, and difficulty. An enemy can watch his opportunity without the least compulsion upon *his* operations; and attack any spot as from a centre point, within a circuit of many hundred miles; and which, to be always prepared for defence in each quarter, would require immense armies of regular troops; and, indeed it may be reasonably doubted whether any attainable force would be capable of repelling an attack made in a desultory warfare, by well-practised, well-appointed flying squadrons; which is obviously that mode of annoyance the most tantalizing on one side, and the most encouraging, because effectual, on the other. The

* See paragraph 41.

Delawar and Chesapeak are both bays of such extent, as to comprehend a sea coast of from five to six hundred miles each, and the former especially; but both are surrounded with towns, which, in time of war, fit out privateers; if they are assailed in port instead of being chased at sea, the principal means of American retaliation will be cut off. But the divisions forming a fleet under such a system, should be each itself very complete, and capable of a separate or a combined action. If the season of the year is well chosen, an incursion may be made in suitable places, beyond a mere sudden and momentary descent; but notwithstanding the favorable circumstances here enumerated, no army should venture to take post in the United States for more than a few weeks, in the same spot or district, unless under some peculiar situation, force, commander's skill, resources, or extraordinary object in view; but, in America, a protracted incursion is always hazardous: for the militia forces of the interior, from one end of the continent to the other, are, on an emergency, and during a short period, alert, and like hornets when they do come; being numerous and sharp: for every youth in the United States is skilful with his gun at long-shot and bush-fighting; no European troops are an equal match to them under shelter of woods or houses, neither can the Americans on their side stand a charge of the bayonet, in an open country. The attack at Washington was sudden, secret, and of course successful; made with great skill and gallantry; but not more so, as it is said, than that which immediately followed at Baltimore, which failed because the people of the interior had sufficient time to come together, in overwhelming numbers. The expedition to New Orleans had many more bad properties attached to it, than I choose, at present, to speak of; but one of them, and perhaps the most fatal of the whole, was want of secrecy. It was talked of at Paris many months; and at Halifax and Jamaica several weeks before it took place. In truth an incursion should never be made any where in America beyond a safe retreat to the navy, and it is, besides, perfectly unnecessary in the United States; for an active, if secret enterprize, especially if covered by the stratagem of a feint, will command any one desirable object within the time thus limited. The districts south of Long Island are those which will favor this mode of warfare to the greatest advantage; but Long Island sound and Penobscot bay are other points from which this species of warfare may be advantageously directed; and the whole of this coast, from the east end of Long Island, to Passam-Acadie bay, being abundantly supplied with large and small harbours, the privateering mode of hostility is that which greatly prevails there. It

was, therefore, of the utmost importance that Moose Island should not have been given up, and nothing but a want of attention to the rights of the claim, and the value of the object, would have yielded so important a possession. But the ministry which shall witness another war with America, will find, that *coute qu'il coute*, that bay must be cleared of the enemy. These eastern coasts, however, are better inhabited than those to the southward, and the late concessions of the British fisheries will assist in peopling them still more; but their chief employment in time of war, being that of fitting out privateers, activity on the part of their opponents becomes of the utmost consequence; and that activity may be ensured, I would recommend a share of all prize-money to be retained as a fund to be given for the capture of privateers, proportioned to their guns, tonnage, and hands found on board; for men of war and British privateers are not generally very anxious to look out for such prizes, as they usually become the most dangerous to our small cruisers and packets, and at the same time, are not so valuable as merchant vessels; frequently not paying the expences of trial, which are so outrageously increased in the colonies, as to have become a serious hazard to the commanders of His Majesty's navy; and where the pay is so small as it is in that service, must essentially operate against activity and risk of prosecution. Such a bounty, if made important, and not merely nominal, will greatly encourage the desultory warfare on the American coasts; and then it will be found, that, as almost every man in the United States is a trader, the public of that country will be interested in preventing war, when no profit is derivable from it, and the British seamen will have less disposition to desert or resort to the States when they discover that not only there is little chance of employment, but that what there is, becomes doubly hazardous to them, from the probability of detection. But if matters are managed by us as they were during the last contest, the inverse, as it was then, will be produced, and war will be again protracted by the mere effect of partial interest. Though invasion upon the north-eastern coast of the United States may be advantageously used, it must be in some degree varied from that to the southward, and practised with more caution and celerity; for the inhabitants are more expert, more active, more numerous, more condensed, and resident nearer to the shores. That the attention of our commanders should be very principally directed towards destroying privateers in the ports of the enemy in preference to chasing such musquitos at sea, will be evident to every person who recollects the tantalizing situation of the British merchants on the St. George's and Bristol channels, towards the close of

the last American war, by only one or two privateers; whose activity and superior sailing eluded the vigilance of all the cruizers government could, at the importunity of those interested, send against them. If this was the case at that time, let those who are masters of the subject imagine what would be the effect; the same inattention to this object in practice; if Great Britain had no port nearer than Europe to the country of the United States; and yet we can scarcely ever hear the subject discussed, but the ignorant, the indifferent, and the avowed partizans of the United States, do, with perfect calmness, because with secret hope, anticipate how surely those States will one day become possessed of the British settlements in North-America. And I am perfectly of their opinion if, unhappily, the same inattention for every purpose, except deprivation of rights, is continued towards those colonies, which has of late prevailed. But those who will take the trouble to examine the map of the American coast, will instantly perceive, without possessing much military and nautical knowledge, how admirably the peninsula of Nova Scotia is placed to harass, in time of war, the coasts of the United States, when the British fleets do that which they always may, and generally have done—command all that floats upon the ocean. Expeditions with sea and land forces to the enemy's shores are readily made from thence in a few days; and the safe ports of Annapolis Royal, Shelburne, and Halifax are at hand, to receive fleets of any number and size of ships; but that of Halifax is peculiarly favourable to victual and repair them, by possessing better lands in its neighbourhood than Shelburn, though much inferior to Annapolis; and from its accessible, central, and approximate situation to those agricultural parts of the peninsula, which are able to furnish any quantity of provisions for any number of men, which probability can suppose during a war to become necessary*. But divested of Nova Scotia, and I take the liberty, Sir, particularly to address the question to that excellent and gallant admiral, one of the commissioners of the admiralty, than whom no one understands these subjects better; I say, to what other ports can British fleets, whilst Britain has any, resort on that side the Atlantic for repairs, to victual, or shelter, and health, when the congress of the United States, in a fit of spleen, chooses to exclude British ships from their ports by embargo, or exclusion acts, or open hostilities, than those of Nova Scotia and of Halifax in particular, where the British purse has erected such a noble careening-yard?—Where, Sir, in the sickly, or in the hurri-

* See paragraph 19 and the note,—and 31.

cane seasons of the West Indies, would British men of war, and particularly those of the largest size, resort to at all; or, at any rate, so well as to the coast of Nova Scotia, where access, plenty, and safety abound in every season of the year*.

40. Every nation on earth, in offensive and inoffensive operations, possesses its peculiar defects and advantages; but in none are these qualities more marked than they are in the United States; where the great waters, of which it is their custom to be vain, form a striking instance of weakness; for, as we have seen, hostile vessels can there resort in safety, if superior in power to the enemy, and harass him at pleasure. But the whole of the United States waters being shoal, especially those south of New York, (and that of New York will not admit any but the lesser seventy-four's); a hostile marine will require vessels of various force to meet this circumstance. In fact, the builders in His Majesty's dock-yards must greatly improve their marine architecture from what it was during the last war, if they hope to meet the Americans either *in* their ports or *at sea*; they being infinitely our superiors in this science, at present. The time of peace is that which is exclusively proper for such works, and the whole nautical skill and science of the nation, and the utmost prudence of the ministry, ought, in this important branch of public effort, to be exerted, in order that the nation may not again be so disgraced as it was during the last American contest; in which, from a variety of errors, too obvious to the lamenting provincials, Great Britain was worse foiled than in any former instance of her history: for though it must be confessed that she never, in the commencement of any former war, was so completely in the right, as respected the matter in dispute; so never did she come out by mismanagement, more completely humbled in the comparison of military and naval actions, with such a paltry foe. It is true that badly manned ships and long shot actions, are said to have been the principal causes of such misfortunes; it may be so, and I partly believe it; but when the provincials saw such ships as the *Achar*, *Leander*, and *Newcastle*, come out expressly to meet the American frigates, they lamented the ignorance of those who sent them†. I would earnestly recommend it to His Majesty's

* See note and paragraph 19.

† If there is any person that wishes to believe that the British navy lost no credit by losing the ships that were lost, I recommend to him to read Mr. James's *Naval Actions*, a work of great labour and ability; but, as a plain man, I cannot bring myself to look beyond the fact that the ships were taken in fair fight; and that though the French revolution had ceased, and our navy remained at complete disposal, no class of ships was provided equal to the

government to recollect what they owe to a generous nation, like that which it ought to be their pride to conduct to superiority in every respect; and not inflict any further disgrace upon an army to which, next to the national spirit of the individuals who compose it, we are indebted for the high character it possesses, to that illustrious commander-in-chief who has preserved it from the *debasement* OF PATRONAGE; and on that gallant navy, which, when the debasement of patronage, like the plague, shall once thin its decks of skill and science, will again lower its flag to the most contemptible of its enemies*.

41. To the end, therefore, of obviating *one* very important inconveniency to which the operations of the British navy were subject, in the shallow waters of the United States, during the last war, I would recommend to the attention of our naval architects, the principle † adopted by the South Americans of the Pacific ocean, in navigating the rafts called Balzas, minutely described by Don Ulloa, in his work on the Spanish and French measurement of a degree of the Equator, from 1737 to 1745, a translation of which was published by the elder Mr. Stockdale. I have myself seen a vessel built on this principle, which drew little water and sailed well ‡. It is true that the Ameri-

service. The fact is, that we are very little better by comparison now than we were then; for the Americans are improving daily. I fear if our ministers do not have compassion upon the nation, we shall want many able apologists in future contests.

* When I say *contemptible* I speak only by comparison, and with reference to the past; that enemy is becoming formidable with gigantic strides; and when we meet again in combat on the ocean and the lakes in Canada, will bring with him skill, science, and power; and without a due proportion of those requisites on the British side, we shall experience the same disgrace as before.

† Those who are not convinced of the utility of shallow draft vessels, may consult Stedman's 4to. edition of the American war, at the attack of Mud-island, in 1777, to great advantage; and the whole work, if they wish to shun both Scylla and Charybdis.

‡ A model having been built and approved, one of them should be built in England by way of experiment; and if successful when perfected, the timber suitable for a sufficient number, should be provided, stored, and seasoned for use in Nova Scotia and on the lakes in Canada; for I do assure you, sir, that the timber of both those countries is sufficiently durable, if well seasoned, for a fifteen or twenty years warfare at least; and that there is no necessity to send water casks to the fresh water lakes of Canada; or frames of ships to be seasoned by a *double* voyage across the Atlantic, at an enormous expense of freight, as was the case in the last contest; for it is a fact, that the frame of a vessel was sent from England to Canada, where the merchants identified their own marks upon it,

cans are under equal disadvantages of shoal water in defence, as far as it regards their marine, as we are in attacking them; and so sensible are they of their disabilities in this respect, that they know they never can collect a fleet in any one of their own ports, able to contend with such an one as Great Britain would bring against them. They will, therefore, unquestionably from this time forward, use every means, adopt every device to procure such harbours as those of Nova Scotia, which can alone, as it were, *parade* a fleet of sufficient number to form a line of battle, as that line would be reasonably supposed capable of contending with the British power*.

42. The force requisite for a desultory warfare against the United States, should, as it has been just now said, consist of many complete but small squadrons, capable of acting singly or in concert; these should be composed of some powerfully armed and some inferior vessels; an abundant marine artillery; pikemen or lancers exercised frequently at quarter-staff†, cud-gel, and broad-sword; some riflemen, particularly useful for the round tops, where the Americans are sure to place their best shots; and the whole, when practicable, to be taught to take to the shore readily, and to equal the Americans at bush-fighting‡;

which at the peace was sent from Canada, and sold by public auction at Halifax. But to instance the mode of using colonial timber, I will state, that *by way of experiment*, a brig, called the Halifax, was built at the Careening-yard there, by order from home, in the last war; and that part of the timber was growing in my woods only three months before she was launched: and now we shall probably be told that colonial timber is good for nothing, and the Halifax brought as proof.

* This I shall probably be told is to be jealous overmuch; shall I therefore avow the cause of the jealousy? I will confess it; and say, that they have obtained the islands in the bay of Passam-Acadie, to which they brought no more title than they can bring to any part of the peninsula of Nova Scotia; and that unless some means are adopted to put a stop to such concessions, the most fatal consequences will some day befall this kingdom.—See paragraphs 15, 35, 37, 39.

† There is no human being so formidable when fighting in close quarters as an English, Scotch, or Irishman; nor any weapon more useful to him than a quarter-staff; at which the English yeomanry were in ancient terms very skilful. *Query*, could not the lancers, as foot soldiers, be so trained?

‡ If our troops at Crany Island had been properly exercised at embarking and disembarking; if at that fatal affair, a proper time of tide had been selected, they would not have suffered as they did; and if the British troops were but as well skilled in the woods, as

these exercises, with the practice of the great guns, much more generally promoted in the American than in the British navy, will furnish abundant employment in port and at sea, throughout the year. British commanders accustomed to act against nations in other parts of the world, where this mode of warfare is unknown, or not often in practice, when they come upon the American station, either do not know or think lightly, until better taught by the Americans, of those means which become of the utmost importance, on this, to them, new continent, where such arts are, for our safety and national character, too sedulously practised on one side, and too frequently neglected on the other; and which has secured to the former advantages falsely imputed to other causes; even including in this remark, our losses in the long-shot actions, where artillery skill ought not to have been so preponderating as we know it to have been on the side of the enemy; but which has discredited a navy that never suffered disgrace before.

43. The government of the United States, if their coasts are well watched, must labour under the disadvantage of short revenue; and, in default of that requisite, I believe there is no other commercial civilized state so deficient in public spirit; on this subject Mr. Bristed will afford much information and matter for opinion. A loan, beyond a very limited sum, is, in America, according to that gentleman, a desperate expedient, perfectly unattainable; and from the public character abroad, by no means a reasonable expectation there. The pecuniary situation of affairs at Washington, towards the close of the last contest, was such as to convince any real politician, that the United States cannot extend, even under success, hostilities beyond three or four years; but this advantage, as Mr. Bristed informs us, was thrown away upon our rulers, who, under those circumstances, hurried up a treaty, which only required a little procrastination to have brought a contest carried on, even under a series of disgraces on our part, to a favourable issue. To enhance the expenses of such an enemy, becomes, therefore, a species of very useful hostility; and there is no method so effectual to this end, as that of keeping the militia on the alert, and yet never to make an attack at any spot, but under a high probability of success. To keep such an army of regular troops in pay, as would guard the extended barren coasts of the southern

they are in the open plain, the Americans would seldom dare face them. It is the effect of our errors, and not the American prowess which has rendered them formidable: let the British fight those people as they do the French, and they are as sure to beat them.

states, along which their principal cities and towns are situated, against an active enemy, would exhaust the resources of even a country whose commerce, like that of Great Britain, improves by war; but the United States, whose trade and *commercial agriculture* is almost completely cut off by war, must be, in a short time, at the mercy of any nation which possesses greater revenue and power. The militia of America is taken, unlike that of Great Britain, from persons of from sixteen to fifty years of age, not drafted from the great body of the people; but the entire mass itself, old and young, of those ages together; and this constitutes the 300,000 militia, of which their vain boasting writers are so proud. Besides which, an American militia always brings with it the most unconquerably filthy and undisciplinable habits; to which, if we add the carriage of artillery and baggage along their miserable sea coasts, we may then, in a degree, estimate their power and the expense to which the government must be put; and, upon a failure of customs, they can be relieved only by an inland system of taxation; which, in the estimation of a free-born American, Mr. Bristed describes as an intolerable grievance.

44. Let any person, capable of making an adequate calculation, fancy to himself the situation of a country abounding in agriculturists, living principally by the exports of their raw materials during peace;—one half of the inhabitants producing, and the other half carrying those materials to the markets of other nations; but suddenly involved, by a vindictive government, in a war, in the face of every interest the nation owns; and thus cut off from all external commerce, at 3,000 miles distance from any friendly country—unable, but through great risks, to procure the common conveniences of civilized life—obliged, whilst the produce is spoiling in the stores, and the ships rotting at the wharfs, to convey by land carriage, in default of navigation, along deeply indented coasts, of eight or nine hundred miles in geographical extent, the fruits of their industry from port to port, in order to steal the same through the cruisers of the enemy, and thread a labyrinth across the Atlantic, before the traders can offer the same to their former customers at advanced charges. Fancy, I say, such a nation, which, in time of peace, enjoyed an abundant revenue, wholly derived from duties on customs, suddenly by hostilities, which had not a single honourable point to support the horrors of contention, become deprived of that *external revenue*, and obliged to resort to *internal taxation* to support the national expenses of such a war. I say, Sir, when a well informed person can fancy such a scene, he will behold the actual pic-

ture of the United States of America in the years 1812-13-14; and, in 1815, he will see that nation without a single penny in its treasury, or a single friend or ally to lend her a stiver or a sous, boldly come forward, and be suffered to confer upon equal terms with an enemy that, considering the renowned heroes she possessed, might have crushed her in the dust; and yet, by the most wonderful inversion of reason and common sense, be permitted to come off with advantages she did not at first meditate. Was it not rather the duty of a ministry, whose country had been grossly insulted by such claims as the Americans set up against Great Britain (sailors rights, free ships, an abundance of other such pretensions)?—Was it not rather reasonable to expect the ministry would have availed themselves of the distress in which that government had so involved *itself*, and to have insisted upon a relinquishment of such inadmissible claims—and not to slur them over for future negotiations, when a change of circumstances may create a very reversed scene of diplomacy? In fact, this change of position has already begun to show itself, and the unfortunate colonies have been made the first sacrifice; but the recent events in those sacrifices, though the effects are not yet so visible to this nation as they are beyond the Atlantic, may give to those who are able to reflect above the common observations of the people as a mass, some foretaste of what they may expect in future. Let it be recollected that those pretended rights, by the discretion of our diplomatists, are rolled up in the archives of Washington, to be forthcoming at any convenient future opportunity; and that all which has been since yielded, has not erased one iota of the original claims.

45. Great Britain and the States *south* of the Delawar line, are not then rivals to each other in any respect, but the States *north* of that line are rivals to this kingdom in every point of view, and to the northern colonies in a most especial manner. The southern States, though they produce the important articles of cotton, tobacco, tar, pitch, turpentine, flour, rice, and indigo, never convey those articles themselves, and are totally regardless who does convey them to market; they are perfectly indifferent whether it be done by their northern fellow citizens or foreigners, provided they receive the value. But the northern States, in the only articles they produce, such as timber, staves, fish, oil, peltry, ashes, grain, and other articles of agriculture, become the complete rivals of the British colonies. In many articles of States manufacture; in the carrying trade of the southern States; in that of the East Indies and China; and in conveying the productions of Europe to other

countries, the northern States become the commercial rivals of Great Britain herself. In fact, these two districts of the United States have all the most essential properties of two distinct nations; they have little, perhaps no esteem, friendships, matrimonial, or family connexions in common; and generally differ in politics, habits, manners, and moral principles; they are connected by their federal government alone; but that chain, it must be confessed, is secured by a very sure link—INTEREST—the great Moloch of American adoration. Were it not that that union favored the eastern carrying trade of southern produce—were it not that a separate government would weaken them in the estimation of foreign powers, and create a double diplomatic expense, the union of the now United States of America would dissolve in a very short time*. But were the southern inhabitants of the United States capable of appreciating the value of Great Britain to them, they would perceive that she was now the principal customer for their produce; and that if she chose to encourage her southern colonies, situated east and west of her central government in Europe, in producing cotton, tobacco, flour, and many other articles we derive from the States, the demand of *every other* nation would not furnish them with such another market as Great Britain *alone* does. I say, Sir, if such a policy were

* Those who grounded the expedition against Castine, on the flattering hope that they should thereby separate the American union, and afford a rallying point to the disaffected members of the convention at Hartford, committed a very gross mistake. It became the principal means of uniting all parties; as soon as that inconsiderate measure was known, there was but one feeling throughout the United States; the fact was, that no one had seriously contemplated a separation; and the more the subject was agitated, the more obvious the interest became on the other side. But the possession of Castine was a fatal stroke to the descent at Baltimore, for if the fifteen hundred military, and the naval force, which were employed at Castine, had proceeded to the Chesapeake, they would have been just in time to act, in concert with the other forces, against that town, and, together, would have formed an overwhelming power. This plan came from England, and was so generally condemned at Halifax, that no one would credit the report of its real destination, but insisted that the expedition was gone to the southward. It was a want of knowledge of American character that produced the plan, for there was no want of zeal in the execution. The cruelties exercised at Newark had made our troops very resentful.

adopted—and what national interest need prevent such a bounty to the colonies?—what would become of the southern portion of the United States*? It is unnecessary that I

* Indigo was once a considerable manufacture in Carolina, but by reason of the increased attention to that article in our settlements in India, it is now nearly relinquished in the United States. Rice is now fast improving in India, and better seed would still further increase the use of it in Great Britain; if it could be rendered cheaper and better, the use of it would increase in proportion, and until it became an important article of consumption. The growth and cure of tobacco is as simple as of any other agricultural article whatever; and though some favored spots in Maryland grow the *kitesfoot* and some other superior sorts, yet if the growth of tobacco was generally encouraged through the British colonies, in the warmer latitudes, improved sorts would, in every probability, appear in districts, as they do in every other production of the soil. Cotton, like tobacco, will grow in any warm climate, not subject to occasional frosts during the season of its growth; and superior samples are frequently rising in the market, and become as various in quality as new sorts produced from apple or potatoe seed. The Bourbon cotton once carried the preference, and has sold as high as 6s. the pound; then the Robleys, from Bourbon seed, grown in Jamaica, came into fashion, and bore 4s. and 5s.; and now the *sea island* of Georgia has got the preference of all other cottons for the finer fabrics, but at the reduced prices of 2s. to 2s. 9d.; and there is no doubt, as the growth is diffused in the British settlements, new excellencies will unexpectedly appear to aid the changeable fashions of the day. Flour has long been an article of great export from the States; and has undergone, when in demand, the adulteration of *plaster of Paris* and of *white maize*; but any other country, which has twenty weeks to grow spring wheat, the Talavera in particular; or forty for winter wheat, and sixty-four daily averaged degrees of heat to ripen it, will perfect that grain. So that we know that the Cape of Good Hope and Canada, where it has, and several other colonies where it has not yet, been tried, will advantageously admit of encouragement in this particular, whenever it shall please the legislature to bestow it upon the colonies. Under all circumstances, therefore, these kingdoms are under no agricultural obligations to the United States. In regard to our manufactures, that nation will always receive those of England, when price and quality point out the preference, and not otherwise. There is but one way to school an American, and that is by practical illustration; but concession is the very worst expedient to gain favor with that Government.

should put a like question relative to the northern portion of the union, because the embargo system has already solved that problem definitively. Then I would wish to ask—Is it good policy to volunteer into the hands of the Americans, rivals to both Great Britain and her faithful colonists, the articles of fish, already granted—timber, probably now meditated—and peltry, yielded by giving up Nootka Sound by the last most unaccountable treaty? Without which several articles of commerce, those aliens would be divested of their principal ability to commit the meditated hostilities with which they, in every fit of avarice or resentment, are pleased to threaten us.

46. It is a vain effort for human beings to guard against every contingency, be it in war or politics; but in order to render success probable, public as well as private persons adopt certain fundamental principles, from which they never swerve but with great caution; and as private families, who keep their children well employed, stand the best chance of ensuring their happiness, so ought a government to furnish the same means of industry to her own domestic population, and to her colonies, in preference to strangers. I confess it, however, there are cases in which a nation may be forcibly called upon to deviate from this, which is obviously but a general rule:—for example, 1st. When being weak and incapable of defence against a more powerful neighbour, she may be obliged to sacrifice her natural interests to deprecate her enemy, or to acquire the aid of a political friend by his alliance, and make some concession to obtain it.—Thank heaven, this predicament is not among the number of our misfortunes, though the Government, in regard to the United States, has acted as if it were so. 2d. If wishing to encourage a particular domestic manufacture, a nation, on a balance of advantages, is induced to prefer the natural product or agricultural growth of another state, though she, or her colonies, are capable of furnishing her with the same commodities; still the parent state, in good policy, should not *wholly* give up her own colonies in this particular, because we know, from experience, that a political friend may become an enemy in arms, as well as a rival in peace; and then what becomes of the necessary supply in war, if the whole of it is made to depend on such a precarious reliance of friendship? Yet this is precisely the case in the article of hemp, as it was and now is furnished by Russia. One nation should never place its sole dependence upon another, especially if that other nation is equal, or nearly equal, in power; it is one of the surest means to excite hostilities or

children's spinning wheels, and let the other tools and utensils of the farm go to ruin—suffered those children to waste their days in idleness—and of necessity, under such circumstances, to become refractory and inventive in every mischief? Yet we will suppose these parents themselves to be most perfectly industrious, we will even add successful *in their own efforts*—were such parents to suffer their neighbours *to cart their grain for pay*, and perform much other work which their own children on the farm would execute as well, and even more faithfully, would not the neighbours look upon those parents to be deranged in mind, and especially so if the good housewife was in the habit of lying-in, with twins too, at every annual birth? I am inclined to believe the end of such improvident and miscalculating neglect would be, that the parish would interfere, and bind the children out, perhaps by their own consent, to the neighbouring farmers, who, possessing more cunning, and as much industry, as these good people, would employ them to suit their own purposes; but, at the same time, to the superior benefit of the children.

47. You will, Sir, I doubt not, readily apply this apologue to the present situation of Great Britain and her colonies; who, were they assiduously attended to by Government, and, as far as the times would admit of it, kept employed, would become populous, thriving, industrious, grateful, contented, loyal, and affectionate; and if attention to their interests were mingled with that parental prudence, which knows how to indulge and how to reprehend, how to watch, how to observe, and therein *when to see* and *when not to see*—their resident governors would be more popular than they usually are, and the wily tricks of this nation's enemies would be exerted upon them in vain;—though they might envy, they never could seduce them. But it will be found, that to distress the colonies, in order to deprecate the United States, is to inflame the hopes of that government, and induce the two to cast their eyes towards each other.

48. The colonies might be made, more than they are at present, recipients for that redundancy of population under which these kingdoms are supposed, at this time, to be labouring. I say, *supposed*, because I happen to be one of those few who do not subscribe to the generally received opinion that they, at present, are in that state. Be the cause of the existing evils, however, what it may, the facts are two-fold:—

- 1st. That many of the people in England, Ireland, and Scotland, are out of employment; and
- 2d. That they are, consequently, disaffected, turbulent, and sometimes riotous.

One of the great advantages of colonies, in all ages of the world, especially in the days of the Romans, has been that of taking off from the parent state the burthen of a superfluous population; but that wise people made use of colonies to *strengthen*, not to burthen, the parent state, and with that view always placed them in the close neighbourhood of her enemies, for the purpose of awing them; then every Roman was proud of and attached to his country, for the only cause that could attach him—because the parent state made it his interest and his glory to be so. And will any one assert that, with a like attention, Britons are incapable of a similar feeling? No, Sir, on the contrary, I am proud to say, that the colonists hailed with enthusiasm, as ardent as their fellow subjects on this side the water, the numerous victories the British heroes obtained over the French; and only lamented that so few were gained over the enemies in their own neighbourhood. But I know not when and where the advantages of colonies have been, and yet are, so available as in the British settlements of North America; yet do I recollect, that in the last sessions of parliament, one of his Majesty's ministers stated in the House of Commons, that "they possessed an application from Canada, requesting that no more emigrants might be sent to that country;" and this is one other proof how generally misinformed Government is on colonial subjects; but if the whole of the circumstances are once understood, the evil which, I have no doubt, has been stated somewhere or somehow partially, will, on inquiry, be found susceptible of an adequate remedy. When the inhabitants of these parent islands emigrate, they are—

- 1st. Those who possess property, and expect, by removal, to employ it to better advantage than they can do at home.
- 2d. Those who have no property, but expect to be able to live in comparative idleness, or find better pay and employment abroad.

You may be sure, Sir, that the first class will always prove acceptable in every colony, unless to those few prejudiced people who are so grossly ignorant as to hate strangers only because they are such; and some of these are to be found in every colony, not less than in many of the remoter spots in this country. But the second class, *when they arrive alone*, often become a dead weight upon the inhabitants of a colony, for three obvious reasons:—1st. Because they have little wherewith to support themselves. 2d. Because they are frequently of trades which are useless in a new country, and re-

quire too much trouble to be taught anew, or are aged, infirm, or impotent. And 3d. Being too frequently found to be idle and profligate in their habits, the settlers, from experience, are indisposed to receive them as servants into their houses, and dread to suffer consequences which that same jealousy does itself sometimes actually occasion; but good and diligent workmen, of those occupations which are useful in the colony, will always readily find employment; and so far every spot of America, where slavery does not prevail, is a good poor man's country. But bad people arrive more frequently in the British colonies than they did formerly, because the predilection in favor of the emigration to the States is unfortunately wearing off; and that country is not now, so much as it once was, the drain through which the kingdom was happily relieved from much of those impurities, arising from perverted politics, and bad morals, with which all nations are troubled more or less. There are several means of preventing the evils complained of; and as every well-wisher to the colonies sincerely desires to see the tide of BRITISH emigration turned towards our foreign settlements, I will detail those means which are considered the most efficacious, some of which do not appear to have yet fallen under official attention; but every true friend to his country must deplore that most wretched policy which has taken place in Canada, more than in any other province, of admitting American citizens to settlements*; and not only so, but in establishing every possible facility, public highways especially, in order to render that intercourse more easy, which it ought to have been the sedulous attention of the rulers in that country to have closed, if possible, with adamant bars.

- 1st. Government, by official inquiry for the welfare of both countries, should endeavour to become informed of, and should remove, the obstacles which exist to the settlement of vacant lands; and those they will find to be, in some colonies, numerous, inveterate, and difficult of correction, though by no means insuperable.
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* It became a common practice a few years ago, with persons in possession of signories, to advertise in the United States newspapers for settlers of every description to remove to Canada, and especially to the lower part of the river and the Gulph of St. Lawrence. The Nova Scotians dreaded the consequences to the fisheries of such indiscriminate settlements; and the council and assembly, in a joint address, warned his Majesty's government of the consequences:—but to what purpose have they done so?

- 2d. That the difficulty of obtaining lands being removed; the conditions of possession may be made more easy than they are; but be ever rigidly enforced. They are, now, often unreasonable, and are only partially executed.
- 3d. That encouragement should be given to persons of sufficient property to settle *in company*, when they shall have adopted others as servants in proportion to the associated persons embarking, or the number of acres granted; which should be preferably some tract previously selected by an agent of their own number on the spot, sufficiently qualified to form a judgment. The good effects of these measures are already visible at the Cape of Good Hope, and ought to become general.
- 4th. The colonists, now resident, should be induced to appoint committees at the seat of government in each colony, as guides to single persons and families, not connected in company with others; or generally to any persons who may require information of lands vacant and on sale; masters who may want servants; and to draw up printed directions for local information of every thing useful to settlers, as regards seasons, agriculture, method, and produce. This plan has been frequently put in execution, by the laudable zeal of individuals; but it is of so much importance as to require legislative support. Every resident in a colony must have often witnessed the distress of wandering strangers, who were wasting their money and more precious time, under the want of information.
- 5th. Government should not interfere in any other respect than to *regulate*; and to remove obstacles in the way of real *bona fide* settlers; and facilitate the departure of bad, restless characters out of the settlements; and so generally superintended, as to prevent evils at home and abroad; or, as Mr. Burke terms it, "to do good by preventing mischief."
- 6th. Government should reserve no emolument whatever, nor go to any expense: the latter should never be made a pretence for the former; for you will, Sir, find upon inquiry, that when expenditure has been tendered by government, it has very seldom been declined; yet, when accepted, it has seldom produced the good derivable from private efforts; a return,

unless secured with great caution, is generally neglected or becomes invidious by its enforcement; profitable, perhaps, to somebody; but that, upon the whole, the purse of government has never overflowed from this source of revenue; even the United States government, which is tolerably energetic in every measure to procure revenue, is many millions of dollars in arrears for the sale of lands, the payment of which it *dares* not now enforce*.

49. In truth, all *direct* and *personal* taxes upon the people of any colony are hateful to them; they evade them by every means in their power, or they submit to them, only when enforced under the acts of their own legislatures, for municipal or county purposes. The British custom-house duties in the colonies are productive to government, because they are not of a *direct* nature; for being laid upon the articles and paid by the importing merchant; the cost, profit, expenses, and duty become so mingled, that no one inquires into the particulars; if he wants the article, he looks no further than to his means; it is his inclination or his necessity that induces the purchase: but I have known even a *provincial* poll-tax of 2s. 6d. on each male inhabitant above sixteen years of age, though with many other exceptions, so unpopular, that the legislature thought it prudent to give it up. Government should show its wisdom in removing the very seeds of dispute; to render the British provinces happy and satisfied, the advantages which the parent state derives from its colonies should be limited to the following particulars, and a clear understanding in this respect would produce benefits incalculable.

- 1st. The purchase, by the colonists, of the manufactures of the parent state. And be it ever remembered that the amount of this advantage must depend on the number of the inhabitants within the colony and the amount of their prosperity.
- 2d. The custom-house duties *already* imposed upon certain goods landed in the colony†.
- 3d. Those on the importations at home; some of which require to be explained and others reduced.
- 4th. Postage of letters.
- 5th. The supply of the other settlements with the ne-

* 22,996,547 dollars.—See the president's last speech.

† These should be well considered and liberally proportioned to the profits of the article, the ability of the colony, and the indirect effects likely to result.

cessaries with which they cannot supply themselves; and yet afford revenue or employment to the parent state; and without which supplies to those settlements from the other colonies, the parent state could not receive such benefits; for instance, the West Indies and Newfoundland.

6th. Relieving the parent state from a distressed population.

7th. By receiving from the colonies those articles which she does not or cannot herself produce.

8th. As an advanced post, to keep the enemy in check at home, and shield the parent state itself from that annoyance in war, which the experience of the *last* American hostilities, not less than the *first*, proved could not be prevented, when that enemy was not, as he might have been, more effectually attacked in his own ports.

9th. As a nursery for seamen, which in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, &c. for instance, very far exceeds the custom-house returns, by those who are, or were formerly, occupied in the gypsum, and are now in the coasting trade and the fisheries; and in Canada by persons employed in the navigation of the rivers and lakes, and by the North-west company.

50. I beg leave to add a few words on the last of these articles, as it respects the impressment of seamen. The present colonies have never denied, as the old colonies did, the right of the navy to impress seamen in war time; it is a great political question, to solve which they think themselves incompetent; but they claim the same exemptions, and none other, which are, in every exigency or indulgence, allowed in Great Britain; and yet in all the numerous instances which have occurred within the present colonies of excessive infringement of those rules which are laid down by acts of parliament, court decisions, and admiralty orders; (I speak not of trifling instances) I have never known one in which that spirit of resistance was so conspicuous as it appeared on every similar occasion in New England; though we read in history, that impressment was the usual practice in those colonies, to raise forces even *for land service*, when volunteers proved insufficient for the expeditions against the Indians. But, Sir, you may be assured, the indiscriminate manner in which impressment in the Atlantic colonies is generally conducted, is a great evil; and requires the most energetic enforcement of orders from government, if there is any serious intention to apply a remedy to practices

which render the colonists unhappy, and drive British seamen to take shelter in the United States, where they man the public ships and the privateers of the enemy, and where they submit to the severe infliction of American naval discipline, and fight desperately, rather than return to their native service.

51. The revolted provinces have been often and with perfect justice accused of ingratitude, for having requited with rebellion their parent, who had entered into many wars, but that of the *seven years* in particular, entirely on American account: correct as this accusation is, none of the *present* North American colonies up to this day, are chargeable with a debt of this description. Great Britain has fought no battles for them. The debtor side of Mr. Colquhoun's political ledger, folio North American colonies, therefore, contains a gross error. I cannot find a single item of the nature of colonial *defence* or *settlement*, which of right should be placed to the debit of the present Northern Colonies*. Whatever was expended, (and much it is said was wasted, in settling Nova) Scotia goes to New England account; it was for her sake, and at her importunity, *that* country was made a frontier post; and if ever it should be thought worth while to inquire into the case, it will be found that none was ever better suited to the purpose. Cape Breton and Canada were also afterwards conquered to insure the safety of New England. Long did Nova Scotia suffer from French and Indian warfare, before she became free from the murderous consequences of New England security. If Great Britain (notwithstanding her fostering care) and her revolted provinces have had two disputes which have cost each of them two round sums, the present colonies neither promoted the quarrels, nor have they, except in an increase of population, benefited much by them: Canada, indeed, has, on the contrary, suffered greatly by the two contests, in the burning of her towns, and the unjustifiable massacre of her inhabitants†, which it is true has not produced any love towards her enemies. Yet

* See paragraphs 3. 29.

† When Newark, in Upper Canada, was burnt under circumstances peculiarly atrocious, it took place when the thermometer was thirty degrees below zero, and women and children were forced into the open fields to shift as they could; and yet when a retaliation took place at Washington by the destruction of the *public buildings*, and one private house by accident, what a wailing did that inadequate chastisement occasion throughout Europe! But your true republican always assumes privileges he refuses to others.

the present Northern Colonies ask nothing of the parent country but that common justice which shall enable them to recover from those inflictions. If the foregoing statements and the reasoning upon them are generally correct, (and I sincerely believe them to be so) the British North American provinces appear to be well worthy the protection of the parent country; not for *their* happiness alone, but for the sake of the advantages which she herself may derive from them, provided she adopts the proper means of making them productive; and as it does appear that *not expense*, but management, is all that is required to effect this end, it becomes a peculiar hardship that, after all the injuries they have hitherto suffered, the colonies should yet have to contend against foreigners for nearly the only trade yet left to them; and among those foreigners that enemy from whom they have sustained the most severe inflictions.

52. It is now, Sir, high time that I should wind up this address, which I will do by exhibiting the most obvious consequences that would result, *were the colonies of British North America transferred to a rival power*. In the present state of the European continent, it is more than probable the civilized world will generally continue at peace during some years; and that the American interests will (notwithstanding the late angry negotiations between the United States and Spain) have a tendency to become more and more pacific, provided there should be any vigour and wisdom in the councils of the Cortes. It is also highly desirable that peace should continue to exist between Great Britain and the United States. There can be no question that it is essentially the interest of both powers to promote it; but those angry debates and sometimes enactments, which are almost annually brought into congress, are so many instances of irritated feelings, that exhibit a character of ill will in the American government, in spite of our manifold concessions, which keep that nation in a continued fever against this country; but which I believe are cherished more by the government and the orators, to keep up their influence over the mob*, than by that respectable class which constitutes the middling or great mass of the people; and in no country is that class of society better informed or more worthy in every respect than in the United States of America. But as the effects of such angry ebullitions may by chance lead, as they often have before, beyond the bounds of congressional debates; and what *has occurred* in a degree, may, as another emollient, be

* Paragraph 34.

extended to a relinquishment of a more important territory ; I beg permission, by way of a consequence to what may by possibility happen, but with ardent prayers for a better result ; to suppose that those valuable possessions, THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES, are, by some fatality, some secret treaty, some expediency of concession, transferred into the hands of the enemy and rival of these kingdoms, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA* : under such a state of things, I am of opinion, that that nation will have acquired, and then only can possess, every means which can tend to render it truly formidable to Great Britain.

- 1st. The American republic will be placed 3,000 miles beyond assault from any European state whatever.
- 2d. The United States have not, at this time, a single harbour capable of receiving a large fleet of first and second rate ships in safety. I have ventured to challenge any person to point out *one* on the western side of the Atlantic besides those of Nova Scotia, and Louisbourg in an inferior degree, calculated to receive a large fleet of line of battle ships at all seasons of the year†, and to refit them after an accident arising from weather or fight ; but if in possession of the harbours of Nova Scotia, especially that of Halifax, the Americans would become much superior to either England, France, or Spain ; and Britain, France, and Spain are in this particular alike interested in preventing such a general misfortune ; and woe be to them all if they ever suffer such a junction‡.
- 3d. The British West India possessions, which require certain fresh supplies almost weekly, and cannot, therefore, receive them from Europe, will remain at the absolute disposal of the United States in time of war ; which may compel Great Britain, under apprehensions of such an event, to submit to almost any terms they may please to dictate ; but, at any rate, will so greatly awe her councils, as to afford the States an undue influence over them§.
- 4th. The island of Cape Breton and the peninsula of Nova Scotia possess many species of minerals not to be found in the United States, east of the Allegany : coal, gypsum, salt, copper, and freestone§.

* Paragraphs 15 and 41. † Paragraph 19, note (*).

‡ Paragraph 39 towards end. || Paragraph 8.

§ I know there is a coal mine of very inferior quality in Virginia,

53. With coal of such varied and of such excellent quality, so abounding in quantity and so easily worked, aided by the native ingenuity of the inhabitants in the north-eastern division; the United States would soon, so rival Great Britain in her manufactures, especially possessing as they do in the southern country, so many of the raw materials, as to become a very serious, if not fatal opponent to the united kingdom. With the gypsum of Entry Island, one of the Magdalens, they would supply the upper countries on each side of the Canada lakes and the St. Lawrence River: and from the gypsum of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Cape Breton, the whole of the countries east of the Allegany mountains. With salt upon the spot, (for there are several salt springs) and every appearance of mineral salt in Nova Scotia, particularly at the river Phillippe in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; aided by the coal to refine it, almost at the door, there is not a state in Europe which could vie with the Americans in fisheries, even for their domestic supply, except with the support of large bounties and countervailing duties. The copper would always aid the manufactures of the States, for they would not keep the earth closed upon that metal as we do in the colonies. The freestone of Ramshag, in Nova Scotia, is inexhaustible, and equal to the best Portland quality*.

54. I have thus, in the first place, exhibited some of the consequences which will ensue to the Northern Colonies themselves if, in their present distressed situation, they are further borne down by any additional burthen upon their commerce:—2d. I have shown some of the injuries already sustained by them at various times since the American independence:—3d. I have made it appear that those evils probably arose from that want of intelligence in England, which it now becomes necessary to collect:—4th. That this defect has apparently induced our rulers to yield the interests of the colonies to the importunity of foreign powers, not yet

and one of better quality at Cumberland, near the Allegany mountains, in Maryland; and copper, I believe, in one unproductive mine in the Jerseys: but these are not worthy to be otherwise adverted to. All the above articles of coal, gypsum, and freestone, abound in Nova Scotia. The country abounds in other minerals, but many of them are prohibited from being worked, and, therefore, the extent is unknown.—Paragraphs 28, 29, 30.

* A very favorable specimen of this stone may be seen by every visitant of Halifax, in that elegant new building, the provincial state house.

satisfied; and in other instances suffered private interest to prevail over that prudence which matters of such importance required from the hand of power:—5th. I have shown of what utility the Northern Colonies are to the British nation, and how by reasonable and not expensive means, those colonies may become prosperous and happy; and thereby be continued in loyalty and attachment, and be rendered a *support* to the parent state; that this must be effected by means which alone it is in the power, and which it is the duty and interest of Government to afford them:—6th. I have, through the whole of this address, endeavoured, as much as possible, to make appear that distinction between the government at Washington and the mass of the people within the United States, which I am certain exists; that the former, together with the populace, are those only which Mr. Bristed means, when he says, *they so hate and detest us*; but that the middle class of the people are liberal, friendly, and well-wishers to British prosperity*; I have endeavoured to prove, that in war the United States are not formidable, if we then treat them as an enemy, and not merely as a child, a brother, or a sister, estranged for a while; that as traders they certainly are a convenience, like every other nation that takes our manufactures from us; but by no means, even in this point of view, a fit object to be adopted in competition or in preference to our own faithful colonies; that those States are by no means an essential ingredient to British prosperity; nor do they even merit to be considered among the most favored nations:—7th. Induced by very frequent suggestions to myself, by persons who have seemed to *fish* for information, I have supposed a case which becomes a complete answer to those inquirers; and which I think renders it evident that the possession of the Northern Colonies by the United States would afford to that country advantages over other nations, and over Great Britain in particular, which in every probability would lead to consequences of a most fatal tendency:—and 8th. I have, as I hope, made evident to every candid mind the truth of those principles with which I set out, and then adopted as guides to my own progress in this address†, and as axioms of the highest importance to this government, to the colonies, and to the nation at large; but not yet sufficiently accepted or understood by those characters who have it chiefly in their power to give to them their due effect.

55. If, in this address, I am thought to have been guilty of indiscretion, in thus bringing forward circumstances which some

* Paragraph 34.

† Paragraph 2.

persons may be of opinion ought to have been buried in oblivion, I beg it may be considered that the present situation of the colonies is very critical to them; that they have no ostensible friend in parliament or representative there, invested with their interests, or acquainted with their past or present affairs; and yet that that honourable body is about to be called on to decide *ex parte* upon a proposed duty, which the colonies *under their present depression* are vitally concerned in and *inadequate to the support of*; that past experience renders it doubtful how far the consequences of a further accumulation of sufferings will be fairly appreciated in the face of a favourite scheme, in the other quarter where they should, but have not always received attention; and that, partly from my own observations and experience, confirmed by the opinion of one far better versed than I am in public documents and intelligence, the officers of the Board of Trade are not acquainted with the facts so essential to be known in order properly to judge of the effects likely to result from the present proposed measure, or the reasoning within the colonies to be expected from it. The foregoing observations are the fruit of a residence of forty-six years, past at frequent recurrences in the now United States, in England, and the colonies, with a continued desire to learn their several interests, which I consider to be inseparable between Great Britain and her colonies. But having in the pursuit of this object been favoured with the means of obtaining, as I think, accurate information, I have expressed my opinion on the subject with a confidence, I trust, not too high, (because all that is past is supportable by proof, and all that is anticipated by the highest probability) and with that unreservedness which the urgency of the case appears to require. Retaining, therefore, as I do, a knowledge of some circumstances and events, not generally possessed by others, but interesting to the colonies and this nation, and having nothing to hope, or to fear, I have made up my mind, though reluctantly, and after long suppression, through your name, Sir, to make these matters public; and leave it to those who have the power, to act in the premises as they see fit.

56. If I am told that I might have made these facts and sentiments privately known to those in power, instead of publishing them to the world; my answer is, that, the cold repulsion of every proposal not made by a person of official rank, is enough to disgust the zeal of *independent* loyalty; but where is the official man that will submit unpleasant truths to the minister on whom he depends for promotion? In the

course of a long life, the person who now has the honour to address you, Sir, has often endured the mortification of that feeling*; but now that his zeal has become nearly extinct, he conceives it to be his duty at this crisis, to place upon paper this imperfect epitome of a much more extended collection of facts and reasoning; and which he yet flatters himself he shall be able to complete, in a manner to be of some use to the society of which it has pleased Providence to constitute him a member.

57. To the government of the United States I have no other apology to offer than the view I have already taken of its inimical conduct towards Great Britain and her colonies. After pilfering our fisheries, I now see it aiming, as I verily believe, at the acquisition of our colonial timber trade†, the loss or even diminution of which will be most ruinous or injurious to the colonies, and, eventually, a serious injury to Great Britain herself. Yes, Sir, with the proud consciousness of ranking among the most loyal of his Majesty's subjects, with an apprehension prompted by that feeling, I see the federal eagle, like a bird of prey, watching the colonies situated near her own nest; and, in anticipation, exulting in the acts of the British rulers: acts, which she herself, from *policy*, not less than from *avarice*, and they from *misinformation*, have promoted.

58. To you, Sir, alone, I am of opinion, I ought to offer an excuse for the liberty I have taken of making use of your name without license; but when, after a debate with myself, I came to consider that there was *nothing personal to you* in

* Notes (*) and (†) to paragraph 46.

† To prove an act of state policy, or the secret confederacy of other nations, in as complete a manner as we are expected to do in a suit in a court of law, is out of the power of any *private* man; but whoever takes the trouble to consider the *interest* which the United States have in imposing duties on British colonial timber, perhaps, also, for we are mainly in the dark on this subject, *in taking duties off from their own* (see paragraph 6.), how they have acted on some occasions (paragraph 14, note (*) to paragraph 36.), and the manner in which they have since their independence, in very numerous instances, been embroiled with other nations (see paragraphs 35 and 37), it will, I think, be conceded, that the suspicion is so strong, that it amounts to something bordering on proof. It certainly is not a measure *hostile* to their interests, or we should have seen the arguments against it in their files of newspapers, mixed up with the disgusting trash of their daily abuse of every British transaction.

this address, and that, as president of the Board of Trade, such a report from your office as these sheets contain, would, one day, perhaps, become necessary for the due information of his Majesty's ministers, I did not hesitate to adopt the means most likely to attract their attention; which I am confident is all that is necessary to produce the desired effects, of saving the colonies from the danger impending over them, and of rendering them, what I am convinced the ministry wish, *a happy portion of* HIS MAJESTY'S EMPIRE; than which nothing in this life can so highly contribute to the satisfaction of him, who has the honour to subscribe himself,

- Sir,

Your most obedient
and very humble servant,
WILLIAM SABATIER.

London, March 22d, 1821.