LETTER

TO

THE HON. FRANCIS HINCKS,

BEING

A REVIEW OF HIS REPLY

TO

MR. HOWE'S SPEECH,

ON THE

ORGANIZATION OF THE EMPIRE.

LONDON:
JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.
1855.

LETTER.

SIR,

THAT you should have rushed into print on the publication of my speech in England, does not surprise me. There were some things in it calculated to give offence, and matters discussed on which I have long known that we entirely disagree. As you were on the spot the keenness of your criticism was one of the unavoidable perils of publication, and as that was foreseen, it must be good humouredly encountered. I would, however, rather review your reply than have you complain that the speech was published here in your absence.

Before grappling with your main arguments, permit me to set myself right upon one or two points, and first, as to the passage which you assume to have been aimed at you. When that passage was spoken, I freely admit that I was in no humour to take the most amiable view of your public conduct upon the Railway question, and believed that the expressions used were warranted by the subject and the occasion. The speech, you must remember, was spoken sixteen months ago, long before the Select Committees to which you refer were appointed, and at a time when the Press and Parliamentary speeches in Canada teemed with accusations, that up to that

period had not been met or disproved. The reports, which you state contain your vindication, were only made during the last session. They have not yet reached me, but when they do, permit me to assure you that nobody will more sincerely rejoice than myself to find the exculpation complete. In justice to Nova Scotia, however, you should acknowledge that these imputations did not originate there. They came to us from Canada. It was roundly asserted in that province that you had been concerned, with the Mayor of Toronto, in a transaction so gross that the "Court" of Chancery had inserted on its "records" a sentence, by which that officer (the only one against whom the bill was filed), had been compelled to restore to the Corporation his share of the profits jointly made. It had been asserted that on the Stock Book of the Grand Trunk Railway Company, your name was found standing opposite to £50,000 of paid up stock, and that, from being no richer than most colonial politicians usually are, you had, within a marvellously short space, become extremely wealthy. All these things were said in Canadian newspapers of the highest respectability, and by members of the Legislature holding prominent positions, before my speech was made. To such an extent were these statements credited in Canada that the Liberal party was broken up, and Sir Allan McNab came in at the head of a new combination, from which you were excluded. These charges, you say, have all been disproved. Of the extent and cha-

racter of the vindication I shall soon inform myself by reference to the reports, and in the meantime permit me to repeat that I shall sincerely rejoice if it should be satisfactory.

As you have thought it worth your while to favour the world at large with ten pages of comment and explanation with reference to our Railway negociations, I can scarcely pass them over without a few remarks, although nothing would be more unseemly than any attempt of ours to interest the British public in our past differences of opinion. From the account you give of them it would be extremely difficult to comprehend the nature of my negociations with her Majesty's Government, or of your own. A few explanations will suffice to define our relative positions and policy.

The idea of a great Intercolonial Railway, to connect the British provinces with each other, originated with Lord Durham—that of a shore line, connecting Europe and the United States, through the Lower Provinces, was suggested at the Portland Convention. The Trunk for either, or both of those lines, would pass for 130 miles through Nova Scotia. After several years had been spent in unavailing efforts to construct some portion of these works by companies, with aids and facilities from the Provincial Legislatures, I induced the Government of Nova Scotia to assume the responsibility of borrowing the funds required to construct her own. I also suggested that if the Imperial Government could be

induced to guarantee the loans required by the Provinces to complete the system, a vast amount of money might be saved, and that the works would thus be remunerative at a much earlier period than if constructed in any other mode.

I came to England to press this policy on the Imperial Government, and I laboured here until my efforts had attracted to it the favour of the Press, of the House of Lords, of the Citizens of Southampton, and of many influential Members of the House of Commons. The Government then yielded, an apparently cheerful assent, and the guarantee was promised in a public despatch, which was at once forwarded to all the Colonial Governments.

Knowing that the consent of New Brunswick could not be obtained to the arrangement unless it included a provision for connecting her chief seaports with the system, and that if the shore line were provided for we should command the passenger traffic with the United States, and build up upon British territory fitting rivals to the great commercial cities of the Republic, I argued throughout that both Lines were essential to the preservation of British interests and dominion, and ought to be provided for. For six months, the people of British America, with the official Despatch in their hands, believed that the guarantee was given for both. As matters have turned out it is apparent that it might have been safely given, for the revenues of all the Provinces have so largely increased that they are

now enabled to borrow all the money they require without the aid of the Imperial Government, utterly irrespective of the paying properties of their Roads. But it subsequently appeared that Earl Grey only meant that the guarantee should be given to the Trunk Line alone.

Now you argue that, for all the consequences of this misconception, blunder, or second thought, whatever it may have been, I only am to blame. Suppose that this were true—that I really did erroneously assume that Earl Grey designed to do more good than he really intended, the error would be venial. But had I no foundation for this belief? We shall see.

It is true that I expressed to Sir John Harvey, in my letter of the 11th of December, 1851, my "regret and deep mortification" that I had misunderstood the views of Her Majesty's Government. With Earl Grey's despatch in my hand asserting the fact, I was bound to assume at the moment that I had. A little reflection, however, convinced me that I had hardly done myself justice. I mean to do it now, and I am much obliged to you for affording me the opportunity.

When I put myself in communication with the Colonial Secretary in 1850, I was aware that misunderstandings had sometimes arisen as to matters of fact, where interviews had been obtained by persons connected with the Colonies, and subjects discussed in an informal manner. I determined to

avoid these, if possible, and therefore invariably sent to Earl Grey my own Reports to the Provincial Government of what had passed, for his Lordship's inspection and approval. Mr. Hawes's letter to me, pledging the guarantee, was dated on the 10th of March. On the 13th I addressed to the Deputy Secretary of the Province a Report to accompany that letter. This was sent to the Colonial Secretary for inspection, as all my reports were. You say that they were "not read." But should they not have been read? If they were not, there was gross negligence, which no public officer could have defended on the floor of the House of Commons. If they were, then with what face can you assert that the officers in Downing Street "were wholly unaware that I believed them to be committed to a scheme which they had not entertained." That these reports were read I have the best reason to believe, because one of them was cancelled at Earl Grey's request; but that they should have been, if they were not, is just as apparent as that any Minister's interpretation of a treaty, about to be sent to his own Government, should, if submitted, be read by the Government to which he was accredited, in order to avoid the possibility of future misunderstandings. Hereafter, I doubt not, that even you will agree with me, that others, and not I, are responsible for the six months' waste of time, and that it would have been better for all parties concerned if my "letters" had been "read with sufficient attention."

Your reference to the "speeches," which were not read, you will find to be equally unfortunate. I do not refer to half a dozen, made in different parts of British America, and regularly sent to Earl Grey during the summer of 1851, because I have no proof that his Lordship did read them, and certainly no desire to contend that they were worth reading. But, on my return to Halifax, in the spring of that year, I made a speech, in the Mason's Hall, in which I not only expanded my views of Imperial and Colonial policy, as connected with internal improvements, immigration, and the employment of destitute British subjects on British soil, but described the proposition made by Mr. Hawes, as I understood it, with unmistakeable distinctness: arguing with the people of New Brunswick, in a series of calculations, that, by accepting that proposition, they would get both the great works, essential to their prosperity, for about the same amount that one would cost if they rejected the guarantee. I must have been a bold man to have made that speech, believing that I was in error. He will be a bolder, who asserts, if Lord Grey read it in June, and never informed all British America until the end of November that I had misunderstood him, and that we were self-deceived, that he could have been defended on the floor of Parliament, or anywhere else; and that a British Colonist, with such a case in his hands, need to have been much afraid to hold up his head before

six hundred English gentlemen, who, whatever their other faults may be, are dear lovers of fair play.

Now, I have never proved, but you compel me to prove, that Earl Grey did "read" and sanction that speech. It was sent to his Lordship on the 28th of May. It was acknowledged in a note signed "Grey," and dated "Colonial Office, June 12, 1851." As this note was marked "private," I have ever declined to publish it, and in consequence have borne much misapprehension which I ought not to have borne. Read it, and then ask yourself what you would say of the statesman who read such a speech of yours; who wrote you such a note; and who, five months after, wrote to your official superior to say that you were self-deceived. "I received," says his Lordship, "your two letters of the 28th of "May, but I have little to say, beyond thanking "you for them, and expressing the gratification "your report of what is going on has given me. I "think all you have done about the Railway very "judicious, and without flattery I may say that I "do not know when I have read a better or abler "speech than that which you made at the public "meeting. I feel very sanguine of the ultimate "assent of New Brunswick to the measure as pro- "posed, and that we shall succeed in getting this "most important work, destined, as I believe, to "effect a change in the civilized world, accom- "plished."

An unskilful defender or eulogist often does more injury than an open opponent, and I am under the impression that Earl Grey will not thank you very much for your defence of what is indefensible, or for your assertion that my "letters and speeches were not read."

Were I disposed to attribute to the great contractors whom you have named, the acrimony that runs through your pamphlet, or to revive the bitterness of past controversy, I apprehend that they would thank you just as little. With those gentlemen I have never had any personal quarrel, and do not intend to have any now. They have withdrawn from all interference with the Railway policy of Nova Scotia, and however attained, Nova Scotia respects too much the position which they have acquired in British America, to desire unnecessarily to interfere with them. By a few very simple contrasts I could show how deeply those gentlemen "were interested," and what strong temptations they had to "interfere." That they did so, from the time that they sent an agent to Toronto in the spring of 1851, down to the final signing of their contracts with you in 1852, every man in British America believes. We may charitably hope that you, in making those arrangements, thought only of the interests of the Province, but that the contractors looked after their own interests, and played their game with great energy and adroitness, even you will scarcely deny. There is hardly

one of them with the power of face to back your statement, or who will pretend that their interests did not lie all in favour of the popular presumption. My policy was, after securing the money at the cheapest rate, to leave the Provinces free to get their roads built at the lowest price, by open public contract. Theirs obviously was to secure the construction of 1000 miles of railroad, at their own prices. I have never asserted that these gentlemen "exercised any influence with Lord Derby's Government," but that they had influence with the Government of which Earl Grey was a member, and of which they were all supporters, even you I think will not deny; and that, having influence, they would use it in a matter involving a profit of a million of money, I am credulous enough to believe.

But, assuming that those gentlemen have been of great advantage to British America, that their policy was the best, then I think that you ought to be the last person to sneer at my labours here in England, which first turned their attention towards the North American provinces. Mr. Jackson publicly asserted in presence of thirty gentlemen in Nova Scotia, that but for Joseph Howe's able expositions of the resources of British America, neither he nor Mr. Peto, Mr. Brassey, or Mr. Betts, would ever have thought of embarking their resources in their railways. If then Canada has largely benefited, and you have made a fortune by their operations, do be

civil and grateful to the person who made you acquainted.

> Be to his faults a little blind,
> And to his virtues very kind;

And "clap the padlock," if not on "your mind," at least on your restless right hand, when you feel inclined to attack him.

On your own railway negociations I am inclined to touch tenderly. Assuming that you were sincere and disinterested in all you did, I have no doubt that you had your own trials. You attribute most of them to my absence, but I am inclined to believe that on that, as on another celebrated occasion, the absence of a delegate from Nova Scotia was considered rather as a relief than a misfortune. However, you might have candidly told your readers the true cause. That being most unexpectedly unseated on a point of form, after my engagement to accompany you, I was compelled to spend the winter in canvassing a large county, and in running a heavy and anxious election. Had I been here I am quite sure that you and I would not have agreed. The quarrel with Sir John Pakington might have been avoided, but the results of the negociation would have been the same. As it was, you did the very opposite to what you professed you meant to do, when you came over. You came confidently declaring that Canada would aid New Brunswick in making a line by the River St. John, and that the guarantee would be given to that line if

we would consent to it. We did consent, and New Brunswick, which was simple enough to listen to the blandishments of Mr. Hincks, has been left three years without a mile of finished railroad in any direction, while the State of Maine enjoys all the advantage of your diplomacy. You came professing to repudiate Companies, and to build your roads as Government works, and you ended by throwing our common policy overboard, and rushing into the arms of the great contractors. The chief reason you gave was, that when the Imperial guarantee was withdrawn, their influence in the English money market was necessary to enable us to command the funds, and that their skill and experience were indispensable to the permanent construction of the line. The results show that Nova Scotia can construct roads with her own contractors as good as theirs, at two-thirds of the cost, and that while all the Provinces can command as much money as they require, upon their own resources, Canada is compelled to advance nearly a million of bonds at a time to enable your Company to float their stock, and get their lines completed.

Such being the facts, patent and notorious to all the world, take an old friend's advice, and do not be too ready to appropriate to yourself doubtful compliments. Let bygones be bygones, and if there is any little good that we can yet do on the face of the earth, let us set about it in a spirit of mutual forbearance.

Your defence of Lord Elgin's treaty could not have been rendered necessary by anything in my speech, because, permit me to remind you that the speech was made some months before the treaty, and long before it was known to me that Lord Elgin was to be charged with that service. But, perhaps you thought that the treaty required defence, or it may be that you have a taste for defending all the Lords you know. It would have saved Sir John Pakington some trouble had you been equally indulgent to the Baronets.

Not having been a Member of the Government of Nova Scotia at the time, I am under no obligation to defend its conduct against the charges you have preferred. But I heard the Members of it defend themselves in Parliament, and I do not hesitate to say that you have deeply wronged them. Now what are the facts? Lord Elgin, absent from his Government on leave, in a private note, informs Sir Gaspard Le Marchant that he is coming out to the United States to negociate, and desires his Excellency to send on a gentleman to confer with him. In the meantime an official letter comes down from Canada, addressed by the Administrator of the Government of North America (Sir Gaspard's official superior at the time, bear in mind) to his Excellency, instructing him to select Delegates, and informing him that notice would be given of the time when, and place where, the Delegates were to meet Lord Elgin. No notice of time or place

was ever given, and before the two gentlemen who had been selected were informed to what point they were to repair, Lord Elgin had rushed in hot haste to Washington, and alienated a national property of more value than I can describe. The defence made by the Government of Nova Scotia, in reference to this transaction, was perfect. The House almost unanimously held them blameless.

Though myself a warm admirer of Lord Elgin —a supporter of his administration from first to last—and indebted to him for much personal courtesy, I condemned his conduct in this transaction, upon the facts as disclosed in the papers. It did appear to me, that in this age of telegraphs and railways, His Lordship might have waited four days, even to avoid the appearance of marked discourtesy and injustice to an ancient and loyal Colony, whose birthright (for she was the only Province deeply interested in the inshore fisheries) he was about to barter away. "Kill, but hear me," was never considered an unreasonable request. Nova Scotia had ever treated Lord Elgin with personal respect. She nobly sustained him when he and you were driven from the capital of Canada by those who complained of a similar surprise. Nova Scotia, had a sacrifice of interest been required of her, for the general advantage of North America, would have gracefully made it, but those know little of her who fancy that she will ever sacrifice her dignity and self-respect; and her conduct throughout this trans-

action any of her sons could defend in either House of Parliament.

Since I came into England I have been honoured by Lord Elgin's personal explanations on one or two points of this controversy, and, however unfortunate I may still think it was that ground was left for the impression, I entirely acquit his Lordship of any design to exclude Nova Scotia from the discussion. I believe that he and Sir Gaspard Le Marchant were both mystified by the stupid despatch which came down from Canada, of which the former knew nothing, but which the latter was bound to obey.

But such questions as this, are eternally arising in or with reference to some Province of the Empire, and do you not perceive, that, when they do arise, there is no common platform where they can be discussed and adjusted?

In 1852 you suddenly threw over a great scheme of inter-colonial policy—sacrificed the interests of the maritime Provinces, and of the Empire at large, and added, at least, a million to the necessary cost of the Trunk Line through Canada. Your defence was, that you had been driven to do all this, not, as you now allege, by the absence of Mr. Howe, but by the discourteous and unstatesmanlike conduct of Sir John Pakington and Lord Derby. Well, what happened? Both those officers went down to their places in the Imperial Parliament, explained and justified their conduct, and left the universal impres-

sion in England, that Mr. Hincks, assuming that the rage had not been put on for the benefit of the great contractors, had acted very like the angry Boy in the Alchemyst, and had, at least, sacrificed a great scheme of national policy to an unpardonable vanity, or an unfortunate infirmity of temper.

You went home to the Canadian Parliament, and there you left the contrary impression. A majority were made to believe, that from Lord Derby and Sir John Pakington you had received most scurvy treatment; and, under cover of the virtuous indignation thus excited, your Railway Contracts were sanctioned and approved. I regret that your speeches and letters are not beside me, but I well remember the tone and temper of them. Not a word did we then hear about the "high position which a Canadian Minister occupies in the eyes of the world." Your argument then was, that being a Canadian Minister, accredited to the Imperial Government, you had been treated with marked indifference, if not with sovereign contempt.

But my argument is, that, besides the two parties to this controversy, there were the British people, and the people of British America, whose interests were involved in it, and sacrificed by the rupture of the negociations; and I contend that the Empire should afford the means for a fair discussion of all such questions. I say, let not error be propagated on both sides of the Atlantic, which, when such questions arise, leads to irritation and aliena-

tion, but let us have a fair and full discussion somewhere, and ascertain where the truth lies. Let not Mr. Hincks go to Canada, and abuse Lord Derby, or Sir John Pakington go down to the House of Commons, and disparage Mr. Hincks; but let them both be brought face to face before six hundred gentlemen, representing the whole Empire, that every man in the Empire may thereafter know what he is to believe.

What is true of your case is true of my own. What remedy had I in 1852, when Lord Grey's Despatch shattered the noblest scheme of Colonial policy ever devised,—a scheme, which was calculated, to use his Lordship's own language, "to effect a change in the civilised world." None whatever suited to the magnitude of the wrong, or of the occasion. Borne down by the weight of authority which I had no means of resisting here, I would have given all that I was worth or ever will be, for the opportunity of appealing from Earl Grey to the House of Commons—for the chance of winning, from the Imperial Government, a reconsideration of my policy. I might have failed, and so might you, and so might Mr. Johnston, had he come here to complain of the treatment of his Province, or of himself, in the Fishery negociation. But what then? We should all live and die with the satisfactory reflection, that we had been heard. Our own people would not justify us when we were wrong. Sources of irritation would be removed and general princi-

ples, applicable to the whole Empire, would be evolved by every fresh discussion.

I come now to your reference to our Mines and Minerals, and I cannot but express my surprise at the *ad captandum* and flippant style in which you have discussed a subject of such importance. You used to have a keen eye for a grievance, but I fear prosperity has clouded your vision. You used to strain at a gnat, and now you can scarcely see a camel.

Let me suppose that all the Mines and Minerals beneath the surface of England, Ireland, and Scotland, except what lay under land granted seventy years after the first settlement of either kingdom, had been improvidently granted away to a Royal Duke, transferred to his creditors, and were held at this hour in close monopoly by a Company which only worked two or three over the whole broad surface of the three kingdoms. How long would such a monopoly last, in presence of that Parliament which has abolished the Slave Trade, the Rotten Boroughs, the Corn Laws, and the exclusive privileges of the East India Company? Not a year. Yet this is the grievance of Nova Scotia.

You argue that, because the Legislature gave corporate powers to the Mining Association, and because an old Parliamentary report acknowledged that their operations had been beneficial up to a certain time, that therefore this lease should not be disturbed. But had the East India

Company—the Borough-mongers, and the Slave-holders, no Legislative sanction? Of course they had; and could not I, or any body else, consistently condemn the Company's monopoly, while admitting that India had been benefited by its operations? Might I not admit that the owner of Old Sarum generally made judicious selections of Members of Parliament, but would that warrant his exclusive possession of what belonged to Birmingham or Manchester? Might not a Parliamentary Committee report that the Planters of a particular island were considerate and humane, but would that justify slavery there or any where else? Such arguments would not avail even to amuse the House of Commons. This lease would only require to be aired there for an evening or two to go the way of all monopolies—to be universally condemned.

But I have ever separated from this act of the British Government, which the British Government, at whatever cost, should cancel and recall, the acts of a body of British merchants who bought the lease, and, upon the faith of it, have expended their capital in mining operations within the Province. To these gentlemen, individually and collectively, I have ever done justice. Some of them are my valued personal friends. They know my opinions and respect them, and they know that while I believe that her Majesty's Government is bound to adjust this question—that while I believe that it is for the true interests of the Company that it

should be adjusted, I have never contemplated or would be a party to any act of spoliation or injustice.

But let me fancy that all the mineral wealth of Canada, except what lay under a few old seigniories on the St. Lawrence, were thus locked up. What would the people of that Province do? Resort to the old mode of furnishing facts to Members of Parliament, and sending addresses and agents to the bar of the House of Commons, as they did for half a century? No. They would resort to their more modern and more effective expedients—a successful or an unsuccessful rebellion. They would burn down a Parliament House and pelt a Governor-General.

Now, it is because I desire, in the management of this great Empire, to avoid the delays and irritation inseparable from the old mode of discussing grievances, and the perils of the new, that I seek to secure a common platform where they may be discussed and settled. I think it beneath the dignity, and insulting to the intelligence, of the great Provinces of this Empire, that they should be asked to fee or to cram some Member of Parliament to plead their cause, or to send a hireling advocate to implore attention to their grievances at the bar of a legislative body from which their people are systematically excluded. It may suit you to ignore this very rational demand; and, looking only to the paramount object of floating Railway stock, with an

awful ponderosity, to paint the colonial condition *coleur de rose*, but I have watched too carefully the developement of the colonial mind, and studied too long the imperfect organization of this Empire, to believe that the adjustment of this question is dependent on the temporary prosperity or tranquillity of any particular Province or cluster of Provinces —on the personal influence or opinions of any particular individual. We are but on the threshold of this great discussion—the greatest, let me tell you, in which the men of the present day were ever yet engaged. This is not a question which you or I could, if we would, control. It is not a question which concerns Canada or Nova Scotia only—it concerns India, Australia, New Zealand, Jamaica, Ceylon, and the Cape. It concerns every Province into which the British races have gone, and thriven, and bred a native race with all the characteristics of the parent stock. It will presently concern even Canterbury, the youngest born of that great Family of Nations which I wish to keep together. You and I will soon float like bubbles upon the surface of this great discussion, which will swell far beyond the ordinary sphere of our influence—the narrow circumference of our ideas.

You seem to think that my official position should restrain me from discussing this great question. If it did I should not be very long in office. While I honourably fulfil my official obligations to the Government of Nova Scotia, it has no right to com-

plain at the free expression of my opinions on any topic of general interest. This is a question of imperial dimensions—it involves the integrity of a great Empire—the allegiance of millions of Her Majesty's subjects. Is my local position, as an officer of a single Province, to circumscribe my rights and duties as a British subject, as a citizen of that Empire? God forbid.

I never pretended that I spoke the sentiments of the Government of Nova Scotia, or that the Legislature of any Province in British America had taken action upon this question. Mr. Johnston's object in moving his resolution, and mine in discussing it, was to set the people in all the outlying portions of the Empire thinking on a subject of common concern. To give a wider range to the discussion was the motive for the publication of my speech. My object has been attained. It would have been premature for Nova Scotia to have come to any direct action upon this question, until the subject had been agitated far and wide. That I have truthfully delineated, upon many important points, the feelings of all our Colonies I firmly believe. That wide differences of opinion may exist as to the best mode of attaining a more perfect organization, is more than probable. That English prejudices may stand in the way, and Colonial prejudices also, I quite anticipate. But I do not care for all this, because, in attaining Responsible Government, we had greater difficulties to encounter with less sufficient means.

Twenty years ago, when Robert Baldwin, myself, and a few others claimed for the British Provinces in North America the political privileges which they now enjoy, there were hardly ten men in England who did not believe we were mad, and powerful parties existed in all the Provinces opposed to any change of system. The system has been changed, and what are the results? Read them in the subsidence of irritation—in the settlement of old questions—in the free competition for the prizes of public and social life within the Provinces themselves—in the diffusion of education, and in the rapid march of internal improvements of every kind. All these wonders have been wrought out, in a few years, by the action of Colonial intellect left free to operate over our internal affairs. But have we no external relations? with our British brethren—with our foreign neighbours? with each other? with French, and Danish and Spanish Colonies? with the Commercial States of Europe, Asia and Africa? Of course we have. Now, what I want is, that the Colonial mind should be called in to aid in the discussion and adjustment of such relations. That the Queen should have the benefit of the advice of her Colonial subjects on all such questions—that Parliament should consult with them—that the people of the British Islands should be taught to regard them as parties concerned—to respect and to rely upon them. Is this an unreasonable request? It may indicate unpardonable presumption, but I fear

not to express the opinion, that even upon purely British questions our advice might be useful; that Mr. Hincks might be of service in the House of Commons, when such subjects as decimal coinage are under discussion, and that even Mr. Howe might have thrown into the debate on the Limited Liability Bill a little of transatlantic experience.

But you tell me, that I may go into Parliament now. Why, I may go into the American Senate or into the Chamber of Deputies, by changing my country and qualifying for the position. You or I, in the House of Commons, unsustained by Colonial associates—representing no Province—clothed with no Colonial confidence or authority—would much resemble a certain animal without claws, in a place that shall be nameless. We should be, in fact, English representatives of English cities or boroughs, rather remarkable for having strong colonial tendencies, which were always put aside when the interests or the prejudices of our constituents were concerned. But ten North Americans, clothed with the authority of half a continent, enjoying the confidence of millions of people, would stand in a much higher position. They would be listened to with respect, and, even if only permitted to address the House of Commons, without voting, would render essential service to the Empire.

You assert that "the present Colonial system is all that can be reasonably desired." Let me disprove the statement by a single pregnant illustration.

The Russian Empire, broad as it is, contains but 60,000,000 of people. The British Empire contains 130,000,000. Now, how does it happen that when these two Empires go to war, the one that has the smallest amount of population is able to hold in check her rival, who possesses more than double her numbers? Will you pretend that but for the military aid of France, Great Britain, on the land, would be any match for Russia? How long would our unaided forces beleaguer Sebastopol? How long could they protect Constantinople? The fact is startling, that the physical resources of the smallest population outnumber those of the larger in the field. Now why is this? Simply because the one Empire is organized throughout, and the other is not. Because every Russian is made to feel that he has a common interest in the war; while only 30,000,000 of Britons, on the other side, bear the whole brunt and burthen of it. Have we not, at this moment, 100,000,000 of the Queen's subjects, beyond the British Islands, looking on as mere spectators of this death-struggle, while the Queen has no power to call one of them into the field. England, Ireland, and Scotland furnish all the thews and sinews for this great controversy—their's are the blood and treasure—the peril and the grief. There have been wailing and sorrow in every city and hamlet of these islands; but what then? We have piped and danced beyond. Crape shadows the doorway of every church in England, but our congregations

come forth in gay attire, for the voice of the national sorrow has not been "heard in our lands." This people are paying a million a week to uphold the national honour, yet we call ourselves the common inheritors of that priceless treasure, for the preservation of which we do not vote a sixpence. From the bosom of our mother country, as we call it, have gone forth thousands of stalwarth men to carry our national flag—to die around it—to perish in the trench or in the hospital, and the boys of England, Ireland and Scotland (my heart bleeds when I look into their young faces) are preparing to follow them. Now, let me ask you, have the outlying portions of this Empire sent a man? Where are the regiments that should pour in here, that would, if the 100,000,000 of people, now unrepresented and indifferent, were made to participate in the ennobling privileges and great duties of Empire? Tell me that the question that I have raised is a Colonial question only, intruded at an inopportune moment. No, it is a British question in every sense of the word, the weight and paramount importance of which our hearts confess, for events daily supply us with painful illustrations. Prince Albert spoke good sense when he declared that our free institutions, balanced against the secrecy and the unity of despotism, were on their trial. His Royal Highness might have added, that our Imperial organization was on its trial too. Nay, he might have

gone further, and said, that it had been already tried, and found wanting. We have been eighteen months at war, and the great Provinces of this Empire, where the Queen's health is drank at every festival, have not sent a man to enforce the Queen's authority. We have been eighteen months at war, and not a man of the hundred millions who profess to venerate the British flag has struck a blow in its defence. Yet you tell me that the system is perfect, and I tell you that it is no system at all—that the question of questions, at the present moment, far transcending all the other questions of the day—is how this Empire is to be organized—how its strength in times of emergency may be drawn out—how the maritime and physical resources of the outlying portions of the Empire can be rallied round the homestead—how the hundred millions beyond the narrow seas can be induced to feel, and think and fight, for and with the thirty millions that they enclose. When this question has been discussed, and wisely determined, as it will be, lustre will be added to the Imperial diadem—the Queen's name, at home and abroad, will be indeed a tower of strength; great weight and authority will be given to the decisions of Parliament, and a career will be opened up for the energetic and the ambitious, that will on every great emergency rally round our national standard the strength and the affections of an Empire.

You will present yourself in a few days to the

Emperor of the French, and spread before him the productions of Canada. Do not be surprised if that shrewd politician should ask you, "but, pray, Mr. "Hincks, does not Canada produce any men? "What number have you sent to the Crimea? We "have the Sardinian, but where is the Canadian "Contingent? Africa sends me Zouaves, cannot "the great Province of Canada, peopled by two "martial races, send the Queen of England a few "regiments?" Should these questions be put, what is to be your answer? You cannot plead the poverty of your country, for her revenue is overflowing. You cannot plead that you have not men, for the militia returns of Canada should show 400,000. You cannot pretend that these men are unfit to take the field, for every man is a marksman, and they are of the same stock as those who fought at Chateaugay, and at Lundy's Lane. You cannot deny that Canada was conquered by the arms of England—that she has been fostered and defended ever since. You cannot pretend that she has anything to complain of, for you profess to believe "that the present Colonial system is all that can be reasonably desired." What then is to be your answer? I am sure you will have too much good taste to point to the few thousands of pounds which North America has contributed to the Patriotic Fund, less than it has cost England annually to maintain two regiments in Canada—less than England has often contributed when there has been

a fire at Quebec, or in Newfoundland. What, then, is to be your answer? Go down to Winchester, or Aldershott, and look at the fresh-coloured English boys preparing to do battle for our country—then think of the horny hands and stalwarth forms that we have left on the Ottawa, and on the St. John, who do not strike one blow in its defence. Where, when England is sore beset, are the descendants of the Loyalists, a race as loyal and as chivalrous as any within the Queen's dominions? Where are the McDonalds and McKinnons of Glengary and Sydney? Where are the McNabs of McNab, and the Frazers of Pictou? Echo answers where? And you must answer to the Emperor of the French that these men are cowards and poltroons, which you know they are not, or you must confess that there is something wrong in the organization of this Empire—fundamentally and radically wrong, and you must retract the silly and unfounded assertion that the "colonial system is all that can be reasonably desired."

Now, my answer to such a question would be simple, candid, and consistent. It would carry conviction, and vindicate the character of North America, while it accounted for the position she maintains. "May it please your Majesty, England entrusts her Colonies only with the management of their internal affairs. These are admirably managed without expense or trouble to England, except where she needlessly interferes. But she never consults us either

about her own or our external relations. She makes no provision by which the hundred millions of people inhabiting noble countries in every quarter of the globe, shall share her legislation or her counsels, shall give vigour to her diplomacy, accuracy and fulness of knowledge to her administration, or numbers and strength to her armies. Under those circumstances, may it please your Majesty, we attend to our own affairs. Our sympathies are all in favour of England whatever she does, but our active interference in a foreign war cannot be demanded. We grant a few thousands of pounds, to provide comforts for the wounded, and we pray in all our churches for the success of her Majesty's arms, but we do not raise a sword to help her; we think in the simple language of Jeannette, that 'those who make the war should be the men to fight.'" This is the answer which every North American gives to his own conscience at the present hour. It is the answer which every man of the hundred millions of non-combatants gives to the world at large. If it be a fact then, that they are non-combatants, and that this answer is sufficient, what shall we say of the system which produces such results? what shall we say of the politician who declares that it is all that can be reasonably desired? what shall we say of the British gentleman who would strangle with official trammels the liberty of public discussion on such a theme?

Logic would cease to be an art if your argument on the distribution of distinctions was worthy of serious notice. I showed that while the humblest native of the smallest State in the Union might hold any legislative or executive position within that Commonwealth, all the highest offices in the nation were open to him too—that he might be a Secretary of State—an Ambassador—a Judge of the Supreme Court, or President of the Republic. You tell me that "a Canadian Minister occupies a much higher position in the eyes of the world than a Secretary in Michigan or Illinois." Even if this were true, and I am quite sure that the boast would be laughed at in Michigan, it proves nothing, unless you can show that the Colonist's career does not practically stop when he is a Provincial Minister. I contend that it does—that, having reached that point, he is hedged in by barriers which he cannot overleap, that thenceforward he must "fling away ambition"—that he has got into a *cul de sac*—that he finds John Bull, looking very like a beadle, guarding the rich scenery beyond, and saying to him, as he marks the expression of his longing eye, "No thoroughfare here." I can point to the Winthrops, the Cushings, the Rushes, the Websters, the descendants of the men who tore down the British flag, and drove out the Loyalists in 1783, representing their country in a National Legislature, or in every Court in Europe, and I can find a Buffalo Schoolmaster or a New Hampshire Lawyer pre-

siding over the Union; while I challenge the world to show me a Colonist in our National Legislature—in any Imperial Department, or who is now, or has been for half a century, Governor of the smallest Colony within the Queen's dominions. That is my argument, answer it if you can. You tell me that on this subject I am misrepresenting the feelings of British America—that I was "unable to convince the Assembly of "which I was a member," of the soundness of my views. But I tell you that the speech of which you complain was delivered amidst the cheers of both sides of the House—that it circulated over British America, almost unquestioned—that, however men may differ as to the remedy, there is no difference of opinion as to the practical exclusion of Colonists from the higher employments and more ennobling distinctions of the Empire. That this conviction is sinking deep into the hearts and souls of the rising generation, and ought to be eradicated in time by wise and generous statesmanship. Mr. Johnston's speech, of which I regret that I have not a copy, was more able and argumentative than mine. Now, what do you answer to all this. "It is true that I cannot find a Colonist in the National Legislature—in the Diplomatic Service—in any Imperial Department—or in the Gubernatorial Chair of any British Province, but I can find an office, recently filled up by a gentleman, who, though an Englishman by birth, *has resided*

several years in a Colony." If you were a British American and not an Irishman, "who has resided several years in a Colony," I should blush for my country. If I could show that every Irishman in Canada had been practically excluded from office for half a century, what would they say if you consoled them by finding a Canadian in office who once saw the Giant's Causeway?

As respects the United Services, your argument is equally feeble. You say that the Colonists now fighting the battles of their country in the Crimea will repudiate my opinions. How many are there? I know of one Nova Scotian, who carried the colours of his regiment up the heights of Alma. There may be another—there may be half a dozen North Americans in all; but why do you not speak out what all our people feel on this subject. In a letter which I addressed to Lord John Russell in 1846, I ventured to assert "that the time would come when it would be thought as disgraceful to sell a Commission in the army as to sell a seat upon the Bench." The time has come. You argue that because the system of purchase excludes seven-eighths of the people of the British Islands from the higher grades of the army, and nearly all the Colonists, the Colonists have no reason to complain. But my argument is, that a system which works this general injustice weakens the Empire, and ought to be abolished.

What would you or I have said, when we held

executive offices, if a man had walked in and offered to buy a magistrate's or a militia commission; would we not have shown him the door, and have put him out of it, instantly, peremptorily? Yet do you justify the right to buy and sell the power of life and death—to lead men or to mislead them in the trench or in the field—to guard or not to guard them, by forethought and experience, from frost, and wind, and rain; from hunger, surprise, and despondency? Or, if you do not, why not tell the honest truth at once—that, so long as commissions are bought and sold, and their distribution controlled by Parliamentary influence, the Colonial youth, who have no Parliamentary influence, and comparatively less wealth than their competitors at home, are practically shut out from the military service of the Crown.

You tell me that the Colonists can now claim "the protection of the Empire," but what twaddle is this? What protection does Canada give to India, or Jamaica to Canada? None whatever. Do you not perceive that the whole business and burthen of protecting the Empire falls upon the people of two small islands, who, when they want aid and protection themselves, do not get it from any of the Provinces? Did not the sword of Wolfe win every acre of the soil of Canada, and did not Canada recently refuse a few acres of that very land to encourage soldiers to fight for our common country?

While she appeared to have her choice of foreign

alliances, England could perhaps afford to disregard the natural strength which lay within her own possessions. But how stands the matter now? Russia and all her tributaries is in battle array—Austria is treacherous; Prussia sulky. All Germany stands aloof. We have to lend money to Turkey and Sardinia to enable their armies to keep the field. The United States, thoroughly Russian in sentiment, preserve a sort of armed neutrality. Our sole effective ally (a noble one I grant you) is France. God give stability to her councils, but I tremble when I think how much may depend on a single life. This is a faithful picture of England's relations with all the world. Stand before it, and tell me if it does not counsel her to strengthen her alliances with her own natural allies—with her own Provinces, peopled by her own children. Is the old Pelican eternally to shed her blood for the nourishment of offspring, who fly away when they are strong, or who when the eagle descends upon her nest, fold their wings, and do no battle in her defence? Surely the mother is careless and indifferent, or the children are unnatural.

The whole Austrian Empire contains but 36,514,466 inhabitants, a trifle more than one-third of the population of the British Provinces beyond the sea. How have we waited, and pleaded, and negociated, and argued for an alliance with Austria, while we have never wasted a thought upon the strength, latent but tremendous, which lies in John Bull's gigantic limbs, that our

wretched system paralyzes. Let us group all our Allies together, and we have

Turkey with . .	15,500,000	people
Sardinia . . .	4,916,087	„
France . . .	35,781,628	„
	56,197,715	

But half the physical force that lies in the outlying portions of this Empire, unrepresented and unorganized, but which a moderate share of representation, and some forethought and consideration, would ever, in times of trial, rally around the throne. There is scarcely a Province that could not and would not send its regiment, if due consideration and a fair distribution of the honours and distinctions of Empire made it a point of honour and of duty to send it, and many of them could send ten. The review of such an army would be a sight indeed; and Queen Victoria and her illustrious Consort, standing in their midst, would feel that her throne was bulwarked as it is not now—British statesmen would feel that they were independent of treacherous allies —the British people would feel that their soil, their institutions, and their high civilization were secure. To realize this great conception there is nothing wanting but to draw into the counsels of this Empire the ripened intellects and noble spirits that lead this population. Talk not to me of difficulties, all Government is compromise, and half the diplomacy wasted on "the four points" would soon adjust de-

tails. Let Great Britain and Ireland do their duty, and the Colonies will not be indifferent to the call of patriotism, or regardless of the national honour.

If I sought to "dismember the Empire" I would hold my tongue, and let these contrasts work their way. I point them out, because I desire to keep the Empire together—to organize and strengthen it—to rally round the national flag the energies of millions who strike no blow in its defence—to bulwark the British Islands with natural Allies—to make them independent of Turks, and Austrians, and Sardinians—to draw into the Imperial employments the high intellects which embellish, the energies which control the destinies of its distant Provinces—to make Queen Victoria's service a service of love and emulation every where—to enable her to command every sword within her dominions. To teach Englishmen to value their own flesh and blood—to teach Colonists to look to this great metropolis as to an arena, which at any moment they may be called to tread—to Westminster Abbey, not as to an antique pile of masonry covering the bones of their fathers, but as the sacred depository where their children may be laid, when they have discharged in open and fair fields of emulation the higher duties of Empire, and won its proudest distinctions. When that day comes, and come it will, when the good sense that extended Parliamentary representation to Manchester and Birmingham shall have extended it to Canada and

Jamaica, to Australia and the Cape; when the men of the east and of the west, of the north and of the south, speak with authority and fulness of knowledge, from the noblest forum to the largest civilized community in the world, then shall we have a camp at Aldershott, and an army, that, unaided by foreign alliances or mercenaries, can protect the civilization of the world.*

Should that day ever happily arrive, you and I will forget our past controversies in the general joy. Should it not, the consciousness of the fearless performance of a great public duty will, whatever may happen, in some measure console

Your obedient servant,

JOSEPH HOWE.

* Taking the population of the Empire at 130,000,000, one in every seven at least may be considered a man fit for service. This would give us 18,000,000 of fighting men within the Empire itself.