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MR. G. R. R. COCKBURN, M.P.

At a dinner at the National Club in Toronto a few days ago, Mr. G. R. R. Cockburn, representative for centre Toronto in the Dominion House of Commons, gave utterance to some quite remarkable sentiments. Among other things he said:— "You all know I am a supporter of the National Policy; but we must be on our guard against the pressure and influences that threaten the introduction of McKinleyism into Canada. * * It is difficult for the Government to withstand the pressure of interested parties, who simply desire government sanction to take money out of the pockets of the people. * * It is well, therefore, to examine what has been the result of thirteen years of protection; and if in the examination it is found that a protection of thirty or thirty-five per cent. has been futile in infusing life into any of the industries whose establishment has been attempted, it might be concluded that that industry was one not appropriate to the country, and should be allowed to die. * * The course of trade and manufacture has altered greatly since the N.P. was adopted, * * and an examination of the tariff in the light of these altered circumstances would show that a considerable readjustment of duties is necessary.

If it were found that some industries had given undoubted signs of having taken firm root and were growing strong, I would be inclined to encourage those even more than they are now. On the other hand, if it were found that other industries show no signs of healthy vitality, I would favor a diminution in the protection afforded. The National Policy was adopted with the idea that a few years of favored growth would put our manufacturers in such a position that they would in time be able to sell their wares at prices as reasonable as they could be procured for from abroad." A report of the incident stated that Lieut.-Col. Fred. C. Denison and Mr. Coatsworth, fellow members of Mr. Cockburn in the Dominion Parliament, in the representation of Toronto, listened to their colleague's remarkable speech in dead silence.

At what was the largest and most representative meeting of Canadian manufacturers ever held in the Dominion, gathered in Toronto about February 1st, 1887, to listen to Sir John Macdonald's exposition of the state of the country in general, and of the fiscal policies of the existing political parties, the following resolution was unanimously carried:—

Resolved, that this meeting of manufacturers, representing almost every branch of industry and every section of the country, hereby place on record their unanimous opinion, that on the maintenance of the National Policy depends the continued prosperity of Canada.

A few days later, on February 12th, a meeting was held in the Pavilion, in Toronto, under the auspices of the Industrial League, intended to show the interest felt by the manufacturers in the National Policy and in the party supporting it. The meeting was presided over by Mr. H. W. Elliot, and among the many gentlemen upon the platform were Mr. Cockburn, Mr. Denison and Mr. Small, who were then candidates quite anxious to be elected from Toronto to the Dominion Parliament. The meeting was intended to ratify the resolution above alluded to, and to create enthusiasm in behalf of the candidates who were then so anxious to encourage the manufacturing industries of Canada; and Mr. Cockburn was one of the speakers. It is not recorded, however, that his emphatic endorsement of the National Policy was qualified by such sentiments as he gave utterance to a few days ago. The Industrial League, whose guest he then was, and whose influence he was so anxious to acquire, and without which he well knew he could not hope to be elected, rendered Mr. Cockburn very substantial aid in his canvas. They were very generous towards him, and he was very profuse in his protestations of undying and unswerving attachment and devotion to their interests and to the National Policy.

In view of these facts—in view of the fact that Mr. Cockburn in his election owed much to the influence of the manufacturers exerted in his behalf; in view of the fact that he had sworn eternal allegiance to the National Policy; in view of the fact that his continuance as member for Centre Toronto was due to the influences that first elevated him, and in view of his recent utterances at the National Club, and their vagueness, it is due to those who were and would still like to be his political friends, for him to make some explanation of what he said. He should explain how and by whom pressure and influence that threaten the introduction of McKinleyism into Canada was brought to bear upon the Government. He should tell who the interested parties are who bring pressure to bear upon the Government