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PLEA FOR THE CANADIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRIES



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In making an appeal to the people of Canada for the rescue of our textile industries let us ask ourselves two questions: First, are the Canadian textile industries worth rescuing for their own sakes? and second, are they necessary in building up our manufactures to that stage where we shall be self-sustaining, as far as the primary needs of the people are concerned?

We may approach the second question by asserting that, next to food itself, clothing and fuel are the prime necessities of the people, and in a climate such as that of Canada, it is a question whether clothing is not more vital than fuel. Taking it for granted that the people of Canada approve of the policy of imposing duties on imported goods for the purpose of encouraging home manufactures, as well as for raising revenue, we affirm that, textile fabrics being the most essential of our manufactured necessities, it should be the purpose of the tariff to secure the development of the home industry to such an extent as to supply the main needs of the people. In case of a war involving Canada by which our supplies should be cut off our people would be brought to distress indescribable if textile fabrics could not be manufactured in the country to meet the rigors of winter. Is it wise to say that such a contingency is unlikely? Whoever would put this country to such a hazard should read the history of the great wars of the past two thousand years and note how unprepared one or both parties to the conflict have so often been, and especially how unprepared have been the innocent third nations, who may be overrun by the nations in conflict. Witness the very last great war—the Russo-Japanese conflict and its effect on Corea and Manchuria—unexpected in its beginning as unlooked for in its close and after consequences. Even if war should never devastate this country, we have still to consider that perpetual

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