

Stratford
Ont.

THE FARMER'S POLITICS.

Reciprocity of Trade with the United States.

An issue of vast public importance is now presented to the electors of Canada. Between the two great political parties the dividing lines are distinctly drawn. During the Session of the Dominion Parliament, held in 1887, Sir Richard Cartwright in advocating the adoption of the policy of the Liberal party, moved the following resolution, setting forth in unmistakable terms, the necessity of enlarged trade relations with the United States:—

“That it is highly desirable that the largest possible freedom of commercial intercourse should obtain between the Dominion of Canada and the United States, and that it is expedient that all articles manufactured in or the natural products of the said countries should be admitted free of duty into the ports of the other (articles subject to duty of excise or of internal revenue alone excepted); and it is expedient that the government of the Dominion should take steps at an early date to ascertain on what terms and conditions arrangements can be effected with the United States, for the purpose of securing full and unrestricted reciprocity of trade therewith.”

Sir Richard Cartwright proceeded to show, that there had been for many years an alarming exodus of Canadians to the United States—that the total volume of exports and imports had decreased from \$217,000,000 in 1873, to \$202,000,000 in 1886—that \$80,000,000 (or nearly one-half, and that the most profitable half) was with the United States, notwithstanding the trade barriers between the two countries,—that the policy proposed in this resolution would benefit nineteen-twentieths of the population of Canada, by allowing them to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest markets—and thus the monstrous burdens now falling on the farmers, laborers, artisans, mechanics, fishermen, miners, lumberman, and the great producing classes in the community would be redressed.

Hon. George Foster, the present Finance Minister, enunciated the Government Policy in the following amendment:—

“That Canada in the future, as in the past, is desirous of cultivating and extending trade relations with the United States, in so far as they may not conflict with the policy of fostering the various industries and interests of the Dominion, which was adopted in 1879, and which has since received, in so marked a manner, the sanction and approval of the people.”

In opposing the proposition for enlarged trade relations, he alleged that the adoption of such a policy would jeopardise the National Policy and the manufacturers who had been protected since 1879, and would not benefit the farmers.

The government amendment was carried by a vote of 124 yeas, to 67 nays—thus defeating Sir Richard Cartwright's proposition for Reciprocity.

During the Sessions of 1889 and 1890 respectively, Sir Richard Cartwright proposed a similar resolution, and upon each occasion the Government called upon their supporters to mark their disapproval of the policy of Unrestricted Reciprocity by recording their votes against the resolution. In 1890 Hon. Mr. Colby, President of the Council, enunciated the policy of the Government in significant language, as may be seen by the following extract from the official (*Hansard*) report of the Debate:—

“HON. MR. MILLS, Bothwell, (addressing Mr. Colby).—Then the hon. gentleman is opposed to trade in natural products?”