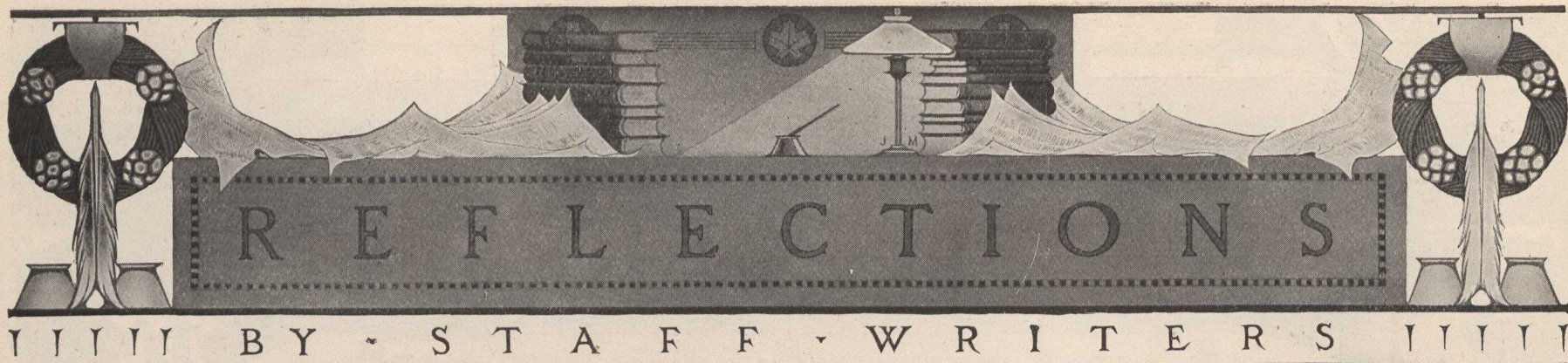




THE FUTURE OF THE TARIFF

WHICHEVER party is in the majority after the General Election on Monday next, it seems reasonably certain that the tariff will not be greatly affected. In the West, the Hon. Frank Oliver and other speakers have been creating the impression that if the Conservatives were returned to power higher duties would be placed on implements, woollens and binder twine. Mr. Oliver has some basis for his argument, but it is doubtful if the Conservatives seriously contemplate going so far as he intimates. The agricultural implement people are not suffering, and binder-twine is an article not made entirely from Canadian raw material. There is no great reason for an increase of duties on these two items. As for woollens, the case is open to argument. As pointed out a fortnight ago in this journal, some woollen industries are doing well and some are not. A general increase in woollen duties is out of the question, though one or two lines may require attention. At the meetings in Wolseley, Sask., and other places one of the mottoes displayed was "A vote for Laurier is a vote against Protection." At best, this is only "approximately" true. In other words, it might possibly come true, but it is more likely to be false.

The editor of the *Toronto Star*, in a leading editorial of the issue of the 17th, declared that if the Conservatives came into power they would abolish the British preference. The writer says: "The average rate on dutiable imports brought in from Great Britain in 1896 was 30 1-5 per cent.; it is now 24 1-4 per cent. To restore the Conservatives to power would, therefore, necessitate the payment by Canadian consumers of nearly \$6 on the hundred more for all the British goods bought by them than they pay now." One wonders where the writer gets his justification for this statement. It is safe to say that ninety per cent. of the Conservative voters of Canada approve the British preference. A Conservative government could not abolish it. As one British writer says: "They might make it more businesslike, but they are not likely to eradicate it from the Tariff Act. Their sympathy with the Conservative party of Great Britain in its campaign in favour of British preference for colonial goods would be an almost sufficient reason for its retention." There are several others almost equally strong. The editor of the *Star*, we venture to assert, does not believe his own statement. In fact it would seem as if some "campaign liar" had stolen secretly into the *Star* office and inserted the editorial when its capable and usually sensible editor was out to luncheon.

So much for the tariff in its relation to Great Britain. As regards the United States, the situation is much the same—there is no change in sight. Speaking at Farnham the other day, Sir Wilfrid Laurier repeated his oft-made statement that the next move for reciprocity between our neighbours and ourselves must come from them. The Canadian pilgrimages to Washington are not to be repeated. According to the despatches Sir Wilfrid said: "I would be ready at any time to make such an agreement with them on a reasonable basis, but as leader of the Government I have made my course, and if we are to have any more treaties of reciprocity with our friends across the line the overtures must come from them, and not from us." The United States manufacturer has less to hope from Mr. Borden than from Sir Wilfrid, so there is little prospect of a change in the tariff in that direction. The Republicans are likely to control the Executive Mansion for another four years, and therefore United States advances toward reciprocity are at least that distance away.

The Canadian manufacturers are so well satisfied with the present tariff that they have refrained from interfering in the election campaign. Prominent manufacturers are found on either side. At their recent meeting in Montreal, they passed a resolution in favour of placing tariff matters in the hands of an independent commission of

experts. They are prepared to see the tariff taken out of politics altogether. This would not be the case, was there any deep-seated desire or hope that in the near future important changes would be made. The present tariff is moderately protectionist and any changes required in it are only such as may be necessary to bring it up to date in its classifications and to make it more scientific in its application. New methods of supplying old wants and the constant, persistent change in manufacturing conditions, make tariff revisions periodically necessary, but tariff revisions need not necessarily result in higher customs duties.

QUEEN'S AND THE CHURCH

QUEEN'S University and the Presbyterian Church must ultimately separate, though that separation can never be more than nominal. A church university may have an arts course in connection with its divinity work, but it cannot properly have a pedagogical, a medical or an applied science faculty. As the result of a protest by Mr. (now Sir) Mortimer Clarke at the Presbyterian General Assembly of 1892, the trustees of Queen's voluntarily gave the church a veto upon all theological appointments, but for a quarter of a century the church has refused to recognise any responsibility for the University as a whole. Thus "the Presbyterian University" has been such only in name. Its denominational character has, however, been sufficient to prevent the Ontario Government extending to it such aid as it gave to the University of Toronto, a purely provincial institution. The biographers of Principal Grant declare that he "came at last to feel that it was best to sever a connection which had become nominal and to make the constitution of the university representative of the work it was doing." They quote an expression of opinion written by him in the *Queen's Quarterly* of October, 1900, in confirmation of this statement. In 1901, a change was made with the consent of the Assembly, and a new constitution adopted. Divinity Hall was to be erected into a separate college, placed under the direct control of the church, and affiliated with the university. A bill was prepared for submission to the Dominion Parliament, whose ratification was necessary. Just at this stage, Principal Grant died and the whole nationalisation movement stopped. In 1903, the Assembly reversed his policy and the struggle has since been maintained without further definite results.

The question has been much discussed and only last week, the Senate and the Board of Trustees agreed to again recommend nationalisation to the Assembly. The resolution of the latter reads: "The trustees also beg to express their opinion that the altered conditions with which the University has had to deal in these later times call for the removal of the denominational disabilities in the charter of the University."

THE GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC

AT the time of writing, there has been no official denial by Grand Trunk Pacific officials of the rumours that a reconsideration of the lease of the National Transcontinental from Winnipeg to Moncton will be demanded. The rumours may be political entirely. It may be that no such action is contemplated. Yet the evidence is steadily accumulating, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier made a hard bargain with Mr. Hays. This coupled with the wonderfully high cost of the national highway, as compared with first estimates, is probably the basis of the rumours.

The real facts as to the cost of the road from Winnipeg to Moncton are hard to get at. The road is far from being completed, and future work may be less expensive in the average than what has already been done. In general, however, it looks like a Quebec Bridge case on a larger scale. A company undertakes to build a bridge. The Government gives a certain measure of assistance. It then