

Probable Effect of Preferential Duties on Inter-Imperial Trade.

The industrial life of a modern community or body politic is inextricably complex. Internal and external influences are constantly vibrating through its nerves, and disturbing every fibre of its system daily. These influences are hourly changing the conditions under which profitable production can be carried on, whether on the farm, sea, or road, in the forest, mine, factory, warehouse, or shop. With the exception of the known effect of crop failures, war, plague, pests, storms and earthquakes, the cause of these disturbing influences, are as a rule unknown, at the time their effect becomes manifest. These changing conditions are constantly increasing the profits in some lines of industry, and decreasing the profits in others. It is impossible to predict what changes will manifest themselves in the immediate future. This uncertainty must always make it a dangerous experiment for governments to interfere with the people in their pursuit of profitable production; or in other words, in their effort to feed, clothe and house themselves; for this effort of the governed to obtain these results is the main, if not the only cause of profitable production.

When we consider the obvious truth, that it is from the current proceeds of profitable production out of which capital receives all returns for its use, all government expenses are paid, and in a word, all the disbursements of the community are drawn, the danger of tampering with its cause at once becomes apparent. In this connection it should be