

## So Mote It Be.

The rose of "Merrie England,"  
 Who doth not love it well?  
 Where Scotland's sturdy thistle grows,  
 We know that true hearts dwell:  
 Old Ireland hath the shamrock,  
 With its laughter and its tears;—  
 Oh! closer may they be entwined  
 Through all the coming years.

With us—the far-off children  
 Each emblem hath its place:  
 Deep in our hearts we cherish  
 The kinship of our race;  
 We pray that in the future—  
 Be it joy or be it grief—  
 With Thistle, Rose, and Shamrock  
 Still may twine the Maple Leaf.

Toronto.

M. ALGON KIRBY.

## Cost and Profit of Liberty VI.

NO matter what the cost, the profit is greater. That is the case as regards self-defence. The nation which abdicates this primary duty is unsound at heart. Destitute of self-respect, others will not respect it; and taking the attitude of a pauper it will get in the end a pauper's fare and a pauper's grave. Every dollar wisely spent on our militia force is not only so much insurance but new vitality added to our nerve centres. Thirty or forty years ago the arrangement proposed between the Mother Country and Canada was, so far as concerned our part, a militia force of 50,000 to be drilled annually for twenty-eight days. Our population and wealth has increased, but our militia has come down to 35,000, and the drill to something representing sham. Britain, meanwhile, has done her part. Never were her naval and military forces, her reserves, volunteers and militia in such a condition of efficiency. Therefore, she can "talk with her enemies in the gate."

It is also the case, as concerns life and the means of living. War may be an occasional necessity, but trade concerns every man's everyday life. We are all consumers and all—paupers and politicians—"on the make" excepted—producers. It must, therefore, be to our interest to get our products into the markets of the world, and to get what we consume as cheaply as possible. Every degree of cheapening means a higher standard of living for the average man. What an object lesson Britain is in this respect! There are no artificial obstacles in British ports, and consequently all the varied products of earth flow there, to be distributed from its centres to whatever points call most loudly for them; meanwhile the British people purchase the best products of every clime for less than the home cost. "These are surely from Canada," said a friend of mine to a fruit merchant in Scotland, pointing to some barrels of Gravensteins. "Yes, they grow some fine apples over there," was the answer. "What do you charge for them here?" was the next question. To my friend's astonishment the price was less than he usually paid in Montreal. Mentioning that fact he got for rejoinder, "Oh, yes, I sometimes supply your market with Canadian apples." Actually, the two freights did not amount to as much as the rise and fall in prices. Consequently, the great distributing centre did the business, its ships got the freights, and we—like the rest of the world—paid tribute to the men who took their stand on the side of the laws which govern exchange.

Think of Montreal and Toronto under free trade! They would be the emporia and distributing centres of the continent, and the people of the United States would do their own smuggling! Congress would rage, but every weapon it used would kick, except reciprocal free trade, and that instead of a weapon would be a cornucopia big enough for the continent.

What an experiment to try! But Montreal is afraid of risking its cotton factories and sugar refineries. That is, it would rather levy tribute on five millions of people than on seventy-five millions. So much the worse for it, and so much the worse also for the five millions! I do not wonder at Montreal, however. It has something, and counting its 20 or 30 per cent. contentedly murmurs, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." But what have the five millions got? Why, they have "the home market," a market which no policy gave to them and no policy could take away

from them! What wise men our farmers, dairymen, stock-raisers, and lumberers must be! As wise as the masses in the States, in France, in Germany, but not wiser; scarcely as wise, for if there is one country on earth more unsuited for protection than another, that country is Canada.

But, we must have a revenue! What are you going to do for revenue, is the question that is considered final? Why, how does Britain get a revenue fifteen times as great as ours, though her population is only eight times as great; not a single article of general consumption taxed save tea, and that as cheap as it is in Canada! How does New South Wales propose to raise a revenue without taxing even tea? Of course we must have a revenue of thirty-five millions, seeing that we are steadily adding to our debt and need fifteen or sixteen men in the Cabinet, while our big neighbour gets along with seven. Of that thirty-five about eighteen millions come from customs, and no one proposes to sweep all those millions away. Every Finance Minister knows the elementary principles of his craft, and that the way to get more revenue is—within certain limits—not by increasing but by lowering duties. A small duty on tea or sugar will bring in more revenue than a high duty. In the same way, if we lowered the duties on British goods, say to one half of what they are, we would get more revenue, in a year or two, than we get now from that source. Our ships, too, would have return cargoes, freights would be lower, our merchants would thrive, consumers would smile, and no legitimate manufacture would suffer.

Would you keep the present duties against other countries? Yes, against all that impose duties on our great natural products. Why? if lowering the tariff tends to give increased revenue? For three reasons: beginning with our chief customer would be a big enough experiment, to start with; because it is reasonable to trade as freely as possible with those who trade freely with you; and the goal in view is inter-Imperial free trade.

Would not other countries be annoyed! They would have no right to be annoyed. There would be no retaliation, and nothing that could be called discrimination. The present "comparatively low" duties would remain, with a clause stating that they would be reduced one-half, in favour of all countries admitting freely the main products of Canada. I am aware that it is not possible to draw a clear line between natural and manufactured products, but the distinction is ordinarily well understood, and our main products could be specified. Moreover, I quite agree with Mr. O. A. Howland's contention that the aim of a protective policy, pursued in moderation, may be a good one; whereas protection, directed against natural productions, "becomes a war with the beneficence of nature; a rejection of her treasures of soil, forest and mine; a denial of conditions of geography and climate; a quarrel with the rain that falls on the just and the unjust, and with the sun that shines upon the evil and the good." (The New Empire, p. 253). It is surely not unreasonable to maintain the present tariff on the manufactured articles of any country that makes such commercial war. Besides, what is proposed is only what is always done when the United States reduces its tariff. No country gets the benefit of the reduction which does not admit its products on equal terms with those of other countries. It is proposed now as a half-way house to free trade, or at any rate to free trade within the Empire. Should the United States desire to be included, so much the better. That would be such a boon to all concerned that a common tax and excise on spirits and tobacco, with stamps and other duties not interfering with commerce, would give us nearly all the revenue we needed. Trade then would flow in its natural channels. We would be really free. Now, we allow a few gentlemen in Ottawa, who would not be trusted with the management of any one of our great industrial establishments, to arrange and disarrange the whole business of five millions of intelligent, enterprising people. This would be incredible, were it not a fact. These gentlemen are intrusted with the power of "binding and loosing on earth," to an extent which Hildebrand never dreamed of. They can make favoured individuals, companies or rings wealthy by inserting a clause, and impoverish them by striking it out, and this is actually boasted of as a patent for making every body rich. Of course, the work is not actually done by those gentlemen. They consult with the favoured parties, and the machine is hammered into shape at their dictation. For the