

Differences of opinion on what is called the trade question, have divided men into Free Traders on the one side and Protectionists on the other, and in Canada, with some few exceptions, we find the latter in the ranks of the Government and its supporters, and the former in the ranks of the Opposition. **While other questions of policy will naturally enter into the discussion which must decide the action of the electors in the present contest, there is no question, on which the parties divide, which compares in importance to the mechanics and artisans of the Dominion with this one. SHALL THE PRINCIPAL OF PROTECTION TO NATIVE INDUSTRY BE MAINTAINED OR ABANDONED.**

It is not the intention in this leaflet to enter into an abstract discussion of Free Trade and Protection, nor is it necessary to do so, for it is admitted on both sides that a policy of absolute Free Trade is not, under our circumstances, possible for Canada. It would be unfair to his readers as well as to those who, for want of some name which will describe them with absolute correctness, he may designate as Free Traders, for the writer to assume that the electors are called upon to decide for or against Free Trade. Were this the question, it is possible some who are in Canada—and because of Canada's peculiar circumstances—Protectionists would be found advocating Free Trade.

Not only is it idle to discuss the question as if absolute Free Trade were a possible alternative; but it is equally bootless to discuss it, as some do, on the supposition that reciprocal trade relations with the United States are to be had for the asking. Canadians must be manly enough to look on the whole matter in a self-reliant way, for they are the blindest of the blind, the wilfully blind, who cannot see that reciprocity with the United States, on any terms less onerous to us than a complete and humiliating surrender of our commercial independence, is hopeless. Canadians, Canadian workmen especially, cannot afford to wait for other countries to make this or that change of policy on our part possible; they must deal with the facts as they exist, and adopt and maintain a policy suited to our actual circumstances.

**The great question for Canadian workmen to ask themselves, Whether the present policy, or the approximation to Free Trade which it is proposed to substitute for it, is best calculated to advance their material prosperity?**

They can arrive at an answer in two ways:

First—By considering whether, tested by the light of the experience of the eight years of its existence, it has on the whole benefited them, either by giving them steady work, or, by giving them better wages, or by creating an increased demand for their labour, prevented a fall in wages, which is but another way of saying the same thing.

Second—By considering whether the policy of shutting out foreign-made goods, and so increasing the quantity of home-made goods; or the policy of allowing foreign goods to supplant home-manufactured articles in our markets, is most likely to create a demand for their labour.

Every workman knows that in almost every town and village in Canada new establishments, and in some instances new industries, have sprung up since the adoption of the National Policy, and because of its adoption. Not only that, but many, almost all of the old industries have been enabled by the increased demand for their manufactures to greatly increase their capacity. **To say that this does not mean an increased demand for labor is to insult the intelligence of the people. To say that the tendency**