

CANADA'S POSITION ON THE CONTINENT.

Canada is about as compact as a whip lash—much length, little width. I do not refer to her acreage, but to her settlements. It is the men and women that make a country, not the superficies. She is a settlement of provinces, stretching across the continent like beads on a string. To the north there is a vast extent of Arctic waste, from which there is no possible danger of an inundation of cheap goods, but to the south lies the richest country on the face of the earth, with which she might enjoy a trade laden with wealth and fraught with benefits; but from the dreaded inundation of American goods she carefully guards herself with a barbed wire fence, bristling with taxes. In fact, it is a doubly built fence, one half supported in a neighborly way by the United States to keep the Canadian farmer or lumberman from carrying his goods to the best market, and then the Canadian Government maintains a picket line to spoil him of a large part of his returns as he tries to bring them home.

Here we have one of the most remarkable phenomena the world has ever witnessed—two nations, similar in language, in historical origin, in political institutions, in literary tastes, in every way so similar that the traveller may pass from one country to the other without detecting any more difference than he finds between two contiguous states, and yet, so far as trade is concerned, they are as widely separated as though they were on opposite sides of the planet. A bushel of wheat is conveyed from New York to Liverpool, three thousand miles, for five cents; to carry that same bushel one foot from Maine to New Brunswick, across an invisible line, costs fifteen cents. Geographically, as God placed them, Maine and New Brunswick lie contiguous. Commercially, as man places them, they are ten thousand miles apart.

A line, an invisible line, purely imaginary, some 4,000 or 5,000 miles long, all length, no width, is marked across this continent, cutting it in twain. That boundary is dotted with a picket line of watchmen, lynx-eyed by day and sleepless by night, guarding the people of the two nations, lest, like foolish sheep, in their weakness for abundance, they should stray to a more fertile pasture, to a richer supply, to satisfy their manifold wants.

We laugh at the silly heathen when in his superstition he bows down to a bit of wood or stone, and calls that his god; we scorn the ignorance that sent witches to the stake; but in what way were these things one whit more senseless than to build railroads that we may carry goods from nation to nation and then erect customs barriers to stop this conveyance; to drill tunnels, bridge gorges, construct steamboats and devise all possible means to render exchanges easy, and then taboo all this by obnoxious penalties? What a spectacle for gods and men! Two nations lying contiguous trying to erect a mountain barrier lest they should overwhelm each other with the largeness of their products, the abundance of their overflow. "The Canadian will inundate us and beget a slaughter market," says the American. "The American will inundate us and beget a slaughter market," says the Canadian, and in mutual dread they try to guard themselves as herdsmen would herd his cattle. No wonder we call the Indians barbarians and savages! They don't know enough to have a protective tariff. We bow down to a theory that teaches that men have not sense enough to be trusted to buy their dry goods and groceries wherever their common sense would guide them; that abundance is a curse; that trade is a mutual fraud; that the practical man must not be trusted to his own judg-

ment, but must be fenced in lest he commit commercial suicide.

Hence Canadian commerce, instead of developing naturally as a plant or as a body develops, each part in proportion to the other parts, is developing as a fish grows in a water pipe or as the body would grow under compression. British Columbia, by her sea route, has admirable access to California, and between these two countries there should be an immense trade; but we impose huge penalties both ways to prevent this intercourse, and then we saddle the country with an enormous debt to build a railway across the continent, and develop a trade in another and less advantageous direction. We try to separate the contiguous and to unite the distant; but nature laughs at our puerile imbecilities. What a curse is freedom! The Chinaman beats his tom-toms to scare away the devil, and we tax ourselves to scare away trade.

Between Ontario and New York, between the Eastern provinces and the New England States, between Manitoba and Minnesota or Dakota there would be, if free, enormous trade, mutually advantageous; but the tyranny of our superstitions, what calamities it inflicts! The natural and easy we avoid, the distant and difficult we embrace. The blessings at our door we spurn, those beyond our reach we try to grasp.

As for Canadian statesmanship, the less said the better. Just look at the facts of the case. Twenty-six years ago the provinces united in a confederacy. About three years afterwards the Canadian Government bought out the supposed rights of the Hudson Bay Company to the northwest territories. By this acquisition the Canadian people became possessed of an amount of territory endowed with natural resources of such richness and abundance that, if wisely administered and equitably divided, should have made every family rich. Are they rich? Has this vast endowment been wisely administered? Every large city has its soup kitchen, its almshouses, its increasing race of paupers. The mortgage sales of the Ontario loan companies alone range somewhere nearly one thousand annually, the increase of chattel mortgages during the last few years has been phenomenal, the debt of the general government increases about seven millions yearly, and now amounts to upwards of \$230,000,000. And this is only the beginning of the indebtedness, for every municipality must issue its debentures, as it is thought to be physically impossible to pay as we go. That the Jews wiped out all debts at the end of every fifty years is regarded as an act of "divine interposition," quite unsuited to our advanced civilization.

Had any private estate been so administered as the estate of the people of Canada, the trustees would have been indicted; but we give them titles of nobility, erect monuments to their memory, and call them great statesmen.

The census just taken is sadly disappointing. With the advantages of splendid climate, fertile soil, enormous fruit and mineral riches, the crushed toilers of Europe might have been expected to have flocked in multitudes to possess the promised land. We have spent gigantic sums to promote emigration, and yet in vain. We have "assisted passages" only to see the emigrants slip through our fingers to the neighboring republic. The game caught would not stay bagged.

Of course there is great dissatisfaction with the farmers, ground between the "national policy" and the McKinley bill, with the workingmen subjected to the intensified competition of an emigration policy that floods the labor market, while his wealthy employer is protected with a government manipulated by a band of protected manufacturers. The friction in the social mechanism is becoming very evident, the grinding is severe, the condition is one of unstable equilibrium.

Why such disastrous results in this country is not hard to see. The rich are aided to combine, the poor are compelled to compete. Scarcely any check or discouragement has been placed in the way of the land speculator. Everywhere it forestalls industry and squeezes it all it will bear. No more recklessly did Esau sell out for a mess of pottage than did the people of Canada sell their lands, their mines, and their forests.

Her commercial policy could not be more contradictory. To build railroads she has saddled herself with a heavy debt. Then to stop the conveyance of the goods she burdens herself with a huge tariff. The building of the Canadian Pacific Railway cost the country upwards of a hundred million dollars, and then when goods are brought into the country, either from Asia or Europe, a special penalty is imposed, in the shape of heavy duties, to prevent their landing in this country, so that goods from China can be conveyed to and sold in England much cheaper than they can be sold in Toronto. The railway is thus made more advantageous to foreign countries than to our own. We do not sacrifice our wife's relations with the generosity of Artemus Ward, but we sacrifice ourselves. Build a huge railway and then forbid the landing of goods in the country! That is a specimen brick of our statesmanship.—W. A. Douglass, of Toronto, in The Standard.

HOW MEN CARRY THEIR HANDS.

"A sure indication of character is found in the way in which a man carries his hands," said C. G. Clarke, of Boston. "You notice men on the streets. See the young man with swinging arms and palms which are displayed to all who take the trouble to look. He is one of that class whose heart is as open as his hands. He is frank, unsuspicious, a free spender and a believer in the honesty of his fellows. Notice the business man more advanced in years. His hands are always closed so tightly that he gives you the impression he is ever expecting an attack. This is the attitude of men bent upon a certain object. It is an attitude which displays the qualities of determination and fight.

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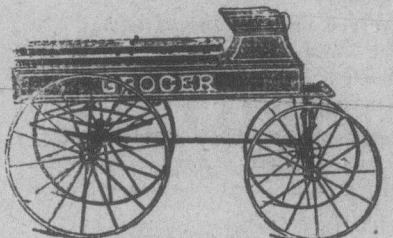
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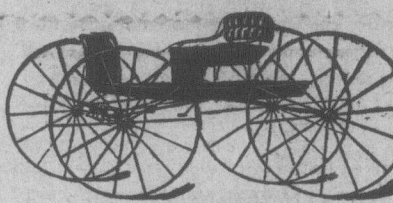
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