

As to the Council the Good Government Association and the Volunteer Electrical League are oiling up their machinery for the campaign. Two years ago they were partially successful. No "ring" candidate, with one exception, was elected from the wards where the English vote is predominant, and some two or three notoriously unfit aldermen from the eastern sections of the city were unhorsed. They seriously weakened the power of the "combination" which has found much difficulty in the last year or so in carrying its schemes; and they hope this time to hold the ground they captured before, and do a little better. Having that end in view they are preparing for an aggressive campaign.

The news from London of the willingness of the Imperial Government to assist in the establishment of a fast Atlantic service between England and Canada has excited a good deal of interest here among the shippers. They are gratified at Mr. Chamberlain's decision to make the Imperial grant conditional upon new tenders being called for; but in the judgment of every one who has had experience in St. Lawrence shipping, a 20 knot service is not practicable and will result in a heavy financial loss to those who undertake to supply it, despite the immense subventions promised by the Canadian and Imperial Governments. The reasons for this view are not few in number, and they are weighty too. Shippers say that a service of seventeen knots is commercially practicable, and will be supplied by the existing steamship lines as soon as they are satisfied that they would not be bankrupted by being subjected to a destructive competition with a heavily subsidized line of fast steamers, which would not make money for itself, and would ruin everybody else. It is likely that they will make a new proposition when the question is formally re-opened.

The Witness has a poor opinion of the compromise copyright measure agreed upon by Mr. Hall Caine and the Canadian publishers, and accepted by the Minister of Justice. It says: "The assumption on which it is based is that the Canadian publisher has some right inherent in him to take toll on books between the author and his Canadian readers—an assumption under which there is not a vestige of foundation. To interpose the expense of another reprinting between the author and the small numbers of Canadian readers for no other purpose than to afford a business to a few Toronto publishers, is an imposition that would be resented by any community not nursed in the servitude of protectionism."

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Life of Adam Smith.*

WHILE Adam Smith yet lived, his title to fame rested rather upon his early than upon his later works, rather upon his "Theory of the Moral Sentiments," than upon his "Wealth of Nations." It was indeed not until more than a quarter of a century after the death of the author, that the "Wealth of Nations" came to be generally recognized as an economic classic, and it was not until more than another quarter of a century had elapsed that the book had any serious practical outcome in legislation. This practical outcome was at once a symptom and a cause of the phase of adoration of Adam Smith and of the ideas which were associated with his name. The period of adoration lasted from about 1845 until about 1870. Contemporaneously with this attitude towards the authority of Adam Smith there endured a phase in the development of economic science which has not inaptly been described as a phase of confident dogmatism. The closing year of this period were marked by murmurings of doubt along the whole scientific line, and not least in the department of economics. Authority in all forms was put to the question, and many idols were overthrown. Among reputations which suffered especially during the succeeding period of scepticism, was that of Adam Smith. Not only were his theoretic positions examined from fresh points of view, and found to be faulty; but even his originality was seriously questioned. He was, at least in the schools, accused of plagiarism from his French friends, the Physiocrats. They had, indeed, themselves much earlier set the charge afloat. It came to be held that the "Wealth of Nations" would not bear re-editing in any serious way, because the indictment of the author for unacknowledged conveyance of other people's words and other people's ideas would be so heavy and so convincing that his reputation would

be utterly blasted. But to blast so great a reputation was a kind of sacrilege. To commit a crime or to expose the errors of one's own household was, as it were, ineconomical in the original signification of the word. The same reason perhaps prevented any but brief sketches of the life of Adam Smith from appearing since the sketch given to the Royal Society of Edinburgh soon after Smith's death by his friend, Dugald Stewart. The actual proof of such vague charges of plagiarism was very difficult, but disproof of them was difficult also, for the editions of the "Wealth of Nations," published during the lifetime of the author, contain no footnotes, and rarely any reference to authorities. The author placidly offers his work as sufficient for itself. The general impression remained therefore that Smith had done as Shakespeare for instance had done before him, and as Burns was actually doing at the same time. Shakespeare had taken inferior dramas, and Burns inferior songs and each had breathed into them the spirit of his own genius, careful only of the artistic result and careless of leaving materials for the distribution of merit by the judicious and scrupulous critic. Adam Smith had taken the uncoordinated material of his predecessors and contemporaries, had woven it not into a drama or a poem—but into a work after all of art—in which the picture of the economical life of his time was not the less vivid that he had transferred to his own work some of the results of the toil of others. The reticence of economists which prevented them from putting all this into set terms for the consumption of the general public could not, however, be permanently maintained. The desire to know all about a great figure—evil as well as good—a desire which has also its good as well as its evil side, has prevailed and we are likely at the beginning of a revived cult of "Smithianisms" in which we shall have all manner of impossible meanings read into the clear and simple language of the "Wealth of Nations," and all sorts of fanciful resemblances between his own and other peoples' writings pointed out in exasperating detail. So far, however, as the cult has gone it is undoubtedly well. First came the industrious and discriminating research of Mr. James Bonar published in his Catalogue of Adam Smith's Library, 1894; and now we have an equally industrious and discriminating inquiry by Mr. John Rae into Adam Smith's intellectual and social relations with his contemporaries. The net result of these independent efforts is a portrait of Adam Smith, at once charming and, we cannot doubt, substantially accurate. It is a comfort to be able to say at once that the real Adam Smith is an even more attractive and luminously upright character than the ideal Adam Smith of the days of wildest idolatry.

Though Adam Smith's life was not adventurous it was not entirely uneventful. According to the standard of the time he had travelled much; according to any standard he had met and associated on terms of more or less intimacy with the greatest men of his time. At Glasgow he was a friend and colleague of Dr. Joseph Black, whose researches into the phenomenon of latent heat added to his reputation as a chemist that of a physicist. He was a colleague also of Dr. Cullen, who was among the fathers of modern medicine; of Robin Simson, who revived the study of Euclidean geometry, and of Francis Hutcheson, the father of, and by far the most notable figure in the Scottish philosophy. At Glasgow also he was the friend, and among the patrons of James Watt and of Foulis Brothers, whose printing press within the walls of the University at Glasgow, enabled them to produce marvels of typography that in the eyes of bibliophiles ranks with the Aldines and higher than the Elzevirs. At Edinburgh the friends of Adam Smith were the most notable men in a society unusually brilliant. David Hume was, till the close of his life, the affectionate friend of Adam Smith. The correspondence between these two confirmed bachelors is almost idyllic. Lord Monboddo, the eccentric anticipator of some of Darwin's speculations, Lord Kames, an enthusiast for criticism, Wedderburn, who became Earl of Rosslyn and Lord High Chancellor of England; Robertson, the historian; Sir John Sinclair, the Caithness laird who gave himself to statistics; Hamilton, of Bangour, the Jacobite poet and author of "The Braes of Yarrow" (Smith, indeed, edited his poems); Allan Ramsay, the painter, and a great number besides of men of genius and of good fellows met him at Hume's house in James Court or in Riddle's Court, in Smith's earlier Edinburgh days, or met together at Smith's own table at the Sunday suppers in Panmure House in the Cannongate.

* "Life of Adam Smith." By John Rae. London and New York: Macmillan & Co. 1895.