

Be that as it may, we were faced with denunciation of the treaty. Sir John A. Macdonald during the whole of his career strove to restore our trade relations with the United States that had prevailed between 1854 and 1866. He sent many a delegation to the United States on that errand, but to no avail.

In 1874 the Mackenzie Government sent Hon. George Brown to Washington. He succeeded in negotiating a treaty, but it was rejected by the United States Senate.

In 1879 Sir John A. Macdonald introduced his National Policy, and, through his Minister of Finance, he inserted in the Customs and Excise Act a standing offer to the United States. It is clause 6 in Chapter 15 of the Statutes of 1879, and runs as follows:

Any or all of the following articles,—that is to say: animals of all kinds, green fruit, hay, straw, bran, seeds of all kinds, vegetables (including potatoes and other roots), plants, trees and shrubs, coal and coke, salt, hops, wheat, peas and beans, barley, rye, oats, Indian corn, buckwheat and all other grain, flour of wheat and flour of rye, Indian meal and oatmeal, and flour or meal of any other grain, butter, cheese, fish (salted or smoked), lard, tallow, meats (fresh, salted or smoked), and lumber, may be imported into Canada free of duty, or at a less rate of duty than is provided by this Act, upon Proclamation of the Governor in Council, which may be issued whenever it appears to his satisfaction that similar articles from Canada may be imported into the United States free of duty, or at a rate of duty not exceeding that payable on the same under such proclamation when imported into Canada.

This standing offer remained in force until around 1888 or 1889. We had to wait until 1891 to bring the matter squarely before the people of Canada. The United States tariff had been raised to a considerable degree, and the farmers of Ontario, Quebec and the East were suffering greatly as a result. Sir Richard Cartwright, who felt that the United States would never grant us reciprocity in natural products unless there was a large measure of reciprocity in manufactured products, succeeded in having the Liberal party committed to the policy of unrestricted or unlimited reciprocity. Sir John A. Macdonald felt that this brought about a very dangerous situation, for the humour of the old provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and of the Maritimes, seemed to indicate that such a policy, radical as it was, would be adopted. In January of 1891, or thereabouts, Sir John had the House dissolved, stating he had good reason to believe that the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Blaine, would be disposed to discuss reciprocity in natural products. An election took place, and Sir John was returned with a majority of fifteen or twenty on the ground that he in-

tended making a proposal to the Washington authorities, in favour of reciprocity in natural products.

Mr. Blaine, however, had not waited for the election, and in a letter which he wrote to a member from Massachusetts or New York State the assertion made by Sir John A. Macdonald was repudiated. Sir John then sent to Washington Sir Charles Tupper, George Eulas Foster, and a third delegate whose name I forget, and before they would be received by Mr. Blaine they had to declare that no offer of reciprocity in natural products had been made. So there was no commitment nor negotiation with respect to reciprocity in 1891.

In 1896 the Laurier Government came into power. In its convention of 1893 it had pledged itself to a lowering of the tariff. The first thing the Government did was to send a delegation to Washington, headed, I believe, by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Fielding. But it was of no avail. When the Laurier Government found that it could make no breach in the wall that had been raised against our goods at the American frontier, it turned towards Great Britain, and although Great Britain had nothing to offer us reciprocally, a preference, which gradually reached 33½ per cent, was given to British goods entering this country. The Laurier Government was then executing its promise of reduced tariffs. As a consequence the Americans had to reduce the price of their goods in order to compete with British goods in this country. Besides this, there was a reduction of tariff during the session of 1897.

The next effort was made in 1911. After a meeting with delegates from the United States, at which the question had been grappled with, Sir Wilfrid Laurier declared that there should be no more pilgrimages to Washington; and, if I am not mistaken, it was in 1911 that the United States Government decided to send delegates to Ottawa. Now, on looking at the agreement of 1911 it will be seen that it includes all the items which I have mentioned as being contained in the standing offer made by Sir John A. Macdonald in 1879. But the 1911 convention goes much further; it covers a wider range. Virtually all our natural products are to be found in it.

I was in the gallery of the House of Commons when Mr. Fielding brought in his convention, and I saw an extraordinary spectacle. Mr. Fielding was a master tactician. He was proceeding slowly through the whole gamut of our natural products on which he was obtaining reductions. Members on the opposition side could hardly bide

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