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London Advertiser

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MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 1924.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen at London, Jan. 11:

"Capital is timid; business is in a case of stagnation and we have retrogression instead of advance."

John J. Scully, general manager of the C. P. R., at Toronto, Jan. 11:

"More business will be done by the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1924 than the splendid record of 1923. Business conditions at present are quite satisfactory. I believe, in addition, that we will shortly see an improvement. I do not hold with those who prophesy business depression in this country. There is too much of that sort of thing. What we need is more confidence and more co-operation."

Mr. Meighen the Same.

The Meighen banquet in London was a success. The crowd was large and enthusiastic, the speeches fiery and to the taste of the Conservative school of thought.

Mr. Meighen has not changed; he cannot. He is the best nagger in public life in Canada. High priest of the school of blue ruin, he had nothing constructive. His whole plea was "If you do not elect a Conservative government in Canada, you will be ruined."

One or two of Mr. Meighen's statements are typical of the burden of his address:

"The tariff situation is at the bottom of the commercial stagnation that today pervades the country. Our tariff every session is determined by a process of log-rolling and bargaining designed to get Progressive votes. Capital is timid; business is in a state of stagnation and we have retrogression instead of advance."

The answer is that the Progressives voted almost to a man against the government on the budget. Mr. Meighen knows that; he was in the house when it took place.

He pays a mighty mean tribute to the people of Canada, who, facing a huge debt, the consolidation of a railways system that was bankrupt, but now fighting its way back to success, are able to show increasing trade returns month after month.

"Business is in a state of stagnation." That is the message that this Jeremiah of the Conservatives has inscribed on the banner he has been trailing from province to province. That is the whine that he harped on until the people of Western Canada were longing for the day when he would close his campaign of gloom and depart. That is the message he brings to Ontario, "Business is in a state of stagnation." Ontario will thank Mr. Meighen heartily if he will hang his crepe elsewhere.

Statement No. 2 from the Conservative leader:

"This Dominion under free trade would be a mere commercial subservency to the great republic to the south, and the vast mass of the people of this country know it now."

Mr. Meighen is the one person talking free trade.

The King government is not talking free trade.

Mr. Meighen has sat across from its members in the house for two years, and he cannot, dare not, say that they are free traders, or that they have moved in that direction. And yet, for political purposes, addressing a body of men who are inclined toward a high tariff, he seeks to leave the impression that there is a free trade movement on by the government at Ottawa.

Mr. Meighen is capable of better things. He has a wide knowledge of Canadian and world affairs, an easy command of good language, and the faculty of presenting a case well. With these qualities he should be able to speak constructively and advise positively. But he does not, and therefore we take it that he cannot. His only cure is in the following:

"The Conservative party, which in days gone by has been called upon, and never in vain, to rescue Canada from conditions such as this, will soon come to office, and come to office unhampered, unshackled, unburdened by dishonest commitments which it cannot fulfill, but free and able to serve the people of this Dominion."

Old political clap-trap. This apostle of "business stagnation" has nothing new to offer. He has not budged from the path he travelled when the people of Canada turned him out bag and baggage in December of 1921.

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