

LIBERALS OF VICTORIA
ENDORSE RECIPROCITY

(Continued from page 3.)

that if the lumbermen were not good they had better look out. The feeling throughout the industry was that the opening of the American market meant to the British Columbia lumbermen practically everything, and did not mean, most not mean, that it was to be the rule of our forests. Sufficient information had been gathered by the Timber Commission to prove that by proper methods of forestry we would have a natural resource that could be perpetuated almost indefinitely.

The cry of a weakening of loyalty to the empire was laughed at by Mr. Brewster, and treated as an insult to Canadians. In the words of Mr. Fielding, the British preference might safely be left in the hands of those who created it. One strong feature of the new arrangement was that it entailed no treaty entanglement. It was masterly statesmanship when Canadian representatives returned with an agreement which depended on no treaty. (Hear, hear.) The tariff changes constituted the wisest, most sane, and most bit of business legislation to the credit of the Laurier government. (Cheers.)

As Mr. Brewster left for the legislature he was given a spontaneous tribute of cheers and applause.

Duncan Ross.—The great Cariboo, was the chief speaker of the evening, and was warmly welcomed by the audience. After a few introductory remarks he plunged into his subject, saying:

The question of reciprocity is not a new one. Indeed, it is older than the Dominion of Canada itself. Before the repeal of the corn laws in Great Britain colonial producers had a preferential market in Great Britain, but with the declaration for practical free trade, United States products came into direct competition with Canadian products in that market. This created considerable disarrangement of Canadian trade for the time being, and blue ruinists, whose descendants are among us to-day, could see nothing for Canada but annexation with the United States. Under the government and a Tory parliament in 1846 passed an address in which it was intimated that it was much to be feared that, because of the withdrawal of protection to Canadian products in the British markets, the people would be led to doubt whether remaining a portion of the British Empire would be that paramount advantage it was hitherto found to be. The reply of Mr. Gladstone, who was then colonial secretary, was a stinging rebuke to those fairweather loyalists, and he expressed the pious hope that the people of Canada were bound to the mother land by a firmer bond than a commercial one, and that the people of Canada did not desire that a market for their farm products should be maintained by a perpetual tax upon the people of England.

The Toronto Globe Comments.—The Toronto Globe said it was amusing to watch the effects of the new British policy upon the Tory members of the province. The comments of these members afforded an admirable illustration of the selfishness of Toryism, wrote that Liberal stalwart, George Brown. Give them the word, and they would desire, and they were brimful of loyalty. They would chant pious till they were sick, and drink goblets till they were blind, in praise of wise and benevolent government, and would call all the offices and all the emoluments, but let their interests, real or imaginary, be affected, and how soon did their loyalty evaporate. Now, there was talk of separation, and the people of the country unless the mother would continue to feed them in the methods prescribed by the child, true loyalty was estimated in pounds, shillings and pence. When these Tory members sustained a complete collapse. It was a strange thing, the Tory's loyalty. You might trample on every privilege, you might oppose the passage of every good law, you might even go so far as to buy the same goods from the United States by retail it becomes an act of disloyalty and we are to be told that British connection is imperilled. Is it not a little rubbish? (Hear, hear.)

History of Reciprocity.—Mr. McBride is not even true to the traditions of his own party, as the history of reciprocity negotiations will show. As I pointed out at the outset, up to the time of the repeal of the tariff in 1854, and continued until 1887, for twelve years there was the freest possible interchange of the products of the forest, the mine and the sea. Canada prospered as she never did before, and her loyalty to the mother country was not lessened. When this treaty was passed, the same blue ruin could see no other outcome than annexation with the United States. When the treaty was abrogated in 1896, some equally foolish people of the same political stripe believed that the derogation would force Canada into annexation with the United States, and the congressman went so far as to introduce a measure providing for the annexation of Canada. When colonial preference was abolished Canada was to be forced into a free market. When the reciprocity treaty was passed, it would lead to annexation, and when the reciprocity treaty was abrogated it would cause the annexation. (Laughter.) None of these things were stated, and it is not reasonable to argue now that our loyalty does in no way depend upon trade arrangements? Is it not reasonable to suppose that a people who will go into the market and meet the world's competition and at the same time give British goods a substantial preference in its own market, is sufficiently loyal to be able to make a trade agreement with its nearest neighbor without its loyalty being impaired? (Hear, hear.)

McBride and Ellison.—The premier of the province and his doughty finance minister, Mr. Price Ellison, have both declared against the

reciprocity agreement, and have both suggested the old Tory cry of lessening the tie that binds us to the mother land. Mr. Ellison has always been an enthusiastic booster for the Canadian and its magnificent fruit. After his recent visit to England he was gratified to hear him tell, in enthusiastic language, how British Columbia fruit met the fruit of the world, including the famous Hood River apples, in good old London, and invariably British Columbia fruit took first place. (Hear, hear.)

British Columbia fruit has no protection in the English market, 6,000 miles away, and it more than holds its own there. It is surely not the same Mr. Ellison who, with tears in his eyes and something in his voice, tells a sympathetic legislature that the British Columbia fruit industry is going to be ruined because it has no protection in a market at its very doors. Let me tell Mr. Ellison that Canadian cheese and Canadian bacon have overcome all competition in the English market, and Canadian fruit will no be the same at home or in England. (Hear, hear.)

I have no doubt that the preference of the British Columbia fruit-growers to be ruined if the government of the Dominion of Canada in its wisdom should not make a reasonable trade agreement with a view of securing a reduction of the high cost of living in this country. Let me tell him that the greatest competition to British Columbia fruit in the northwest market does not come from the United States, but from Ontario, and with a new market opened up in the great border cities of the United States, British Columbia will no longer be sold in Manitoba and in the Northwest, but right at the very doors of this province, across the border.

Mr. McBride is in rather a different position from his colleague. He has recently been foisted into the position of a national figure, and is now the 'white hope' of the badly disorganized Conservative party in Canada. When he discusses a national question he owes it to himself, and to the position which a great many people think he ought to occupy, that he should know that market. This created considerable disarrangement of Canadian trade for the time being, and blue ruinists, whose descendants are among us to-day, could see nothing for Canada but annexation with the United States. Under the government and a Tory parliament in 1846 passed an address in which it was intimated that it was much to be feared that, because of the withdrawal of protection to Canadian products in the British markets, the people would be led to doubt whether remaining a portion of the British Empire would be that paramount advantage it was hitherto found to be. The reply of Mr. Gladstone, who was then colonial secretary, was a stinging rebuke to those fairweather loyalists, and he expressed the pious hope that the people of Canada were bound to the mother land by a firmer bond than a commercial one, and that the people of Canada did not desire that a market for their farm products should be maintained by a perpetual tax upon the people of England.

Disloyalty from a Gentleman who has never seriously applied himself to the problems of government, who has permitted the lands of the province to be held by speculators, who has thereby retarded the production within the province of the natural products which are so essential for human food, who is thereby responsible for the outpouring of a high cost of living, the twenty-five or fifty cents a day, is more the patriot than the man who waves political opinions, and while he is thus employed, allows the public dole to fall into the hands of the American land-grabbers. (Applause.)

There is then that timid Tory, D. R. Ker, who is fearful about British connection, who can withstand all trade negotiations? It would be quite loyal for Brackman-Ker to purchase goods by wholesale in the United States for the purpose of making a profit on them, but while he is engaged in this, he is buying the same goods from the United States by retail it becomes an act of disloyalty and we are to be told that British connection is imperilled. Is it not a little rubbish? (Hear, hear.)

Liberalism for Low Tariffs.—The Liberal party has always been in favor of free trade relations, and in 1896 the country was under the national policy of high protection. After the reciprocity treaty of 1854 was passed, when a Canadian tariff was left with a small population, a scanty immigration, an empty Northwest, enormous additions to her public debt, a tariff that was oppressive to the consuming classes, restricted markets, and a saturation of political corruption.

The trade policy of the Liberal party was laid down at the National Liberal convention held at Ottawa in 1893. This convention decided that the tariff should be so arranged as to promote free trade with the whole world, and more particularly with Great Britain and the United States; further, "that having regard to the prosperity of Canada and the United States as adjoining countries with mutual interests it is desirable that there should be the most friendly relations and broad liberal trade intercourse between them; that the interests of the Dominion and the Empire should be materially advanced by the establishing of such relations; that the period of the old reciprocity treaty was one of marked prosperity to the British North American colonies."

Joint High Commission.—The Liberals came to office in 1896, and a joint high commission was appointed for the purpose of discussing with the United States government trade and other matters. The Canadian commissioners, Sir John Macdonald, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Richard Cartwright, Sir Louis Davies, and John Charlton, M. P., sat in Quebec from August to October, 1898, and in Washington from October, 1898, to January,

1899. This commission was not a success so far as a close trade relation was concerned, because the Canadian commissioners found that the Republican leaders then in power were high make a fair agreement with Canada, and Sir Wilfrid was so disgusted and disappointed that he made the announcement that he would make no further pilgrimages to Washington. (Applause.)

But there recently came a great awakening to the politicians of the United States. People rebelled against the high cost of living brought about by a high tariff. They demanded a revision of the tariff downwards, and they did not get it. Inaugural candidates sprang up in the forest states, and the leaders of the Republican party became alarmed. President Taft went to Albany to meet Mr. Fielding, for the purpose of discussing tariff arrangements with him, the first time a president of the United States ever came half way to meet Canada. He sent his chief experts to Ottawa, for the purpose of settling the tariff on a satisfactory basis. He was so pleased with the results of the conference, that he finally, at the invitation of the president, Messrs. Fielding and Patterson went to Washington, and concluded a trade agreement on the lines of the reciprocity policy, and in conformity with the trade policy laid down by the Liberal party in 1893.

Is it not a policy? (Applause.) Is it not a Liberal policy? (Hear, hear.) Is it not a policy in favor of the Liberal trade policy laid down by the national convention in 1893? If it was good policy then, it is good policy now. (Cheers.) After the Liberals came to power in 1896 a tariff commission was appointed for the purpose of enacting a tariff revising the tariff. The commission, in a moment, blundered into the Liberal promise to reduce the tariff. Iron duties were reduced; barbed wire and binder twine were placed on the free list; by law, and of the farmer; the duty on flour was reduced; the duty on sugar was substantially reduced; and the duty on the most of many farm necessities was reduced. Other reductions were made, and above all, the British preference of 33.1 per cent was placed upon the statute book. The duty on every article of British manufacture is one-third less than the general duty. (Applause.)

All these reductions lessened the burdens of the consuming classes but not the government's revenue. The cost of living has gone up by leaps and bounds, and in no part of Canada is the cost of living higher than in British Columbia, and in the city of Victoria. (Hear, hear.) Under these circumstances, there are many men, not blinded by party prejudice, who will say that the government should do nothing to ameliorate the condition of the great suffering classes in this country? (Applause.)

How It Affects Victoria.—Let us analyze the schedules of the agreement, and see how it would affect us in Victoria. I haven't time to take up all the items, and will only deal with a few, which we will immediately interested.

For the year to March 31, 1910, there was imported into Canada from the United States live cattle to the value of \$25,150, upon which there was collected a duty of 40 per cent, or \$10,060. Under the new reciprocity agreement, come in free.

For the same year horses were imported to the value of \$44,503, upon which there was collected a duty of 25 per cent, or \$11,126. Under the new agreement, come in free.

Sheep imported amounted to \$131,492, and the revenue from this source was \$32,872. Under the new agreement, come in free. The duty on poultry was 20 per cent. The importations amounted to \$141,483; the duty collected to \$28,297. Poultry, under the new agreement, is free. Cabbages, onions, tomatoes, and other vegetables, paid 30 per cent. The importations amounted to \$261,732, and the duty collected to \$78,520. Apples, under the new agreement, come in free.

There had a duty of 40 per cent. The importations amounted to \$155,339, and the duty collected to \$62,136. Under the new agreement, come in free. Melons and cantaloupes paid a customs tax of 30 per cent. The importations amounted to \$66,771; the duty collected to \$19,932. Apples, under the new agreement, come in free.

There was imposed on each duty of 30 per cent. The importations amounted to \$17,577; the duty collected to \$5,273. Under the new agreement, come in free. Cheaper Meat and Vegetables.

There are numerous other free articles in the schedule, but these are sufficient for the purpose of my argument. I have no hesitation in saying that, as a result of this new trade agreement, when put into effect, there should be reduced to the consumer from 30 to 50 per cent, mutton from 30 to 20 per cent, and pork from 30 to 20 per cent. Vegetables in scarce times should come in from California, with a reduction of at least one-quarter of present prices. Apples in the spring season should be reduced 20 per cent. And we should be so prosperous, with such a substantial reduction in the high cost of living, that we can afford to make a substantial reduction in the price of eggs should be reduced 10c. apiece in Seattle, and 15c. here. The price of eggs should be reduced 10c. apiece in Seattle, and 15c. here. Wheat and barley, which are not produced in British Columbia to any great extent, are needed for poultry raising in this province. The soft wheat winter wheat of Washington is especially useful for poultry raising. The reduction in the price of wheat will be 12c. a bushel, or 44 a ton, and on barley 15c. a bushel or 44 a ton.

Even garden seeds, which now bear 10 to 15 per cent duty, will be put on the free list. Packages costing a penny each in England are now retailed at 5c. each in British Columbia. We may occasionally enjoy oysters; but here in Victoria, where on their tables and consume articles imported from the United States. Why, in the name of common sense, if it was good to have these things and good to eat them when they had to pay duty on

them, is it bad to eat them free of duty? Are we any less loyal subjects of the king because we consume American products free of duty to-day than we consumed yesterday after paying the duty? And let me call this one further fact to your notice. Great Britain consumes one-third of the total exports of the United States. If they can do that and still float the Union-Jack there is a little room left for it to float in Canada, yet, with a reciprocity arrangement in effect, (Cheers.)

Mr. Drury concluded by moving the following resolution: "Resolved, that the Liberals of Victoria, in public meeting assembled, unanimously endorse the proposed tariff agreement between Canada and the United States."

James Paterson seconded this resolution, and when it was put to the meeting it was carried with unanimity, not a single dissenting voice being heard.

The meeting broke up after giving three cheers for Sir Wilfrid Laurier and singing the National Anthem.

SAVING TO THIS PROVINCE.—I need not point out to you that the greater portion of all these articles mentioned are imported into the province of British Columbia because none of the other provinces are to any great extent importers of foodstuffs, with the exception of fruit to the Northwest, and the greater portion of the foodstuffs which are mentioned would come to the people of British Columbia. (Hear, hear.)

In other words, an analysis of the schedule would lead one to the conclusion that so far as the application of a tariff affects the cost of living the saving to the people of British Columbia should be 25 per cent of the present cost. (Cheers.) Let me put it another way. If in this city under a wise municipal administration, which we always expect and are generally disappointed in, this amounting to \$25,000,000, that would be kept open during the summer, and a certain amount of advertising could be done.

W. F. Roberts believed that 100 business men could be secured who would give \$25 each and he would be one of them.

The report of the committee was adopted, and in order to carry on the office, in the meantime, it was agreed that the committee should guarantee \$25 for the next month's clerical office expenses.

The secretary, E. K. Beeton, reported that no acknowledgement had yet been made by the Great Northern officials, of the representations made on the subject of a better platform at the station and an improved passenger car service, out of Nelson.

H. E. Douglas said the local officials of the company were thoroughly in sympathy with the movement to secure these improvements. The general officials promised to have the matter of the station would be taken up when the estimates were considered.

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TO WAGE WAR FOR "OPEN SHOP."—Washington, D. C., Feb. 17.—An announcement that \$500,000 is being raised by the unions of the country to finance the struggle of the unions of Los Angeles "open shop" conditions, was made here to-day by President Samuel Gompers, of the American Federation of Labor. His collection, it is said, will mark the opening of the biggest fight between capital and labor that the United States has ever seen.

Appearing to all union men to contribute to the war, the name of "justice and liberty." Gompers to-day is sending out an appeal for funds to various cities and Secretary Frank Morrison of the Federation, announced that already contributions are streaming in. Union leaders declare that the National Association of Manufacturers is backing the Merchants' & Manufacturers Association of Los Angeles in its fight against unionism, and it is the intention to stamp out the union movement in southern California.

Although the labor leaders refused to confirm rumors that this action follows a decision reached at a secret conference in St. Louis when the American Federation held its convention last fall, it is generally accepted here as true that the movement is the culmination of carefully formed plans at the time of the strike in Los Angeles.

All along the coast from Seattle to Los Angeles, it is said, the labor unions have for some time been accumulating members 25 cents each week in preparation for the struggle. To this fund, according to Gompers' admission, will now be added the cash collected in the strike in Los Angeles.

Information was given out here that the struggle in Los Angeles is to be only one of a series. The unions, it is said, have determined to "down" the open shop practically all over the country. The fight won in Los Angeles, to carry the war up the coast to the Canadian border. They are determined, it is declared, that the coast must be unionized from Mexico to Canada, and will concentrate effort of the labor unions to do this.

Strike Probable.—Los Angeles, Cal., Feb. 17.—That the opening of the proposed industrial war in Los Angeles will be fired between March 7 and 15, when a general strike of the building trade unions here is called, was the belief expressed here by the labor press.

H. E. Douglas said the local officials of the company were thoroughly in sympathy with the movement to secure these improvements. The general officials promised to have the matter of the station would be taken up when the estimates were considered.

On motion of F. A. Starkey and Jas. Johnston, it was decided to apply to the railway commission for both a new station and an improved passenger service, this application to be made at the earliest hearing.

IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.—Melbourne, Feb. 17.—The need for a secretariat as a channel of communication between the Overseas Dominions is strongly advocated by the prime minister of the Commonwealth, Mr. Fisher. He intends to take up the subject at the meeting of the Imperial conference in London. His idea of the work of the secretariat he makes clear in the following statement: "I think the prime minister of the Overseas Dominions should negotiate direct through the