

# Two Sides of Protection

From the Manchester Guardian (Eng.)

The more our tariff "reformers" look at the great revival of free trade feeling in Canada, the less they like it. It hits them all ways. Canada was to be our model in sentiment; hers, we were told, was the clear and strong vision of national youth; our bear-eyed old England—how these imperialists despise England—was to trust to the inspiration of the younger nation begins to use its strong young eyes to see through tariff "reform." Colonial agriculture, again was to be demanded of English bread eaters and meat eaters by preferential tariffs; it was agriculture, above all industries, that made men; mere trifles of no social and political value like the Lancashire cotton trade or the Yorkshire woollen trade might perish, but leave us still our ideal Canadian grain grower from the West—and now this paragon says that he wants no preferential tariffs, no tariffs of any kind, at English custom houses or at Canadian custom houses either. All he wants is to get the Canadian

profit from a conviction in purchasers' mind that however bad or dear his wares may be, still there is no hope of getting at the good or cheap wares which may abound elsewhere. This screw the Canadian Manufacturers' Association have put upon the farmers of Canada in a manner which partakes of the ideal about as little as any sharp trade move can. About three-quarters of the people of Canada live by agriculture, and, to save the protectionist manufacturers from the dreadful necessity of depending for prosperity upon the merits of their own wares, the farmers must buy dear reaping machines, dear carts, dear fences, dear clothes, dear sugar—dear flour even, for a frugal milling and elevator combine controls the price of the farmer's corn on the very way from his fields to his own mouth. Under these exactions farming in Eastern Canada has dwindled; a sheep cannot live wholly on being sheared, and the Canadian Manufacturers' Association sheared the eastern farmers so incessantly and so close that, as farmers, many of them perished. In the western provinces a sturdier or a more desperate set of farmers are so rude as to resist this eternal fleecing, and even declare, through one of their trade organs, that "Protection is robbery of the producers." They coincide wholeheartedly in Sir Wilfrid Laurier's recent remark that "Protection is a great wrong and makes millions dishonest one to another. It makes the individual selfish and dishonest, and inculcates the vicious principle of expecting value where none is given."

### Commercial Patriotism

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association, then, are the practical men. The idealists of the party are, we imagine, mostly very pure and ardent, though not very humble, young souls, with the common passion for handling big, abstract political ideas and imaginary forces. They write in the London papers, and can always tell you that something in world-politics is the key to everything else, that this, that, and the other is the central link in the chain of Empire, and that whatever their party

ments of the tariff "reform" idealists in the London press would probably send the keen practitioners of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association into convulsions of laughter, and the workings of those practitioners' minds would, if wholly understood, probably fill our blameless amateurs of statecraft with deep distress. Still, there is a sort of alliance. The Canadian Protectionists work with their whole souls to extort what they can for the moment from their fellow-Canadians no matter though they half extinguish Canadian farming and half empty one of England's granaries in doing it. The manipulators of loose thoughts and vague emotions are rather heartened up than not for the production of rhetorical gas when they see the unlucky western farmer taxed past endurance. For their own minds are so full of sentimental generalities about patriotic sacrifice that when they see a British subject

sacrificed by their party they begin at once to have noble emotions; they are Abrahams offering up their Isaacs; or, if they are not quite so amiable, then the victim, they say, is a Jonah; out with him, lest the ship sink. We cannot say that the western farmer is thus placed between the upper and the nether millstone, for though the Canadian Manufacturers' Association is hard enough to represent the nether, our sentimental protectionists are pulp. But he is not situated pleasantly, and a study of his situation will certainly raise in many of us a desire that in the control of the Empire's policies there might be rather less both of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association's notion of doing business and our own tariff idealists' airy "viewiness." The same political temper is surely something about equidistant from these extremes of selfishness and of sentimentalism.

# Ontario Farmers and The Tariff

By E. C. Drury, Master of the Dominion Grange in the Toronto Sun

In view of the persistent attempts to misrepresent the anti-protectionist attitude which the farmers of the West have so vigorously manifested during the recent tour of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a purely local affair, the outcome of local conditions, and unsupported by the farmers of the East, I have been instructed by the Executive of the Grange to issue a statement defining our position. In doing so, I speak with authority, for the attitude of the Grange on this question is a settled policy, consistently followed through years, and unanimously supported by the organization. That it has the support of the unorganized farmers of the Province, as well is sufficiently shown by the fact that the agricultural press unanimously support it, and that no dissenting voice has been raised by anyone following general farming in Ontario.

### Farmers of all Canada United

Emphatically, the farmers of Ontario, and, I believe, of Quebec, and the Maritime Provinces, as well, stand with the farmers of the West in their demand for real and substantial tariff reduction. That they have not voiced it so strongly

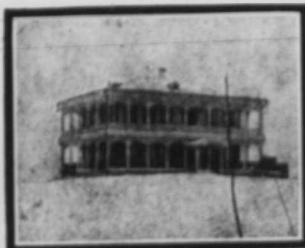
The present tariff is indefensible on any ground. It is not, whatever may be said to the contrary, a revenue tariff, but rather a protective tariff, with revenue as an incidental. No one doubts this. It is so constructed that its highest rates are imposed on those things manufactured in Canada, while its free list is largely made up of raw material for manufacturers, and of those things not made in Canada. Much greater revenue, with less burden upon the people, could be obtained by a tariff stripped of its protective features.

Protection may be defended as a means whereby "infant industries" may be fostered, but this defense cannot be applied to the case of Canada now. Our industries have long passed the "infant" stage, and our Manufacturers' Association can boast, and with reason, of their power to "make the grass grow on the streets of every town in Canada." The tendency in manufacturing concerns now is plainly toward centralization, and it is safe to say that any new concern starting business now would meet with opposition from home manufacturers more to be dreaded than any from abroad, even under absolute free trade. There is little doubt that under the cover of the tariff many understandings and combinations exist among our manufacturers, and that these are used to restrain expansion, and to crush weaker rivals. Protection in Canada is now defeating the end for which it was created.

### Protection and Labor

Protection in Canada is of very little value in raising the wages of the workman, while it works him real injury in raising the cost of his living. Protected manufacturers show no disposition to pay any higher wages than can be helped, and there are cases on record where great manufacturing concerns, able in at least one case, to pay 50 per cent. dividends on the cost of its common stock have cut wages mercilessly on the first indication of a depression.

But it is in its relation to the farming class that the disastrous effect of the tariff is most keenly felt. For some years those of us who insisted that the farming class were not prospering as they should were laughed at. We were told that the continual decrease in farming population was not due to any lack of prosperity, but to the fact that "those who used to swing the cradle and bin the grain were now in the factories making binders." Then, last winter, when a decided shortage of farm products became apparent, quite a furor of excitement was created, and all sorts of investigations were proposed. Since then the farmer has been treated, gratis, to a great deal of advice (given, however, by those who never farmed), as to how he should use his opportunities. The fact is that the farmer is using his opportunities as best he can. He has made wonderful progress in learning new methods, as the history of our Farmers' Institute will show. He has shown surprising aptitude in adapting himself to new conditions. He is, however, handicapped by lack of capital, and it



Peter Veregin's Mansion, north of Veregin Village

Manufacturers' Association off his back; he is quite ready to face the world's competition in English markets if the protectionists will not tie him hand and foot with the tariffs which make everything expensive that he uses on his farm. The consternation of our own protectionists is not at all excessive; for nothing in the recent politics of the world, not even the rising movement against high tariffs in the United States,—and every tariff policy is, willy-nilly, a high tariff policy in effect, if not in intention,—has gone so far to reduce them to a position of controversial helplessness and absurdity. There is some excuse for the label of conflicting attempts to talk the awkward fact away or scold it out of its awkwardness—the simultaneous assertions that the Canadian free trade revival is quite small and that it is very large and very wicked, that Canada as a whole sets her face "like a flint" against free trade and that Canada as a whole is sadly shaky, more shame to her, that bills of attainder would be the really sensible way of dealing with the grave menace to hopes of a protectionist empire and that all the fuss amounts to this—that a few semi-Yankee farmers in the West read some pessimistic free trade article by Goldwin Smith and it went to their heads.

### Practical and Ideal

Moments of sudden agitation and wrath are also moments of self-exposure, and this moment is a particularly good one for studying the two distinct sides of the Imperial protectionist policy which the Canadian farmers are upsetting. Like most other policies, it has an ideal and practical side; what is peculiar to it is the almost complete separation of these two and at the same time the particularly vapory idealism of the ideal side and the particularly sharp, hard, and narrow practicality of the practical side. The practical side is looked after by the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. The political organization of those Canadian manufacturers who would rather have Canadians buy their wares because they must than because they will. That, of course, is the ideal of protected manufacturers everywhere. The free trade manufacturer looks for his profit to an opinion in purchasers' minds that his goods are the best worth getting; the protectionist manufacturer seeks his



A Scene in Yorkton at Sir Wilfrid's Celebration

is attending to at the moment is the crux or the pivot or the nodal point of British history, or world history, or the history of the solar system, or anything. Well, on the subject of the Canadian farmers these idealists have been in full blast. They want the prairie farmer to buy dear reaping machines because, if he won't, the "prairie link" in the "chain of Empire" is "fractured" and "the parted ends of the chain sling wide and sink in the ocean." The farmer is to put up with bad or dear paint for his fences because it is his most sacred duty to "hamper trade north and south" and to "stimulate it east and west." Some of the largest forces in the universe are called out and marshalled to prove that a Canadian farmer ought to put up with a shoddy coat at the price of a good one, or a good one at the price of two. The argu-

has been due to the fact that they have not had the same opportunity. Had Sir Wilfrid toured Ontario during the past summer, as he did the West, he would have met with the same emphatic protests of the farmers against the continuance of the protective system. In 1905 representatives from the Grange and Farmers' Association met the Tariff Commission many times, and always with the same demand for lower tariff. Since then it has supported the same demand by deputations to Ottawa, when a too complaisant government showed symptoms of yielding to the pressure of protected interests. It stands today even more firmly for the same thing, and when the organized farmers of all Canada send their deputations to Ottawa at the opening of the next session the voice of Ontario will be heard with no uncertain sound.