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TARIFF CHANGES.

In 1879 Canada adopted a protective tariff, which was declared to be an embodiment of National Policy. But every year since there has been more or less of "tariff-tinkering," and therefore, say some, the N. P. is a failure. If it be as near perfection as is claimed for it, why this need of amending it every year? This is not a very brilliant bit of argument, nor does it do much credit to the common sense of those who use it. In the first place it is not humanly possible for any man or set of men to frame a perfect customs tariff the first time of trying. A Minister of Finance to do this would require to be a "heaven-born statesman," indeed. In the next place, the spread of manufactures and the shifting of their centres, improvements, and the ever-varying currents of trade, are continually changing the situation, so that the rule that worked well a few years ago is found to work badly now, and has to be amended. Further the greater the progress in arts and manufactures is with the world in general, and with any one country in particular, the more frequently must the tariff of that particular country be amended to match the changed conditions. The more progressive any country actually is, the more frequently will its tariff require to be changed to suit the times. That is, of course, in details only, for the case we are supposing is that of a country which, like our own, has adopted protection as a principle. The details may have to be changed, in order more fully to carry out the principle upon which the whole system rests. And this is precisely what is aimed at in the schedule of tariff changes elsewhere printed. To make our protective tariff effective for its purpose, to make it work the way we want it, is what we are driving at. This may be accomplished, sometimes by increasing duties, and sometimes by reducing or abolishing them. On the face of this year's changes it is evident that, as far as they go, their effect must be to make the tariff more protective than it was before.

As one of the Ottawa correspondents remarks, Sir Leonard did not go as fully as on former occasions into the effect of the National Policy on the various industries of the country, acting on the sensible motive that the benefits of the policy are so manifest and so well understood that minute elucidation has become unnecessary; but he quoted some of the more salient evidences of the enlargement of home industries, such as the enormous increase in the import of raw material. On this point he said:—

In 1877-8 the quantity of wool imported into Canada for manufacturing purposes was 6,230,084 pounds, against 9,646,

684 pounds in 1881-2, an increase of 50 per cent, besides an increased consumption of our own wool. The raw cotton imported in 1877-78 amounted to 7,243,413 pounds, against 19,342,059 pounds, or an increase of over 175 per cent. Nothing can testify more accurately to the increased manufacture of cotton goods in the country than the extent of the imports of raw material, because we have none of it in the country. Then with reference to hides, in 1877-78 the value of the imports was \$1,207,300, while in 1881-82 the value was \$2,200,000, an increase of nearly one hundred per cent. Then the consumption of coal is a very good test of the extension of machinery driven by it. In 1877-78 the consumption of coal, not including British Columbia, was 1,665,401 tons, and in 1881-82, 2,525,297 tons, an increase of 859,896 tons. That gives some idea of the demand for the article that is necessary to drive the machinery of our various industries in Canada. Then we have another test. Go where you will, my experience has been that the manufacturers of machinery are full of orders, so full, in fact, that they are unable to supply their customers, who are therefore obliged to go to the United States. Wherever we go we find the manufacturers smiling and looking perfectly satisfied with what they have to do, and what is the fact? In 1877-78 the value of machinery imported into Canada was \$283,633, while in 1881-82 it was \$2,194,446, an increase of nearly seven hundred per cent., besides the greatly increased quantity of machinery manufactured in the country, which gives unmistakable proofs as to the increase of our manufacturing industries. As to our friends' fear about the prosperity or progress of our manufacturing industries, I think that fact ought to be sufficient to quiet them. It was also alleged that the tariff would increase the price of coal and would not promote the development of the coal beds in Canada. I think, in 1879, I stated that the opinion of the Government was that in four or five years the quantity of coal produced in the Dominion of Canada would increase 400,000 tons. Within four years it has increased between 500,000 and 600,000 tons.

With regard to the re-establishment and great expansion of the sugar-refining industry under the N. P., and the extension of Canada's importation of the article direct from places of growth, he said:—

Then again, there was another industry the Government stated distinctly it was their policy to encourage—the re-establishment and development of the refining of sugar here, and our sugar trade with the countries where produced. We had lost our direct trade with the sugar producing countries to such an extent that in 1877-78 but six per cent. of the sugar consumed in the Dominion came direct from those countries. That has been changed, last year 87 per cent. of the quantity consumed came direct from the sugar-producing countries. That shows pretty clearly, I think, that we have re-established our trade with the West Indies. It was said, however, that this policy would put millions into the pockets of a few rich men, the sugar-refiners, and give employment to a limited number, but