

custom of politicians. The Western people now know definitely just where Mr. Borden and his party stand in relation to the tariff and just what tariff legislation may be expected if Mr. Borden becomes premier. Mr. Borden is firmly opposed to reciprocity with the United States in natural products and is also strongly in support of a protectionist tariff. He cannot quarrel with the Western people if they choose to differ with him upon tariff matters. They are frank to agree with him when they believe he is right, and equally ready to disagree when they believe he is wrong. Mr. Borden must remember that the determination of the Western people to throw off the shackles of protection is not of political origin. When the growing resentment against protection and its accompanying evils first found articulate voice in the West a few years ago, Mr. Borden and his party were in harmony with the government in maintaining a high protective tariff wall around Canada. The Western people took up the matter independently and from the view point of the common people. From the economic standpoint they saw that protection was a huge and unnecessary burden upon the necks of the wealth producers. They have studied the questions as fully as have any of the politicians of Canada, and are equally capable of forming their own opinions upon economic questions. No man can convince the Western people that a tariff which puts exorbitant profits into the hands of the Canadian promoters and financiers is for the country's welfare. We believe, and with good reason, that there is not in existence today a community of people so well informed upon matters of national importance as the people of the three Prairie Provinces. While the agitation against protection was gaining ground in the West it was also making progress in Ontario as well as in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. The monster delegation of farmers that filled the House of Commons chamber on December 16 last, was but an outward manifestation of the deep-seated feeling of resentment throughout Canada against the system which has been fostered and supported by both political parties for the express benefit of less than five per cent. of the population of Canada. In the face of such a feeling the government deemed it wise to accede to a small part of the farmers' demands. The reciprocity agreement with the United States was the result. The government is still very strongly in support of protection and is assisting to build up monopolies by its tariff legislation. The reciprocity agreement is, however, a few bricks knocked off the tariff wall and is a beginning in the right direction. It does not affect the manufacturers but is practically a farmers' compact only in its effect. It is only a fraction of what the farmers demanded and of what the farmers are still demanding and will eventually secure. No one for a moment suggests that there would have been any reciprocity agreement had it not been for the organized effort on the part of the farmers. Even though the agreement embodied but a part of their demands the farmers accepted it. They did not act like politicians and declare that the government was the best in the world, or that this one act squared all accounts against the government. But like sensible business men engaged in the profession of agriculture they declared that the reciprocity agreement was a good business proposition and that they hoped to see it placed upon the statute books of Canada. Immediately the reciprocity agreement is fastened down securely the attack will be turned even more effectively against the citadel of protection. In the light of this situation Mr. Borden and his party in the House of Commons have chosen to deny to the farmers of Canada even this little fraction of relief from the oppression under which they have labored since confederation. Nor has Mr. Borden in his speeches since he came to the West offered any alternative which will give any hope of relief. He offers a tariff commission to investigate and recommend, and also a scheme of preferential trade within the em-

pire. Mr. Borden says that the "tariff should be based upon business principles that would appeal to common sense, reason and fairness." Now everybody believes that. But everybody is not agreed as to what is "common sense, reason and fairness." The present tariff certainly possesses those qualities in but a very limited degree. If a tariff commission is appointed it may be composed of the most intelligent, independent (politically) and able men that can be found in Canada and yet be utterly unsatisfactory. Any tariff commission must have some basis to start upon. Is that basis to be protection or revenue? Again, what power is to be delegated to such a tariff commission? A board of experts with full power to call for information incidental to tariff matters, such information to be given to the public, would undoubtedly be of benefit. But all tariff legislation must be enacted by Parliament and the recommendations of such a commission would be of little use if they did not conform to the will of the people. By all means let us have all the information available, no matter what name the board of experts may be called. The protected interests are all in favor of tariff commissions. They know from experience that such commissions are but employees of the government of the day, and as such look well after the interests of the manufacturers. There is no tariff commission in any country that has any power in tariff making, and in Canada there has never been any that has been other than a bulwark to protection. There are possibilities in the theory of a tariff commission but the people of Canada will be pardoned if, in view of Mr. Borden's statements upon protection, they do not look with favor upon his scheme to appoint a commission as a means of settling the tariff controversy.

Now in regard to Mr. Borden's attitude upon the questions of imperial trade preference the organized farmers have already expressed themselves. Such a scheme cannot be carried into execution without altering the fiscal system of Great Britain and increasing the cost of foodstuffs to the British consumer. Britain already gives us free entry for all our exports and we cannot ask her for more. If Britain had a protective tariff then we might ask for reciprocal preference, but to ask the "mother of nations" to forsake the policy which has given her the commercial supremacy of the world is certainly not practical. Canada must make her own tariff laws and Britain hers. Again, any such preference could only be secured by compelling the British workman to pay a higher price for bread made from Canadian wheat. No one can gainsay this fact. We have yet to see the farmer in Canada who desires to have the British workman placed in the same position in regard to bread as is the Canadian farmer in regard to farm implements, cement and a score of other tariff enhanced articles. There are no Canadian farmers so selfish as to demand a better price for their products when they know it can be secured only at the expense of the people of Britain. The Canadian farmer asks only free entrance to the markets of the world, and he then feels quite competent to take care of himself.

Mr. Borden asserts his sincerity in his opposition to reciprocity and we accept his declaration. But he must realize that in opposing freedom of trade he is allying himself with interests whose claims of sincerity cannot be other than hypocrisy. These interests control immense wealth that has been amassed, not by fair and honest effort, but by means of special privileges that have been granted by legislation. These interests have nothing whatever to lose through the reciprocity agreement. They are shrewd enough to see, however, that if the tariff is once removed from farm products and the farmers fully realize that the so-called protection they have been receiving is a sham, that they will then demand the removal of protection from all other manufactures. For this reason these interests are spending huge sums of money on a campaign against reciprocity. They are

subsidizing the press of Eastern Canada to publish articles against the agreement and are forming "National" leagues to "foster the Canadian spirit." Of course these interests are working upon both parties. We have no political party in Canada free from the influence of the big interests. The leaders of the two parties may not be dominated by these interests but that does not show that the two parties are not closely allied with the money power of the country. Many of the politicians who are making public speeches in favor of the reciprocity agreement are loud in their condemnation of Special Privilege. But in view of their declarations in 1893, and the fact that the tariff is still untouched, the people of Canada may well ask that some action be taken by the government, at least upon the tariff upon implements and cement, before all their present day declarations are accepted at face value. Agricultural implements and cement can be placed upon the free list irrespective of the reciprocity agreement.

In our issue of May 17, we publish the following statement:

Senator Lyman Melvin Jones, president of the Massey-Harris Co., has gone to the Coronation. Considering the great service he has conferred upon the people of Great Britain by selling them his farm implements cheaper than he sells them in Canada, we should not be surprised if the Senator came back with a "Sir" attached to his name.

Our readers will see that we have the gift of prophecy in a slight degree. In this case it was merely necessary to read the signs of the times. Of course the title bestowed upon the Senator was at the suggestion of the Premier of Canada. Possibly it was to console the wounded feelings of the senator, whose pocket-book will be slightly interfered with by the reciprocity agreement, that the title was forced upon him.

If the government means to take over the terminal elevators and place them in a position to afford relief to the Grain Growers it should be done immediately Parliament resumes. There has been unlimited talk on the subject. It is a small proposition as compared with the guarantee of \$35,000,000 to Mackenzie & Mann, and that deal occupied but a few minutes of the time of Parliament.

If the bestowal of a knighthood upon Max Aitken, the cement combine promoter, was due to a recommendation of the Canadian government it deserves the severest condemnation. In view of the investigation now being made into the cement merger, such an honor bestowed upon the moving spirit and chief beneficiary of the merger is a direct slap in the face to the Canadian advocates of a square deal.

At the rate Max Aitken is going he will shortly be a member of the peerage. A few of those millions he made out of the Cement Merger placed into the "war chest" should be sufficient to enroll his name upon the list of titled nobility. Sometimes people leave their country for their country's good.

Mr. Borden declares that reciprocity, if carried to its logical conclusion, means "political absorption." That is annexation. We haven't noticed any nation absorbing Great Britain in spite of her free trade policy. There is an equal danger that Canada will be absorbed—no more; no less.

If the government continues its present attitude of holding in "abeyance" the matter of operating, the people of the West may take it for granted that the road will be handed over to Mackenzie & Mann as soon as it is completed.

When Parliament resumes on July 18, it will be time for a vote upon the reciprocity agreement. There will be no excuse for further debate. All that can be said has been said and there is no sense in rehashing it.

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