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STEEL RAILS.

The *Toronto Globe* in one of its chronic whines against the N.P. asks:—

Will the brethren be good enough to explain why, despite Sir Leonard's promise of a free trade cheapness, such fundamental articles as iron and steel, coal, coal oil, sugar, barbed wire, cottons, etc., are dearer in Canada to-day than they are in the States, though the States is not a free trade country.

This is supposed to be an argument in favor of unrestricted reciprocity, the idea being to show that the N.P. had not effected the cheapening of these articles to the American standard, and was not likely to do so, and therefore, cheapness being desirable, the best thing to be done to effect it would be unrestricted reciprocity. Of course the answer to this is, that the means by which this cheapness was attained in the United States would also bring it about in Canada, and if Canadian protection has not yet done as much as American protection in cheapening manufactures, it can only be that the quality or extent of our protection is not equal to that in the United States. In the case of iron and steel, alluded to by the *Globe*, and also in a great many other cases, we know that under the higher American duties these industries have flourished and

developed to a wonderful extent, while at the same time the prices of them have been lowered to a point which causes the *Globe* to call attention to their cheapness. Protection has done this in the United States, and would do it in Canada if we had just that sort of protection. But we have not got it. It is true some of the articles alluded to by the *Globe* are upon the dutiable list, but references to the tariff schedules of the two countries shows that in about all of them the American duties are much higher than the Canadian duties; and it is therefore clear that if we hope and expect to cheapen these articles manufactured in Canada to the American standard, we must approximate our tariff to the American standard.

While our American friends, irrespective of party, unanimously declared that protection has been the means of building up and developing the manufacturing industries of their country, and that the competition evolved out of this development has brought the cost of production to a minimum, the *Globe* sees proper to ignore that influence; for in the very same article from which we quote, and within ten lines of the above quotation it says:—

Here we are in the closing days of 1891, face to face with the McKinley tariff, of its kind the most cruel instrument of torture ever devised.

There does not seem to be a doubt that the McKinley tariff has come to stay; and if it is the cruel instrument of torture the *Globe* represents it to be, why, pray, is that journal so anxious for Canada to be brought under the operations of it? We know that the *Globe* professes to be an ardent advocate of free trade, and that it has often used its seductive arguments in that direction; and the only reasonable explanation of its present position is, that it would rather have unrestricted reciprocity, including that cruel instrument of torture—the McKinley tariff—than the more moderate protection afforded by the N.P., and the maintenance of our present political connection with Great Britain.

There is another feature of this question which should be well considered. The *Globe* speaks approvingly of unrestricted reciprocity because of the great cheapness of iron and steel in the United States. In other issues of this journal we have shown that the importations of manufactures of iron and steel into Canada amount to over 600,000 tons annually, and that a very large portion of these come from the United States, the "country where that most cruel instrument of torture"—the McKinley tariff—has full sway; and that if we desire to manufacture such articles in Canada, we can only hope to do it by proper protection. There is one item in this list, however, which has never been protected by the tariff, and, according to the *Globe's* arguments, this article should now be produced in large quantities in Canada. We allude to steel rails. In formulating protection regard was had for the fact that there were then no steel works in the country, that the production of pig iron was exceedingly limited; and that as our railway system was then only in course of development, it would be better to defer imposing any duty upon steel rails. This argument appeared to be sufficient to shape and influence legislation at the time. Steel rails have always been on the free list, and no steel rail was ever manufactured in Canada, nor is it probable there will ever be under the circumstances. But Canada is a large consumer of steel rails, and the manu-