

Christianity, the great ideal of the people as it was originally preached, is applicable first and foremost to the poor. But who in the wide world has tried to monopolize it, to dictate about it and to patronize it? The rich. God forbid that the rich should try to get into Heaven, for they will find it more difficult of entry than even the Scriptures have said! Their selfishness, their active hostility to the great body of the people, their hostility to any consideration of reason in the treatment of affairs will bring its revenge upon them; Nemesis awaits them, and it will be some satisfaction to see what it does with them ultimately.

In a word, we have a country with boundless resources, we have a people energetic, ambitious, well-intentioned, and desirous of getting on, but with no great power of settling their own affairs. That power rests largely with Capital and with those men who undertake to represent the people in houses of parliament. And if those people to whom I have last referred do not show consideration for the mass of the people, what can there be but discontent and dissatisfaction and an uprising of the people to seize the reins of power, to seize those resources which lie near at hand and which would satisfy all their wants and give them that labour which they are willing to expend in the satisfaction of such wants, but which they cannot afford under present conditions.

We talk of protection, which is a most admirable form when we speak of it as self-control. My hon. friend from Brome (Mr. McMaster) shakes his head, but if he is to be a consistent Free Trader his motto must be: Let the Devil take the hindmost. There is absolutely no qualification of Free Trade, no qualification of free competition, no opposition whatever to the importation of Chinese labour, no possibility of regulation. Oh, I have read Adam Smith, Ricardo, John Stuart Mill, and his father James Mill; I know them all word for word. You cannot fool me. Their idea was to take the bonds off industry, to let industry go free. And what happened? Of course, Capital in a short time had complete mastery of the situation, and the people became as nothing. Our friend John Bright was perfectly willing to see men, women and children working fifteen hours a day.

Mr. McMASTER: Mr Speaker, I want to correct my hon. and learned friend, because that is the second time he has repeated that slander against John Bright. John Bright did not object to factory laws protecting

[Mr. Burnham.]

children. My hon. friend should not make such a statement; it is not true.

Mr. BURNHAM: In the English House of Commons he voted against the laws for shortening the hours of labour.

Mr. McMASTER: Not the hours of labour for children.

Mr. BURNHAM: I say he did, and it was the greatest possible surprise to the people of England. When the member for Rochdale, as John Bright was, addressed the people of Birmingham, they were very much taken with his plea for lower prices of food. They said they could not understand, however, why he was so opposed to shorter hours of labour and opposed to the relief of children, at least, if not of women, from long working hours. But he himself had shares in the Rochdale factories, and he began to shiver and tremble lest this freedom of trade, carried too far, might interfere with his pocket. His humanity was academic; it was not real.

Protectionists above all things seek to control the affairs of the country, to put them on a reasonable basis, to make them like a reciprocating engine so that they will work harmoniously. Protectionists do not want any one class to control the country. They do not want the farmer to say: "I do not care a brass farthing for the manufacturer or the wage earner, I want to get my goods from the Chinese workmen if they are cheap enough." Much as I esteem the farmer, if he only knows it, that doctrine will mean finally the sale of his own soul.

I am a Protectionist because I have some consideration for the people. It is not the protection of the capitalist or even of the wage-earner that I care about. I am anxious to see our industries so controlled that all men can be made to fit in reasonably together and all people given a fair chance. Let us have fair play. It is idle to pick out instances in which protection has not been up to the mark. We all know that. We all know there are people in churches who pretend to be good, but who ought to be in gaol. We know there are people sheltering themselves under protection and advocating further measures for their own selfish interests.

The whole trouble arises because some of these gentlemen have not at all considered the case broadly and exhaustively. They are so anxious to have all difficulties cast aside, being perfectly willing to sacrifice the people if it will result in success to themselves. That is what Free Trade means, and that is what the people know it will result in if we do not put the brakes on