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CIRCULATION.

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EAST AND WEST.

Mr. Kipling, the chanticleer of Empire, once wrote to the effect that East is East, and West is West. He added some remarks upon the entire improbability of a meeting between the two. Indeed he went so far as to asseverate that that meeting would not take place until Judgment Day.

Several historic assertions are on record as to the precise date of Judgment Day. None of these assertions has been proved correct. Thus we have no means of judging the accuracy of Mr. Kipling's statement. Yet we are confronted with the fact that a meeting must soon take place between Canada West and Canada East. And this is why.

Nova Scotian coal operators are traditionally opposed to anything resembling reciprocity in coal as between Canada and the United States. Their reasons are obvious, numerous, and well set forth. Albertan and British Columbian coal operators are strongly in favour of reciprocity for reasons equally cogent. Heretofore Nova Scotia has had the stronger voice at Ottawa. But now the West is vocal.

Our honoured Premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, has but now completed an official tour of Western Canada. On not one, but on many occasions, good citizens made opportunities to pour into his ear their complaints on matters pertaining to tariff and trade. At Lethbridge, particularly, he listened to the sorrows of local coal-mine operators. The substance of their plaint was that they have reached the present limit of the domestic market and that the tariff barrier precludes them from exploiting the United States market adequately. One manager stated with great frankness that they needed the market, needed it badly, and were shut out of it because Nova Scotia desired protection from Pennsylvania and Virginia. Free trade, he claimed, would develop enormously the Western field and would reduce the price to consumers. And he added a suggestion that, if necessary, a tariff zone be established in Nova Scotia, the West being left free from restrictions.

Whilst without question it is useful to hear both sides of every debate, we fear that Sir Wilfrid will not find that the problem is as simple as it seems. In fact, it is far from being simple. Each side has a right to be heard. Neither side can be dealt with at the expense of the other. The chief difficulty lies in so adjusting matters as to do fairly by both.

A struggle at Ottawa between Eastern and Western interests would be neither expedient nor profitable. We suggest that accredited representatives of both meet on neutral ground and discuss matters fully. This has long been needed. The issues to be considered are