

as widely as is possible, considering that the two countries are nearly in the same latitude. Cobden was, by conviction, an Absolute Free Trader; he would have done away with import duties and resorted to direct taxation, the burden of which he would at the same time have lightened, by reducing the expenses of government, and closing the gates of war. If Mr. Mackenzie takes this line, well and good; but unless he does, he must tell us what tariff he proposes, and let us see whether it is better than that of 1879. Perpetual borrowing is the worst course of all.

The National Policy, in our case, however, has its weak point, one indication of which is the Coal Tax. Nothing can be more iniquitous or more absurd than that impost, especially when it is combined with an attempt to force Canada into manufactures, which she can carry on only with imported fuel. It is at the same time, in form at least, an extreme measure of Protectionism: indeed, it was the only part of the tariff of 1879 which could be justly branded with that name. Yet the leaders of the Opposition dare not attack it; they prefer to share the responsibility by acquiescence. The truth is, that the measure, properly speaking, was not so much fiscal as political, or rather diplomatic. The tax is a fee paid to Nova Scotia for giving her consent to a Canadian tariff. It thus casts a vivid light upon the situation. Among the Provinces drawn out in long and discontinuous line from ocean to ocean, for which the Finance Minister has to legislate, there is no special identity of commercial interest: it is necessary to treat them almost as a set of independent countries, and to obtain the separate consent of each to a sort of commercial treaty. A ministerial journalist at Regina tells Sir Leonard Tilley that to frame a common tariff for that territory and Canada is as absurd as it would be to prescribe a common dress for both climates. A perfect basis for a national policy therefore is wanting. Again, Sir Leonard Tilley is obliged to modify his tobacco duty, in order to meet an alteration made in the tobacco duty of the United States. This shows that the group of interests with which he deals is deficient in distinctness of national demarcation, as well as in national unity. It is inextricably connected with the interests and the commercial policy of the Continent at large. The Anti-Continental