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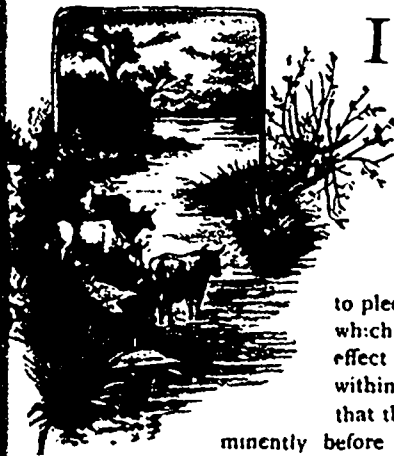
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NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION.



IN connection with the agitation for a change in the unjust and iniquitous personalty tax, we would ask merchants to strive to the uttermost, between now and the opening of the Ontario Legislature on February 11th, to get their representatives to pledge their support to the bill, which will be introduced giving effect to the change. It is only within the past two or three years that the question has come prominently before the business community.

Merchants had been groaning under the outrage perpetrated upon them but took no steps to rid themselves of the evil until the Dry Goods section of the Toronto Board of Trade threw themselves into the breach and appointed a committee, with Mr. Paul Campbell as chairman, to deal with the matter. The results have been referred to in these columns. So ably has this Committee done its work, that it has succeeded in thoroughly arousing the intelligence of the community to the justice of the cause it has advocated. Not only that, but the Attorney General, and the members of his cabinet, have been so strongly impressed with the absolute necessity of a change being made in the Act, that there is every reason to believe the gross injustice, from which the business community has so long suffered, will be done away with during the coming session of the Legislature. The present tax is a striking example of how the law can be utilized for the benefit of one class and the detriment of another. Every reasonably-minded man will readily admit that there is rank injustice in giving an assessor the option of taxing either the capital or income of a business house. As we have already said it should be either one thing or the other, and all classes should be taxed alike.

Now is the time for action. We have been shown a copy of a pamphlet, which is being sent by merchants to their representatives in the Legislature, and which ably and exhaustively covers the entire ground. It presents cogent reasons why they should cordially support any measure brought forward to right the wrong complained of, and it will be a great surprise to us if it fails in that object. In view of the importance of the subject we publish the contents of the pamphlet and would urge all our readers in the province to get copies and send them to their representatives. The pamphlet is as follows.

Allow us, as constituents of yours, to call your attention to the great injustice done to the industrial classes of Ontario in local or municipal taxation. We address you personally for the purpose of pointing out the gross wrong done to these said classes of the citizens of Ontario, of whom many exist in your constituency, feeling confident and assured that the Legislature of Ontario will grant relief and do justice. We ask your kindly aid, interest and vote on behalf of an amendment to the Municipal Assessment Act, which will be presented to the Legislature at the ensuing session, asking that the industrial classes be taxed, as regards personalty assessment, the same as the rest of the community, viz.: on their incomes.

As a preface to our remarks, we insert extracts of a petition, which has been numerously signed by merchants and manufacturers, and will be presented to the Legislature, to wit:—"Your petitioners, merchants and manufacturers, represent that the industrial classes of this province, viz., those employing capital in business and manufacture are unjustly and unfairly taxed in local or municipal taxation. Your petitioners respectfully call your attention to these facts that for municipal taxation a municipality can tax realty and personalty, that the mode and rate of assessment on realty is alike to all classes of citizens, the value of the realty being the basis of assessment, and the rate must be the same, but unfortunately when personalty assessment is dealt with, the act allows the assessment of the capital of the wealthy and retired to be assessed only on their income derived from investments in mortgages, stocks and other investments at actually the same rate as the unfortunate merchant, tradesman or manufacturer is taxed on his capital in business."

That is, the merchant or manufacturer, for risking and investing his money in business to engage labor and promote the welfare of the community, is taxed on personalty fifteen times greater than the retired and wealthy. The thing is so monstrous and outrageous it is hardly conceivable. To illustrate, a firm in the City of Hamilton consisting of two members, who risked a large capital in business, dissolved. Being equal partners they separated on a basis of one hundred and fifty thousand each, the retiring partner drew out his half share. The assessor assessed the retired partner according to the Act, being now a gentleman, on his income as returned at \$10,000, the remaining partner being in business was instantly assessed at \$150,000. The question naturally arises how has this monstrous inequality and injustice in personalty taxation arisen? It is easily explained, instead of taking our inspiration or model for municipal taxation from our mother country, Great Britain and Ireland, or