

Canada's Manifest Destiny.



HE appeal made, this autumn, and on the verge of an election, by the Canadian woollen manufacturers, for increased protection, and their appeal—or was it a threat?—against the forcing of some thousands of men to adopt other means of livelihood; other, that is, than their present trade,—brings the question: Farm or Factory? to the point of a more or less immediate solution. This article, therefore, is, in no sense, political; or, rather, not in the narrow and technical meaning of a much-abused term, though it deals, none the less, with a question of national policy—also in the widest sense—and may, consequently, be, to that extent, deemed political. But it has, certainly, no reference to the various “manifest destinies” which, from time to time, have been assigned to this country, with annexation, independence, or with Imperial Federation. Each of these has had, and will, doubtless continue to have its advocates; but, whereas, each of them is, and must remain, largely, if not wholly, a matter of sentiment, the question above indicated, which forms the subject of present discussion, is, at least, practical, and, it may fairly be said, one not admitting of serious delay. It is a question, in other words, of the true welfare of the Canadian people, rather than of their national or political future. The two are not, by any means, inseparably connected, statesmen and others to the contrary notwithstanding. “All that a man hath will he give for his life.” Forms of government, political ideals, are not among his most valuable possessions.

Briefly, the matter may be stated thus: Is it Canada's manifest destiny to be an industrial, or an agricultural country? A land of many farms, or of a few overcrowded cities? In other words, is legislation to consider, chiefly, the interests of the manufacturer, or of the farmer? The answer to the former question, and, indeed, to the latter, depends, evidently, on certain very definite conditions, practically, on two: density of population, and facilities of transport, the last being the most important, by which, indeed, all the others are determined.

The specification of these two principal conditions does not, however, exclude those which may be defined as climatic and geographical; nor, of course, those laws of trade, supply, and demand, by which all industries must necessarily be governed. Of these, the

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