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THOUGH a good many bills of a practical and more or less useful character were passed during the late session of the Canadian Parliament, it cannot be said that any new legislation of a very grave or radical kind was accomplished. The revision of the tariff, mainly in the direction of higher duties, served to show how completely the Protectionist idea has superseded, in the minds of the Government leaders, that of retaliation with a view to reciprocity, which was the original motive of the National Policy. If the Protection theory be accepted, it can hardly be denied that the changes made are, for the most part, logical, and that some of them were necessary. Whether those which had the appearance of being unwisely provocative of retaliation on the part of our neighbours will be followed by any of the disastrous results predicted by Sir Richard Cartwright and others of the Opposition, remains to be seen. Politically the general effect of the increase of taxes has been to make the tariff policy, henceforth, more entirely and exclusively the great dividing line between the two political parties. The broad question of principle underlying this policy will form the chief issue during some, perhaps many, years to come, though the position of the present Opposition must be materially weakened, from the logical point of view, by the fact of its unwillingness or inability to take the real free-trade position. True, on the one hand, the Government Party will always show a lack of full faith in the economical doctrines they now profess, until they have raised their tariff to the prohibitory point on all articles capable of being produced in the Dominion. But, on the other hand, the Opposition will show an equal distrust of their own theories so long as they content themselves with fighting either for a revenue tariff, or for unrestricted reciprocity with the United States and a high tariff against the rest of the world. The proposed establishment of a bureau of labour statistics, if properly carried out, cannot fail to be of great benefit, not only to the labouring classes but to all kinds of industries in the Dominion. Accurate statistics are the indispensable condition of the knowledge needed for wise action, alike by private individuals and companies and by Parliament. The failure to pass the amended Northwest Act is to be regretted, especially if it has the effect of deferring to a later period than that proposed and decreed by Parliament the exercise of the

powers asked for, in reference to the use of a dual language in the Territories. Otherwise the postponement will be the less regrettable if it lead, as seems not improbable, to the passage of a more complete measure.

CAN it be that the Lincoln electors are about to disgrace their constituency and the Dominion by returning to Parliament, on Friday, the author of the Rykert letters, and the man who stands self-convicted, and convicted by a Parliamentary committee, of having sold his political influence for money? We refuse to believe it before the fact. And yet, since the strange defection of Mr. A. H. Pettit, the other conservative candidate, and the equally unaccountable transition of the St. Catharines' *Star*, there is danger of such a catastrophe. It is conjectured that Mr. Rykert's aim is simply to make good his boast on quitting Parliament, and to gain whatever rehabilitation his reelection might be supposed to confer, and that he purposes to escape the otherwise inevitable expulsion by again resigning before the meeting of Parliament. Should this conjecture prove correct it will make the matter all the worse for the constituency. Its sympathy with political dishonesty and baseness must needs be very deep indeed before it could lend itself to such a farce and incur all the trouble, expense and obloquy its action would entail. But we hope and expect better things from the electors of St. Catharines and the county of Lincoln, notwithstanding the partisan infatuation and seeming moral obliquity which made Mr. Rykert's return possible at the last election, when so much was already known about the most disreputable transaction of which he is now paying the penalty. Under ordinary circumstances there would be a spice of cruelty in reverting in this way to an offender after the severest punishment had been meted out, but so long as that offender not only maintains an attitude of defiance, but even seeks to make a Parliamentary riding a second time a party to his dishonour, so long will it be the duty of every journal which prizes purity in public life to denounce the culprit. After all, it is possible that the Conservative Party needs the further discipline which might be gained were Mr. Rykert to be reelected and take his seat in the House. One of the most healthful and hopeful symptoms of reaction from the low state of political morality into which Parliament has fallen has been that pressure of public opinion, in the House, and in the country, which forced those investigations into old scandals, which were the marked feature of the late session. But the work is only begun. Other charges of equal turpitude are pending, and will demand inquiry on the reassembling of Parliament. No better spur to prick the sides of an honest intent could be thought of than the presence of Mr. Rykert, to demand in person an answer to his question as to why he should be singled out for punishment, when others, equally guilty of helping themselves or their friends from the public crib, go unscathed? If the sore has been but pricked it is the more needful that it should be probed to the bottom. Health cannot be restored otherwise.

WE remarked incidentally last week that the alleged unfair treatment of Canadian architects by the Mowat Government, in connection with the construction of the new Parliament buildings, was a transaction of which we had never seen a satisfactory explanation or defence. The *Canadian Architect* for May has just come to hand with what purports to be a statement of the facts, so far as known to the public. We are bound to say that, if this narrative is substantially correct, the architects in question have good ground for complaint, and the statement put forth on behalf of the Government that Mr. Waite "secured the appointment after a fair competition, expert judges deciding that his plans were the best," merits the strong epithets which the *Architect* applies to it. Let us premise, however, that we have no sympathy with any such notions of patriotism, or protection to native talent, as would accept in any such case anything less than the very best skill available. To appoint an inferior man to any position requiring knowledge, skill or ability of a high order, because of his Canadian or Provincial birth, would be, in our opinion, not only to violate sound economic principles, but to pay a very poor compliment and do a decided injury to the Canadian institution or profession

concerned. But in this case, so far as appears, the opposite vice was committed. We have no space to give the details as set down in the *Architect*, but the gravamen of the charge is that after adopting the report of a committee of experts appointed to decide upon the merits of the plans submitted by competing architects, such report being to the effect that one of two plans should be accepted, the Government handed those two plans to Mr. Waite, himself one of the committee of experts, that he might report as to which of the two was preferable, and that, after long delay, Mr. Waite, instead of reporting in favour of either, made a report which resulted in the adoption of plans submitted by himself and in his being commissioned to erect the buildings. If it be further the fact that while the competing architects were strictly limited in regard to cost to \$500,000, or thereabout, the plans accepted without competition from Mr. Waite involve a probable expenditure of something like two millions, it is evident that a gross injustice was done to the unsuccessful competitors. Apart from that, it is hard to conceive of anything more out of taste, to put it in the mildest form, than that the expert appointed to decide between competitors, thus occupying a judicial position, should be permitted to enter himself into the competition, and that, too, after seeing the plans submitted, pronounce in favour of his own plan, and himself receive the lucrative job. Other aggravating circumstances are given by the *Architect*. If the facts are not as stated, the Government should make the corrections. In any case, Mr. Mowat owes it to his own good name and that of his colleagues to explain a transaction which certainly stands in need of explanation.

SINCE the above paragraph was written the *Globe* has come to hand with an article which is in substance a reply to the complaints noted. The explanations are only in part satisfactory. The statement that the reports of Mr. Waite and the Government architect, finally condemning the plans of the Toronto architects, would have been made public had those architects desired it, if correct, disposes of the complaints on that score, though it does not explain why the original report, recommending the adoption of one or other of the two plans referred to, was changed. The essential feature of the injustice charged, viz., that the plan accepted from Mr. Waite, without competition, involve an expenditure greatly exceeding the limit imposed upon him as upon the other architects, is certainly not greatly changed by the fact that his fees are still to be estimated on the basis of that limit. The primary design of fixing such a limit was, it may be assumed, not so much to lessen the amount of the architect's fees, as to fix a maximum of cost for the building. It is quite possible that the Toronto architects would have been able to greatly improve their plans had they understood that the limit in regard to cost was meaningless, and yet willing, in view of the magnitude of the undertaking, to accept fees computed on the sum originally named. It certainly was not setting a good business precedent to appoint an architect to prepare plans for a building the cost of which was not to exceed a certain specified sum, and then to accept at his hands plans involving twice or thrice that expense. We are bound to accept Hon. Mr. Fraser's assurance that Mr. Waite could not possibly have supposed, from anything that had passed between him and the Government, that his services would be required in case of the non-acceptance of the other plans, but there is no need to suppose that Mr. Waite was destitute of the ordinary shrewdness required to enable him to see the position in which the Government would be left, and to guess at the probable outcome. In a word, the only sound and safe principle in such a transaction is that it should be understood that under no circumstances can it be possible for the expert employed as judge in a competition of that kind, to receive the appointment himself. To admit such a possibility is not only to subject his award to suspicion, but to subject him to serious temptation. On the whole, it is, we think, to be regretted that the Government lacked the moral courage to say frankly to the Legislature that suitable buildings could not possibly be erected for the sum originally named, to ask for a much larger appropriation, and to call