

ample for the fortunate and capable would be inadequate for the unlucky and the ignorant. A shoemaker, for example, who stuck to his last might do very well with a degree of protection which would be quite useless for a shoemaker who spends even a part of his time riding in a motor car. The argument that high wages imply high protection has turned out to be fallacious, since the board has established that high wages by calling for efficiency and improved machinery in reality lessen the cost of production. It by no means follows that the low wages paid to hand-weavers in India will ensure that cotton can be produced more cheaply in Madras than in New England.

If the members of the commission were wisely chosen, in virtue alone of disinterestedness, acumen, experience, and wisdom, there is no length to which they might not carry their enquiry. It is quite conceivable that they might examine the very foundations of protection itself, and ascertain whether it has a basis in truth or arises from an economic fallacy. They might convince us at once and for all time that the consumer never pays the tax, that it is well to buy dear, that an impost which is paid to a manufacturer is as useful to the community as if it were paid into the public treasury, that the money which circulates in the home market is more precious than that which comes from the foreigner, that the cost of living is not in reality rising, that combines and mergers lower prices by the efficiency and economy which they produce, that internal competition is as disastrous as that which comes from without, that men will always use wisely the power to tax which is placed in their hands, even if they are not responsible to those who pay, and that this power is never used directly or remotely for the debauching of society, the corruption of public life, the degradation of parliament, or the debasement of the courts of law. If the commission were able to carry such conviction into the minds of the Canadian people, they would do much to restore confidence in protection and appease the 616,948 persons who voted against the system at the last election, and form forty-eight per cent. of those who cast their ballots.