

The Canadian Courier

A National Weekly

NEWS CO. EDITION

Subscription : \$2.50 a Year.

Vol. II

Toronto, October 5th, 1907

No. 19

Topics of the Day



President Falconer.

THERE should be a Board of Arbitration to decide between the Manufacturers and the Labour Congress. The latter at Winnipeg declared that immigration must be regulated and restricted and that too many workmen were coming into the country. The Manufacturers, meeting in Toronto a week later, declare that more mechanics are needed. What is the average citizen to do under these circumstances? How is he to know which movement to support, and which side to encourage? A Royal Commission is needed to guide the public.

The newspapers might be a guide but a curious condition prevents them. The editors of the newspapers neither criticise nor support trades-unions. They have a special labour reporter who writes signed articles which are not regarded as binding on the Editor, but which, nevertheless, are especially designed to promote friendship with the unions. It is a cheap device, but apparently effective in this peculiar part of the world. One would imagine the insincerity of it would be manifest, but insincerity seems to have become so common that it has ceased to be remarkable.

* * *

The truth is that Canada needs men of all kinds, capitalists, merchants, mechanics, farmers, agricultural labourers and navvies. There is much work to be done. There should be regulation, and all persons inimical to the moral and physical health of the community should be excluded. No other kind of exclusion or discouragement should be permitted, unless it be in the case of the strike-breaker. He is in a class by himself.

The men who would hold back Canada's advance simply from fear that wages will be lowered and the cost of production come down are lacking in wisdom. To-day, the pork-packing industry is at a standstill because hogs are scarce. The exports of cattle from the West are very small this year. General exports are declining. Over production is not keeping pace with our growth in population. Labour is producing less to-day than a few years ago. Prosperity has made us lazy, given us shorter hours of labour and raised the wages bill. This state of affairs cannot continue.

* * *

In the report of the Tariff Committee presented to the Manufacturers' Association by Mr. W. K. George, it is pointed out that a favourable trade balance of six million dollars in 1901 has been converted into an adverse balance of one hundred and four million dollars in 1906-7. Neither the manufacturer nor the agriculturist has kept up with the expansion and Canada has proportionately less to sell abroad. It is an argument against a higher tariff and the committee very properly made the admission. The situation is grave. Canada

cannot go indefinitely importing annually a hundred million more than she exports. There must be a settlement and if production does not increase that settlement will drain Canada of its accumulated savings—in other words, its newer capital.

A higher tariff might increase production even if it were an expensive proceeding; restricting the importation of skilled workmen will tend to restrict production. With this in mind, the average citizen will support the manufacturer rather than the trades-unionist. National prosperity of the material kind can come only through increased production.

* * *

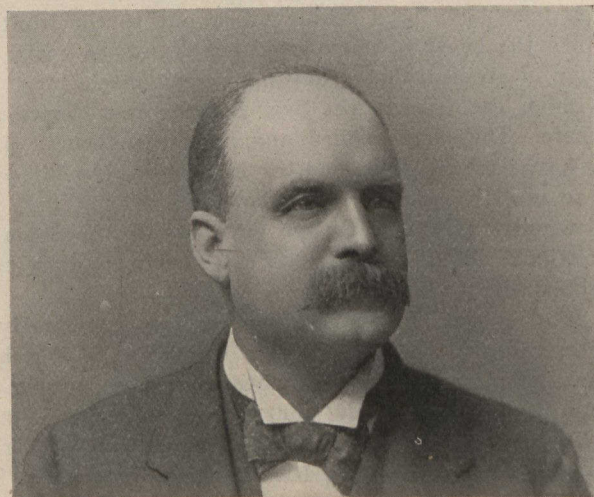
Some person should slap the Asiatic Exclusion League on the hand and tell it to be good. Its childish telegrams are causing sensible people to lose sympathy with the movement.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has wisely refused to be moved by the clamour; Mr. Borden seems to have followed suit with more reservations. Canada has two very sensible leaders just now, and there is not likely to be any rash move. Sir Wilfrid is acting minister for foreign affairs and Sir Wilfrid has seen several impetuous movements come and go since he became a party leader.

* * *

Mr. Edward Gurney, a Toronto manufacturer, with a national reputation, rather startled people by his declaration that he would build the Tariff "as high as Haman's gallows" if it would keep out United States manufactures. The phrase is perhaps more intense than Mr. Gurney intended, but the policy indicated is certainly too sweeping. There is no special reason for keeping out the goods of any country, if those goods cannot be produced here advantageously. Protection requires something to protect, otherwise it is a phantom of the mind. Canada cannot shut her doors to the world, since foreign trade is essential to her all-round development.

It is perhaps true that certain Canadian industries are not making much progress in competition with United States manufactures brought in here in spite of the tariff. There may be low spots in the wall. It is possible that one or two of these might be built up with advantage. For example, a duty might be put on periodicals carrying a preponderance of advertising, since at present paper in this form pays no toll whatever. No doubt there are other cases. To raise the general tariff in order to restrict general importations from the United States, would be unfriendly, unprofitable and unwise.



Mr. Edward Gurney, Toronto.

Who would put the Canadian Tariff as high as Haman's Gallows.