

The fruit industry in British Columbia is in the infant stage with great possibilities which has been stated by responsible men will equal the lumber industry of the province, and at present stage requires careful handling and fostering. There are millions of dollars invested in the fruit industry in the province more than in the farm implement business of Ontario which has been nursed and protected, by so doing these factories of Canada are classed in this line as the leading industries of the world. Without this protection through their growing years, these magnificent plants now employing thousands, would never have existed. The same applies to the British Columbia fruit industry in which the growers have invested many millions of dollars, besides the very large investments of capital in irrigation systems running into millions of dollars.

The necessity of a protection duty outside the fostering of a young and promising industry, is the undeniable fact that the natural market for British Columbia. 'The Northwest Territories' is made the dumping ground for surplus fruit from the north-western states which already possess a large and fully developed fruit industry and the pernicious action of consignment is resorted to on a large scale. It is well taken that the fruit growers are entitled to have their rights guarded the same as has been the case for other enterprises.

It winds up with the strongest representation that this fruit industry absolutely needs protection. The minister has seen fit to quote the views of one editor of a newspaper. I do not know the gentleman who wrote the article or what weight it carried, but the overwhelming majority of the whole of that district entertained diametrically opposite views. I have a copy of the Vernon 'News' of February 16, to show you how strongly they feel on this question. I may say that at a very large meeting on February 15, they quoted various statements made by the government and others with reference to this industry, and among these statements I find the following:

The Shoreham Hotel,
Washington, D.C.
21st January, 1911.

G. C. Johnston, Esq.,
Secretary, Board of Trade,
Vernon, B.C., Canada.

Dear Sir,—I am just in receipt of your telegram of the 20th and have carefully noted all that is stated therein.

I shall bring the matter before my colleague, Hon. Mr. Fielding, and you may rest assured that it will have our most serious consideration.

Yours truly,

WM. PATERSON.

So that these gentlemen who were representing the fruit growing industry in the Okanagan valley wired to the minister at Washington the disastrous effects which would follow if the duties were taken off,

Mr. BURRELL

and the hon. Minister of Customs wired in reply, before the negotiations were concluded, that he would seriously consider their representations. The hon. minister has intimated that the gentleman who wrote the article he quoted is a Conservative. I have here a copy of the Kelowna 'Courier' and Okanagan 'Orchardist,' which is edited by one of the strongest, most consistent and vigorous supporters of this government that I know of in western Canada.

Mr. PATERSON. I did not say that this editor was a Conservative.

Mr. BURRELL. My hon. friend was endeavouring to say apparently.

Mr. PATERSON. No.

Mr. BURRELL. He said that paper was Conservative, which would lead to the inference that this was a Conservative authority, but the gentleman who edits Kelowna 'Courier' is one of the most indefatigable Liberals in British Columbia, and is rarely to be found opposing or criticising harshly anything this government does. I want to read a leading article from this gentleman on February 16:—

Free trade is theoretically the best policy, failing which fair trade, which would consist in a reasonable tariff to use as a weapon in making countries with high protective tariffs come to time; but there should be no picking and choosing, and a lopsided reciprocity agreement which leaves untouched the majority of the high protective duties on manufactured articles, but strips the farmer and fruit grower of their share of protection, is grossly unfair.

And he goes on:

As a Liberal, albeit always an independent one, it pains us to find ourselves in opposition to the policy of the leaders of our party, especially when Liberal rule in Canada has been signalized by such abundant prosperity, but we cannot endorse a departure from the established policy of the past fifteen years so discriminatory in its character that it throws the burden of loss and disaster on the infant industry of horticulture, only beginning to direct its wavering steps along the path of progress, while the manufacturing trusts of Eastern Canada, gorged with the accumulated profits of years, sit sleek and smiling behind an impregnable tariff wall.

Now, before I close this short reply to the Minister of Customs, I would like the minister to understand the emphatic opinion of a gentleman whom he ought to respect. And I would call the attention of the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), to this, and that of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) also, for, if I understood the latter gentleman rightly, he implied that they were Conservatives largely, who were in-