

# REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

## The Autocracy of Democracy.

THAT democracy will triumph ultimately, no one will deny. That democracy has many faults, its best friends will admit. Great Britain is now giving us weekly exhibitions of the arrogance of a democracy. Just when the aristocracy have yielded to the pressure which the Commons put upon them in connection with the Veto Bill, the trades unions are showing how brutal they can be when they wish to gain a point. First at Liverpool and Manchester, the striking dockmen tied up food supplies until people suffered severely. Then they did the same at London. The London situation became acute and the employers yielded—to force and to necessity. At Liverpool, only soldiers keep the mob in check.

Again there is a strike on the much vaunted municipal street-car lines in Glasgow, and on Saturday last five people were killed during the rioting. To enforce their demands, the unions do not hesitate to cause the poor to go hungry, to destroy the property of the capitalist or of the municipality, or even to take human life.

From other parts of Britain, come stories of unrest and democratic rebellion. The people, below the average, have tasted blood in their recent electoral and parliamentary victories, and they are showing their teeth like wild beasts. All of which shows that our civilization is as yet but a thin veneer. The British are far ahead of the Italians, or Russians, but even in Britain democracy has much to learn before it is as wise as Solomon and as humane as the man of Nazareth. Neither the rich nor the poor have yet learned the real meaning of the words: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

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## Our Friendly Critics.

CANADA has several friendly critics, and one of the newest of these is Benj. B. Hampton, editor and publisher of *Hampton's Magazine*.

In an editorial in his August issue he admits that Canada does not desire annexation, but he proceeds to show that the recent Canadian development is to be credited to the United States. "American money at one end and American farmers at the other have done the trick." Large sums of United States money have been invested here. The \$417,000,000 of American capital bind the two countries in closest relations through the ties of Common Business, which are, after all, the only ties of any importance.

This is somewhat patronizing and not wholly pleasing. However, there is some reason behind the statements made. But when Mr. Hampton goes on to consider our political future, he fails to show a real grasp of the situation. He says:

"Once cut loose from the leading strings she has so long outgrown, Canada would become one of the greatest countries in the world; but progress and population do not go where people sing 'God Save the King,' and feel impelled to genuflections before a twentieth century coronation. These things are not in nature."

Mr. Hampton apparently has not heard of Germany, a country where "progress and population" go with "Hoch der Kaiser." Even if he thinks Great Britain and Canada and Australia and South Africa unprogressive, he should know about Germany, the country which supplies the United States with many of its leading citizens and most of its new ideas and inventions.

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## When to Keep Silence.

WHEN should a political party shout aloud and when should it keep silence? This is a question always worth discussing, but especially opportune at the present moment. In the latest issue of *Leslie's Weekly*, the editor tells how the Nebraska Republicans have fired the first gun for Taft as a presidential candidate in 1912, and incidentally discloses the fact that these politicians had nothing to say about reciprocity. Here is a paragraph worth reading:

"In keeping silent over reciprocity, Nebraska's Republicans have set an example which those of most of the other States will probably follow, until

the results of the experiment are known. That policy was opposed by many Republicans. It has been enacted, however, so far as the United States can do this all alone, and the course of wisdom for all the Republicans is to cease talking about it for the present."

When a movement has resulted in a Bill and that Bill has become a Law, it behooves the opponents of it to stop talking about it "until the results of the experiment are known." Here is a rule which the Conservatives and Liberals will need after September 21st. Like the Republicans of Nebraska, they must cease talking about reciprocity "for the present."

Unfortunately for what seems an admirable rule, the same issue of *Leslie's Weekly* contains an article by President Taft, on "What Reciprocity will do for U. S." If President Taft had had the editor's advice before he wrote this article, it would have saved him from a great political blunder. If the editor had really believed in his own precept he would have suggested to the President that the publication of such an article, while Canada was still discussing the subject, would be likely to injure the cause which it was desired to aid.

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## President Taft's Article.

PRESIDENT TAFT'S article is being used by the opponents of reciprocity in this country.

His statements and arguments are quoted to bolster up their case against the pact. That is their privilege. It is always fair in politics to take any weapon to beat your opponents, providing that you are neither dishonest nor ungentlemanly.

Just why President Taft should have written such an article at such a time, it is difficult to imagine. The fight on the Bill in Congress is over. The Bill is signed, sealed and delivered so far as the United States is concerned. There seems to be no immediate necessity in that country for a further presidential deliverance. He ought to have known that its publication would be used by the opponents of reciprocity in this country. They were certain to seize upon his glowing tribute to its value as a developer of United States trade in order to help prove that it isn't good for Canada.

No matter how fair the arguments used by President Taft, they are liable to be twisted against the cause which he has at heart. And the arguments are fair. From a United States point of view, the article is quite statesmanlike in tone. It is enthusiastic, but not overly so. It is fairly calm and well-reasoned. Nevertheless, good political judgment on the President's part would have led to its suppression.

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## The Case of the Manufacturer.

MR. TAFT again admits that he was anxious to have reciprocity extend to manufactured articles. He says:

"In our negotiations over this Canadian reciprocity treaty, I directed our commissioners to secure as great a cut in the duties on manufactures in Canada as they could; but they were unable to secure any more than appears in this treaty, for the reason that Canada would not expose her manufacturers to the competition of American manufacturers."

Probably the opponents of reciprocity will not quote this paragraph when they use the article. It shows that Messrs. Fielding and Paterson did not embrace all the opportunities offered them. They refused to sacrifice the Canadian manufacturer. They might have secured a larger measure of free trade between the two countries, but they properly decided that the people of Canada did not want even a small measure of reciprocity in manufactured goods.

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## The Case of Lumber and Pulp.

WHEN Mr. Taft explains why lumber, pulp and paper are put up on the free list, he is not quite so complimentary to Canada. He says, "One of the great objects of the treaty was the conservation of our natural resources." The lumber and pulp wood supplies in the United States were getting low and it was advisable to "conserve" them. He expects that the importation of Canadian

lumber will lower prices to the United States consumer. So in regard to pulp, which can be bought in Canada "at five dollars less a ton than in this country."

So far, so good, and not much objection to be raised. But when he goes farther and says that he hopes that the proposed arrangement in pulp and paper will "induce the Canadian provinces, over which the Dominion can exercise no control, to lift their restrictions on the export of pulp wood," he delivers himself into the hands of his enemies. To say frankly that if the provinces of Canada try to conserve their natural resources in pulp wood, that their exports of paper will still be dutiable at \$5.75 a ton, he throws down a gauntlet which is disturbing to say the least. To admit boldly that he hopes to force the provinces to do what public policy forbids them doing is to arouse the Canadian fighting blood.

The provinces will not submit to any pressure of this kind, and it is unfortunate that any such arrangement has been made. The Canadian negotiators should not have allowed such a temptation to be framed. The only excuse that can be offered for it is that they did the best they could in a difficult situation.

By this frank admission on this point, Mr. Taft has rendered more difficult the task of defending the reciprocity pact in three Canadian provinces—Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick.

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MR. TAFT is more fortunate in his dealing with the wheat question. He admits that the price of Canadian wheat will be raised when it is sold to the nearby millers of the United States. The freight rates will be lower from the West to Minneapolis, for example, than from the West to Liverpool, and hence the Western Canadian farmer will benefit. The United States farmer will have a corresponding benefit in getting cheaper bran and shorts, which they need for feeding purposes.

Here is one of his best paragraphs:

"What is true of wheat is true of the other cereals. The trade between Canada and the United States cannot but increase the sale of agricultural products across the border both ways to nearer markets than they now made in many instances. The trade will be beneficial to both the seller and the buyer. It will not, in my judgment, reduce the price of wheat or other farming products for our people in any marked way. It will, however, be enlarging the source of supply, prevent undue fluctuations, and it will and ought to prevent an exorbitant increase in farm prices."

Here Mr. Taft makes no exorbitant claims and states the situation fairly. Both countries should benefit by the free exchange of these cereals. At certain times and at certain places, Canada will gain; at other times and at certain places, the United States will gain. Undoubtedly, however, the United States millers have more to gain than any other class, unless it be the Canadian barley grower.

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MR. TAFT seems to be very proud of the fact that the United States sells us \$225,000,000 worth of goods annually, while Great Britain sells us only \$93,000,000. He says:

"If Canada continues to grow, what may we expect to sell her if we reduce the tariff wall, introduce as near as we can free trade, and she increases her population from 7,000,000 to 30,000,000. Shall we not be flying in the face of Providence to maintain a wall between us and such a profitable market as she will furnish us?"

Here is where Mr. Taft is unwise. He should not talk too much about free trade between the two countries. We are extremely sensitive about becoming dependent upon the United States market. If this proposed reciprocity in natural products goes into force, that is no reason why Canada should approve any further measure of free trade for many years to come.

If Canada moves any closer to free trade than she is doing now, Canadians will want that to extend to other countries besides the United States. Mr. Taft's country is not the only country on earth, and Canada would be foolish to tie herself up to one market. Further, if the proposed reciprocity does not work out to what we consider to be a fair mutual advantage, we want to feel free to withdraw. To talk about absolute free trade between the two countries before this partial measure has proved its worth is rather pushing the matter too fast.

Mr. Taft's article may not do any harm. Some people will take one view of it; some will take another. But in any case, it is interesting and the verdict of the Canadian people on this and all other phases of this "burning question" will be given on September 21st.