

## A PLEA FOR A REVENUE TARIFF.

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As all trade arises from the constant necessity each individual in the community feels himself under, to provide food for himself and those dependent on him, and as on the average it takes more food for two persons than one, increase of trade must depend on increase of population. Effective demand for other things must at all times be in proportion to the degree of activity with which the food supply is assured to the community. The partial cessation of effective demand, or what is known as a trade depression, that always occurs in our own country when crops fail, either in our own country or in those countries with which we trade, illustrates the truth of this. Now, as increase of population depends on the increase of the food supply, which in its turn depends on the increase of the area of cultivation in our own country and those countries we trade with, any law that discourages the pursuit of agriculture in our own country or prevents our people trading with the farmers of other countries must narrow the source of the food supply and consequently check increase of population on which increase of trade necessarily depends.

Many assume that increase of trade arises principally from the multiplication of man's wants under modern conditions. It is self-evident that this multiplication of wants arises from the increased assurance, guaranteed by modern conditions, of a plentiful supply of food to each community, owing to the vast extension of the area of cultivation throughout the world, combined with the introduction of labor-saving machinery, improvements in navigation, transport and communication. The tendency of all such improvement and the extension of the area of cultivation is to reduce the cost of commodities to the consumer, which is but another name for the whole community.

Protection, in so far as it protects, tends to increase the cost of commodities, thus in a measure depriving the community protected of the full benefits of modern improvements. Hence we find that the introduction of protection in any country is always followed by a falling off in the average rate of increase of population, and the abrogation of protection by an increase in such average.

This effect of protection on population is illustrated by the census returns of France. The rate of increase for the first five years under the Cobden treaty, a comparatively free trade measure, was 300 per cent. more rapid than for the previous ten years, or for the first nine years after the abrogation of the Cobden treaty and the re-imposition of high protective duties.

Experience teaches that protection in Canada had a similar effect on population. From 1871 to 1881, under a revenue tariff, we increased