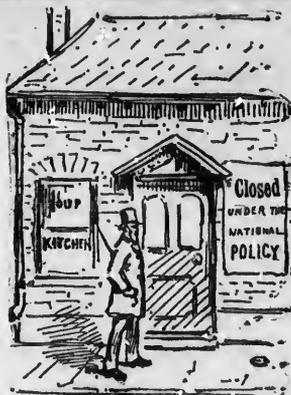


No. 17. WORKINGMEN AND THE N. P.



OLD TARIFF.



NEW TARIFF.

Good Wages and Plenty of Work.

HOW WAGES HAVE INCREASED

THE DOLLAR AND ITS PURCHASING POWER.

1878 and 1886 Compared—No Demand for Old Times—The New Tariff Does the Work.

"The National Policy must go."—Hon. A. G. Jones, 18th January, 1887.

I was not in favor of it when it was introduced. I am not disposed to think more favorably of it after seven years' trial.—Hon. D. Mills (1886).

THE N. P. AND THE WORKINGMAN.

How has the National Policy acted upon the wages-receiving classes of the Dominion? Low wages, and inferior work go together. Degrade the workman and you deteriorate his workmanship. Pauperize the toiler and the leverage is lost of national or industrial elevation. The concomitants of underpaid labor are among the gravest social and national evils of the age, sapping, as they do, the virility of the race and the growth of its commerce.

The broad-minded founders of the National Policy had these conclusions in mind when they framed the present tariff. They aimed to make it an effective instrument to enrich and enlarge the daily thought and life of the great wages-receiving classes by giving, through its operation, employment to labor at good wages; and, by cheapening and perfecting the products of our mills, they ought to make the dollar go further than it did under the old tariff system.

We propose, in this paper, to show that the National Policy has done for the wages-receiving class all that was promised and expected.

In order to ascertain the actual facts an investigation has been made,

1. Into the prices of articles of clothing in 1878 and in 1886;
2. Into the prices of articles of food and drink for the same years;
3. Into the prices of fuel and light for the same years;
4. Into the cost of dwelling accommodation for the same years.

An investigation has also been made into the wages received for the same years.

These investigations have been conducted in the city of Montreal, where the variety of occupations is so great that a large number of facts can be gathered from which to make the general deductions.

In the matter of

WAGES.

About forty classes of skilled employment have been compared. These include carpen-

ters, joiners, coopers, roofers, iron fitters, boiler makers, moulders, plumbers, steam-fitters, brass founders, blacksmiths, painters, masons, bricklayers, cigar makers, plasterers, painters, cotton workers, paper makers, silk workers, etc., etc.

The wages of unskilled labor are obtained from the owners of docks, from the City corporation and from general business men.

Comparing the forty classes of skilled workmen the result is that the wages received in 1886 averaged 25 per cent. higher than in 1878.

Skilled railway employees (as given by the Grand Trunk company) show an increase of 7 1/2 per cent. in wages.

The wages of unskilled labor, taken generally, show an increase of 25 per cent.

Represented by diagrams the facts gathered are as follows:—

Table No. 1.—Wages of workmen of superior skill.

Year.	By the day.
1878.	\$1.77 6-10
1886.	\$2.22 2-10
Increase,	25.1 per cent.

Table No. 2.—Wages of workmen of average capacity.

Year.	By the day.
1878.	\$1.57 2-10
1886.	\$1.79 1-10
Increase,	25.5 per cent.

In the United States the increase since 1878 has been 33 cents.

PURCHASING POWERS OF A DOLLAR.

We come next to the question of the purchasing power of a dollar. To obtain this investigation was made (1) into the prices of thirty different articles of food and drink. In this case it was found that the power of the dollar in 1886 had increased 12 1/2 cents as compared with 1878. That is, a man's wife could go out last year and buy \$1 worth of each of the thirty articles, and find that of the whole she had one-eighth more in quantity in herarder than the same money would have bought her 1878. For example: with a dollar to buy sugar, last year the wife could get one-third more sugar than in 1878; of tea one-fifth more; of oatmeal one-fifth more; of butter, eggs and some other things she would not get as much; of other things she would get the same in 1886 as in 1878. Lumping all together, she would get one-eighth more in 1886 than in 1878.

By lines, this increased purchasing power of the dollar to buy more in 1886 than in 1878, is represented as follows:

Table No. 3—Relative purchasing power of \$1 spent in groceries:—	
Year.	
1878.	\$1.00
1886.	\$1.12 1/2

With a dollar you could in 1878 only buy the short line; with a dollar in 1886 you could buy the long line.

Table No. 4—Relative purchasing power of \$1 spent on fuel and light:—

Year.	
1878.	\$1.00
1886.	\$1.19

With a dollar you could only buy the short line in 1878; in 1886 you could buy the long line.

Table No. 5—Relative purchasing power of \$1 spent in clothing:—

Year.	
1878.	\$1.00
1886.	\$1.20 1/2

With a dollar you could in 1878 only buy the short line; with a dollar in 1886 you could buy the long line.

Table No. 6—Relative purchasing power of \$1 spent on rent:—

Year.	
1878.	\$1.00
1886.	\$0.80

Increase in rent, 25 per cent.

The wages have increased so that the man who in 1878 earned \$500 can now earn \$663, with which he can purchase \$119 more clothing, groceries, fuel and light than he could with \$500 in 1878.

In other words, his position is so much better, through advance in wages, that the average working man can pay \$30 a year rent, where in 1878 he had to pay \$72 and have out of his wages \$112 to spend in extra comforts or to put in the savings bank, while at the same time the purchasing power of the dollar has increased that he can, without costing him any more, raise the standard of his living nearly 1 1/2 per cent. higher, or can clothe himself and family 20 per cent. better, or can give himself and family 19 per cent. more heat and light in his home.

These statements are based upon the supposition that in 1878 as well as in 1886 the workman obtained steady employment.

But as workmen well know by bitter experience, in 1878 work was by no means regular. It was decidedly irregular. It was three days' work in the week. There was not a shop in Montreal in the winter time working on full time. For want of their own kind of work skilled mechanics were working on the Mountain park roads and on the canal for from 60 cents to \$1 a day. These very men are now getting as high as \$2.50 a day and working full time.

With respect to rents, though they were lower in 1878 than in 1886, it must be remembered that the workman had no money to pay even the lower rent with. The number of people who were "sold out" because they could not pay their rent in 1878 was, as everyone knows, very great. It was the same throughout all the Cartwright tariff years.

VOTE FOR THE TRIED FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY.