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## THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

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SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 15, 1894.

## ALL THE WORLD OVER.

*I must have liberty,  
Withal as large a charter as the wind—  
To blow on whom I please.*

THE reception to Mr. Laurier and his travelling companions was not by any means as enthusiastic as it should have been. Of course the crowd which had assembled at the wharf on the arrival of the steamer was not composed altogether of Liberals, but, nevertheless, all, or nearly all, were well-disposed towards the Liberal leader. Evidently the people noticed Wm. Marchant on the boat and refrained from uttering a sound of welcome.

The meeting in the Market Hall was well attended. The speeches were, in many respects, a disappointment; but this can be attributed to the fact that the people expected too much.

In speaking of Mr. Laurier's trade policy, a local publication remarks: "Numerous papers of considerable importance in the commercial world of Canada do not hesitate to express dissatisfaction with Hon. Mr. Laurier's trade policy as enunciated in some of the speeches which he has delivered. It is pointed out that however anxious he may be for reciprocity in trade with the United States, those wishes of his count for nothing, so long as the United States Congress is not willing. He has declared that the people of this country are being robbed under the tariff, and that when he comes to power, he will set matters right in this respect. Then, as a remedy for all business disabilities, he recommends

free trade, forgetful that he has more than once admitted that it is not at present obtainable, and, in consequence, as every one knows, we must continue under the disabilities existing under the jug-handled system from which we suffered and from which the bringing in of the National Policy relieved us."

The burden of Mr. Laurier's speech was "Freedom of Trade." This, as the *Montreal Star* says, sounds well and means little. It instantly suggests "free trade" and as instantly comforts with the assurance that it is not free trade at all. Yet the free trader would find in it a first cousin to his own pet shibboleth, and could easily persuade his imagination that he was at last on the home track following the old war cry; while the moderate Protectionist—the National Policy Protectionist as opposed to the Private Purse Protectionist—could find in it only a declaration for common sense tariff reform. George Foster was a "Freedom of Trade" man in a mild degree when he brought down his first tariff draft at the opening of last session; and he was still a "Freedom of Trade" man—with a little more water in it—when he had located his last "clerical error." Senator Gorman in the American Senate stands magnificently for "freedom of trade," for he has made trade a little freer than it was under the regime of McKinley. It is a wide, wide plank—is "freedom of trade;" and his was a long, long head who first proposed to make it the representation of the Liberal trade position to be sent to the country.

It is freedom of trade that the most single-eyed Commercial Unionist in Canada thinks he is working for. Mr. Godwin Smith would, doubtless, write himself down as in favor of so plausibly named a policy; and so would the man who wants to reduce our duties on British goods and thus make trade freer within the Empire. Who, indeed, is against freedom of trade? The Liberals themselves will not profess to be in favor of the freest trade, and so it becomes only a question of degree; and we are all in favor of as much of it as we think good for the country. We knew what a "revenue tariff" meant; we comprehended the significances of "Unrestricted Reciprocity"; but what is Freedom of Trade? The shoal upon which this new painted ship will come to grief, however, is the widespread distrust of the Liberals in

trade matters, and the consequent widespread demand that their declaration of policy be clear and explicit—not vague and illusory. The country is not in a mood to take anything on faith from the Liberals in regard to tariff legislation. We came to near the precipice in '91 amid a fog of fine phrases. If the Liberals would be strong in the next campaign, they must be exceedingly frank and plain with the country—they must tell us in spite of their baulk at the sight of an open road last session, how they intend to amend the tariff. It is fully, continues the paper referred to above, to howl at protection and then promise "incidental protection,"—to declare for a great reform in the tariff which shall reduce it to a revenue basis when it does no more than raise the revenue now; and ask the people to accept this as a full explanation of the intentions of the party. Plain details and not dazzling phrases constitute the real need of the Oppositionists at this time.

I have no doubt, however, that Mr. Laurier's visit to this Province will at least have the desired result of awakening interest in our illimitable possibilities and the requirements for the development of British Columbia resources.

Before quitting the subject of Mr. Laurier's visit, I must not forget remarking that that gentleman bears a wonderful resemblance to the late lamented Right. Hon. Sir John Macdonald. This resemblance is more noteworthy in facial expression than from a physical standpoint. It is said by intimate acquaintances that Mr. Laurier resembles Sir John also in disposition, being conciliatory and always anxious to make friends.

Now that the new U. S. Tariff law has gone into operation without the President's sanction and without, indeed, the overriding of his veto which he did not exercise because he considered the measure a step in the right direction, it may be well to remark that tariffs generally are not remarkable for the length of time which they last, they being continually subjected to greater or smaller modifications. We cannot look very far in Canada for tariff history as until 1878 our tariffs were mainly for revenue.

But, if we refer to the United States, we find that the first of the distinctively