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A New Way to Pat

Two Irishmen were discussing the various books they had read.

"Have you read 'The Eternal City'?"

"I have."

"Have you read Marie Corelli's works?"

"I have that."

"Have you read 'Looking Backwards'?"

"How on airth could I do that?"

Protection: the Curse of Canada

(Fifth Article)

By J. A. STEVENSON

The protectionists loudly profess loyalty, which with them means high duties on American goods. International hatred directed in Canada against her American neighbors, and political corruption are two inseparable companions of the system. *Goldwin Smith.*

It was the intention of the writer to develop the arguments against protection at greater length and to deal in particular with its demoralizing political effects, but circumstances have arisen which makes it advisable to defer this task in favor of some more practical action. There is at present an opportunity in connection with our fiscal future which must not be lost. Arrangements have been made with the Washington officials for reciprocity negotiations, in the fall, and on their result will depend the continuance or abatement of the resent iniquitous tyrant of the tariff. There are powerful forces working on both sides and the negotiations will be both delicate and prolonged. Mr. Wallace Nesbitt, K. C., leader of the Ontario Bar, recently made a powerful speech at the New York Economic Club, outlining a scheme of modified reciprocity, and there is a suspicion that he was not without inspiration from Ottawa. If his suggestions, which were recently published in the GUIDE, are carried out it will be a step in the right direction. He was supported by Mr. McGibbon, a prominent Montreal manufacturer and some very well known Americans. Times indeed have moved swiftly, for such reciprocity talk would have been unthinkable three years ago. These negotiations with the United States will be of crucial importance. If the tariff against America is lowered, public opinion is certain to force, sooner or later, a further reduction in favor of the Mother Country, now that the United States have conceded Canada's right to give Britain preferential treatment. The man who declares that reciprocity with the U. S. A means our gradual political absorption utters an insult against the spirit of the Dominion. In cold truth, the best preventative against such absorption would be the removal of the protective system. Free trade would in the course of time ensure a cleansing of our cess-pools of corruption at Ottawa and provide us with different fiscal institutions and a different set of political standards from our Southern neighbor. If we follow recklessly in their footsteps and wilfully imitate their political demoralization and stagnation as we are assuredly doing today, nothing is more certain than ultimate absorption. From the point of view of imperial union, the best hope is to follow and copy British institutions and standards as closely as possible, but we can never pursue this ideal under a protective tariff.

Voice of Free Trade.

Now there is ample evidence, both in the correspondence in THE GUIDE and elsewhere of the existence of a vast free trade sentiment in Canada, but unfortunately its voice has been, and still is, too seldom heard in public places. Its supporters are either busy men absorbed in their private business or people utterly disgusted with the preset state of public life. However, there was recently formed in Winnipeg a Canadian Free Trade League, whose object is to co-ordinate and consolidate the Free Trade forces in Canada. A meeting held for organization purposes was well attended for a country where Free Trade is supposed to be a dead letter, and ever since the League's exsistence has been known, applications for membership have been coming in from all over the west. The officials and executive of the League are as follows:—President, Alex. Macdonald, Vice-President, Roderick McKenzie; Executive Committee, T. A. Crerar, Rev. Dr. Bland, R. L. Richardson, F. J. Dixon, A. M. Fraser, J. W. Scallion, A. W. Puttee; Treasurer, Donald Forrester; Hon. Secretaries, R. L. Scott and J. A. Stevenson.

At their first meeting the following resolution was unanimously passed:—

"Whereas, we who are here assembled, are unanimously agreed upon the desirability of the elimination of the protective element from our tariff system with the view to the ultimate attainment of Free Trade.

"Therefore, we hereby pledge ourselves to commence and prosecute in this country an agitation on behalf of the gradual attainment of Free Trade, and to engage in a vigorous attempt to free our country from the shackles of protection. We desire to consolidate the Free Trade sentiment of the country on a non-partisan basis, and call on all our fellow citizens who are in agreement with our views to join in an active effort to secure this end. We hereby resolve to establish and found an organization for that purpose, which shall be called the Canadian Free Trade League and shall be affiliated with the International Free Trade League, and all who sign the roll of the said league shall be considered members and subscribers to the fore-going resolution."

The International Free Trade League above referred to is a very powerful organization which was founded some years ago to unite the forces of Free Traders in each country in one common body. Its aim and natural effect is to destroy the force of the selfish national arguments for protection which are its most dangerous pleas with the unthinking masses. The various Free Trade Orders in the world have for the most part joined it, and its influence is growing. It has a council in every important country and most of these councils contain names of world wide repute. The American list is particularly strong and in Britain Unionists like Lord Avebury and Lord James of Hereford stand side by side with Liberals like Lord Welby and Mr. Rowntree. It will hold an International Congress at Antwerp next year and there are expectations of great results from that meeting.

To Meet Sir Wilfrid.

The Canadian Free Trade League has already made satisfactory progress and has been welcomed as a valuable asset by the International League. Membership will never entail anything more than a voluntary nominal subscription not exceeding $1 per annum and the success of their cause will be the official's chief reward. The creation of the League is peculiarly opportune at this time. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has arranged a western trip for July and his visit affords a unique opportunity for bringing home to him the extent and power of the Free Trade feeling in the west. It is proposed that the Free Trade League, the Grain Growers' Associations, and other bodies should send deputations to the Premier to point out the present unfairness of the tariff and demand immediate reductions, laying special emphasis on such cases as farm implements and woollens. To judge by the utterances of the Premier, in his opposition days, such demands ought not to fall on deaf ears. But the representations of the Free Trade League would be immeasurably strengthened if they were backed up by the support of a wide membership drawn from all parts of the country. Now is the time to take active steps and deal a blow at the vested, protective interests. If Sir Wilfrid and his Cabinet are brought to realize the existence of a strong Free Trade sentiment they will look upon the reciprocity negotiations with different eyes than if the voice of Free Trade was silent. If the opportunity passes it may never occur again. You have read the case against protection and most of you realize it by sad experience. The question is, "What are you going to do about it?" Therefore if there is any reader of THE GUIDE who believes in Free Trade principles and is willing to make a humble effort to further the cause, even in a passive way, let him fill in the coupon hereto annexed, cut it out, and forward it to the writer, who happens to be the Secretary of the League, address 217 Rookery Building, Smith Street, Winnipeg or mail it to the Grain Growers' Guide, and t will be forwarded.

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CANADIAN FREE TRADE LEAGUE

I hereby desire to offer myself as a member of the Canadian Free Trade League and authorize the duly elected officials of the said League to enroll my name upon the list of members.

Name .....

Occupation .....

Address .....