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WM. U. COTTON, B. A., D. C. L., Editor

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WE FIGHT THE BATTLE OF THE PLAIN PEOPLE

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TARIFF REDUCTION IN THE STATES

At last a strong movement for the reduction of the tariff is on in the States. The Republican party inserted a clause in its Chicago platform pledging the party to a revision of the tariff to do away with monopoly values. Taft accepted the platform but said little in favor of tariff revision. The standpatters considered the clause a joke, something to fool the people with, but they are finding that there is a broad demand throughout the States from manufacturers as well as from consumers for a reduction and removal of protective duties.

Raw material in the States is becoming scarce and the manufacturers want the removal of duties on these raw materials. What is raw material for one is a manufactured article for another, and the manufacturers of more complex articles such as shoes find they must have a wider field to draw from for the raw material they use such as hides. Moreover, the manufacturing towns consider that the American farmers are holding them up for exorbitant prices for food stuffs and they desire the privilege of importing cheaper Canadian farm products in competition with the American supply. The popular demand for tariff revision is widespread and the Washington politicians have their ears close to the political ground.

CARNEGIE AND HILL

Carnegie has come out strong for the complete removal of all duties on steel. While the other steel magnates have been mute on the question or have been declaring that protection was necessary, Andy shows no hesitation in declaring that the United States manufacturers can produce steel cheaper than any other country, and that the tariff is a hinderance rather than a benefit.

Hill has also come out for free trade between Canada and the States. Hill's railway lines run close to the Canadian border and he has built spurs running into Canada in order to capture some of the through Canadian traffic. Hill perceives how much more goods his lines could carry were there no artificial barriers to hamper his international carrying trade. Hill therefore, has come out for free trade.

The American nation while it repudiates all slavish deference to the effete nobility of Europe, nevertheless, pays great deference to the declaration of its own industrial rulers. When Carnegie and Hill come out for free trade, the chances are that the politicians will listen and that there will be sweeping reductions in the tariff schedules.

EFFECT ON THE TOWNSHIPS

Should low tariffs prevail between Canada and the United States, there will be great changes for the better in the industry and commerce of the Eastern Townships. Compared with the development of the other portions of Canada the Eastern Townships have stood still. Canada has developed along the lines of east and west not of north and south. Montreal, Ottawa, Sudbury, Winnipeg, all these places have participated in the development of Canada. The Eastern Townships being, out of the line of this development, have developed only in a local way.

The tariff wall has killed us. What with New York, New Hampshire and Vermont to the south of us and Maine to the east we have occupied as it were a blind alley. We have been marked for through commerce "no thoroughfare."

Were the tariff removed, markets would develop for us to the South and East as well as to the north and west. Our border towns would become cities and our villages towns, and we would share in that marvellous industrial development which has recently taken place along the north and south coastal routes of the United States. Until the tariff wall is removed our commerce and industry will lag and our young men of intelligence and enterprise will continue to sell out and go west.

We have half a mind to begin booming George E. Ford for the 1912 Missisquoi election.

SWISS RIFLES

The Eastern Townships are being flooded with Swiss Army rifles which can be purchased at a very low price. These rifles are guaranteed to kill at a mile and are something entirely different in their destructive capacity from the old fashioned guns with which, heretofore, our Nimrod youths have been accustomed to go forth and slay the mighty squirrel.

The cheapness of these Swiss rifles puts them within the reach of youths of low earning capacity, small discretion and huge egoism. These youths purchase the rifles and wander over the country blazing away regardless of where the bullets may strike. The Eastern Townships are under a state of terrorism from the wild shooting of these reckless youths. Some remedy should be adopted to restrain the hunting proclivities of irresponsible individuals with high power army rifles. As usual, however, in such cases, nothing will be done by the authorities until a few prominent citizens have been killed by stray bullets.

AFRAID OF CHANGE

Carlyle is speaking of the French Revolution says that all things are changing. Humanity never stands still. On all sides of us we hear farmers of an older generations telling of how things are changed since their day. Things have changed. Yet the fear of change is in the heart of many people. Since however it is impossible to stop the change why not study the changes that are taking place and try to influence them in the interests of the common people. We would like to see political organization of farmers intent upon bringing about legislation in their own interests. As long as the farmers divide themselves into two parties, their influence will be divided, and they will get mighty little from either a Liberal or a Conservative government. Our idea in supporting Mr. Geo. E. Ford as member for Missisquoi was that there should be more working farmers in the Parliament of Canada. There are too many kid gloved politicians in our national assembly and not enough actual workers.

QUIETUDE

F. C. MEARS

In these latter days the mediaeval plea for the simple life has been revived. To such a plea every age has had need to hearken, and none more so than the present generation. It is a commonplace more than a platitude that the material spirit is predominant in these our times, and it is, moreover true that the spirit of materialism is the most corroding, wearisome and distracting. This bustling, jostling activity, this merciless clangor of commerce, has deafened the whole American continent to "the still small voice" and the benignant call to quietude, it has blinded our eyes to the sunbeams of sympathetic and generous sentiments. Even domestic affection and respect for the sanctity of the home are being robbed of their ennobling influence.

Men are commencing to place too wide a distinction between the spirit of the home and the spirit of the office. It is a prevalent illusion in the circles of material activity that the reflective temper is to be shunned on account of its austerity. But the truly reflective man was never austere. "The thoughtful soul to solitude retires" where its sympathies may grow and receive nutrition. A man never spends an hour in the home circles to no avail. There his spirit is touched by all that sanctifies and blesses. The painful routine of daily occupation is sufficient to eventually destroy "the breath and finer spirit of things" if it is left unmolested and uninterrupted. Then, if we are to be happy wheresoever we are placed, and if we are to spread a sweet contagion, our spirits must harken to the call of the quiet and linger in the realms of solitude.

An Ottawa grocer has been fined twelve dollars for selling cigarettes to a boy. Cigarettes are bad for men as well as for boys, but men are supposed to be old enough to take care of themselves.

THE TUBERCULOSIS EXHIBITION.

A Tuberculosis Exhibition has been held in Montreal. The great white plague which killed off the Indians and has afflicted the white race on the Northern American continent is being investigated more and more thoroughly. As the exhibition was held in Montreal, it threw more light upon the needs and remedies for the city than for the country. Fresh air and lots of it is the great remedy according to the wise heads who gathered to discuss the matter. But the Indians used to go down before consumption like rats before the black plague and if there is any race on the earth that got fresh air and lots of it, it was the North American Indians.

The slum is said to be the great breeder of tuberculosis. Dark rooms and foul air are the breeding places of the tuberculosis germ, yet the Jews, crowded together in the European Ghettos, have successfully withstood the attacks of tuberculosis and have grown numerous amid unsanitary surroundings.

The cleaning up of the slums will do much for the members of the Aryan race of the cities. But the country districts seem as seriously afflicted with this disease as are the cities.

HILL AND RECIPROCITY

F. C. MEARS

James J. Hill, the American railroad king and a man of intellectual acumen, delivered an address before the New York Chamber of Commerce in November last advocating the establishment of unhampered trade relations between Canada and the United States. "I believe that the most natural, most rational, most highly profitable commercial status between Canada and the United States is absolute freedom of trade. Pending the arrival of that, I believe that those who have the interests of both countries at heart should work for the establishment of a trade reciprocity in all natural products as ample and generous as public opinion will approve. What the commercial relations between these countries ought to be is indicated by every fact in their common history."

Emanating from a man who is playing such a large part in the commercial and industrial destiny of the United States as Mr. Hill the above words obviously carry much weight and are entitled to some serious thought, even if they do carry some of the aroma of prejudice and self-interest. Because Canada and the United States are born of the same ancestral stock and drink at the same fountain of natural resources is no reason for assuming that either one of them is going to jeopardize his position at that fountain by leaving it for one instant to brush some flies off the other's back through racial sympathy. When the establishment of reciprocal trade relations between two countries may in the slightest degree involve sacrifice on the part of either of the parties entering into the commercial contract then such a policy is obviously not feasible as the sacrificing party in this turbulent day of our Lord is not apt to sink personal comforts and satisfactions in the desire to maintain and enhance relations with someone else. The spirit of altruism is not yet universal. In that fact lies Canada's reason for turning a cold shoulder to any proposals on the part of the Republic, however tempting and fascinating they may be made to appear, to establish free and unrestricted trade relations between the two countries.

The moment one studies the problem of free trade between Canada and the United States and the feasibility of the policy, one is confronted and almost silenced with glaring inequalities on every side in respect to their comparative wealth, natural and developed. The population of the United States is fifteen times that of Canada. A comparison of the assessed value of the two countries would only add insult to injury and an examination of their respective facilities for handling their trade would only arouse antipathy. To state that there are sentimental difficulties in the way of Canada's offering to enter into reciprocal trade relations with the United States would be only to enunciate a half-truth. The actual commercial difficulties are insurmountable, at present. If the United States is satisfied to wait for another decade until Canada gets her sea legs as regards commercial vigor, then Our Lady of the Snows will be quite willing to enter into matrimonial relations with Uncle Sam.

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TRUST ERA

Mr. John D. Rockefeller has declared that the trust era has but begun. Mr. Rockefeller who controls the vastest aggregation of capital after the Rothschilds is one who speaks with authority on questions of wealth and economic production.

Many economic writers are still wandering in the realms of individual initiative and competition. But competition is dying out rapidly and individual initiative counts for little unless backed by capital. The man who starts out alone to conquer the world or to acquire great wealth soon finds he must have associates and some finances if he wishes to succeed. This association of comrades, this pooling of efforts for a common aim, is the germ of the trust idea. Combination generally means success, the lone fight is usually a losing one.

An illustration of this growth of the trust power can be seen in the career of the Guggenheims who are in the mining business on an international scale. Their business is reduced to a system. They keep in touch with all new mining developments and when a new mining field is discovered their representatives are likely to be on the spot before the rush of fortune seekers begin. They have skilled men in Siberia, in Brazil, in Mexico, in Canada, who are looking out for all mining chances.

It is said that there are five thousand ordinary prospectors out, all hunting a fortune in northern Ontario. Some of these may become rich, but the vast mass will remain poor.

The Guggenheims with their international combination intelligently at work acquiring the best properties will continue to grow richer. Intelligent co operation will beat competitive individualism almost every time.

LARGER COMBINATIONS

Adam Smith writing a century and half ago at the beginning of corporate activity declared that corporations could not compete with individuals because individuals would always manage their own business better than would directors and such like officials the business of others. To-day the cry is that the big corporations are killing off all individual effort. The history of the movement began with each worker owning his own little tools and doing the work by hand. Then came the factory and the workers worked together under a man who owned the factory. Then several factory owners finding competition did not pay them would combine into one company and these small companies would eventually combine into one big company. This is the condition existing to-day in America. Rockefeller declares that this is but the beginning. If this be correct it must mean that all competition will be extinguished and that all manufacturers will work together in harmony in the production of goods under the authority and direction of a small industrial council or one chief industrial president. When this comes about the oligarchy at the head of affairs, owning and controlling all the mills and means of production, will become absolute in power over the nation.

Then will begin the old struggle between the many and the few. The strikes and lock outs of the present is but a forerunner of the struggle to come, unless the workers through legislatures and Congress seize the political power and swing legislation in favor of industrial as well as political democracy.

A hundred miners have been killed in a mine explosion at Marianna, Pa. If you hit a man over the head with an axe and kill him, that is murder. If you send a hundred men down a dangerous mine and it explodes, that is simply a business misfortune to be charged up to profit and loss.

THE CLASS CONSCIOUS FARMER

We have been endeavoring to teach the farmers that it is to their interests to be a class conscious, political force. We are persuaded that we have induced some farmers to become less bitter partisans of their respective parties. But unfortunately there are good farmers who are still strong supporters of the Liberal and Conservative parties irrespective of what those parties stand for or what new policy they may advocate. Agriculture is a separate pursuit with special interests. But the trouble with organizing the farmers into a compact body, is that by the nature of their occupation, they are widely separated from each other and work alone. While other interests, such as mercantile and manufacturing, are crowded together in cities and towns, the agricultural interests are scattered over the whole countryside. While merchants and manufacturers usually have most of the actual physical labor done by others the farmers must do their own work themselves. The merchants and manufacturers therefore, have the leisure and opportunity to get together to discuss their common interests and to bring a united pressure to bear upon the government to get what they want. The farmers on the other hand, toiling alone all day long and part of the night, have not been able thus far to get together and to demand their fair share of government favors.

THE EXPLOITED FARMER

David Harum, that fictitious character, has been made to declare that "farming is working all day and doing chores all night." There is very little opportunity for the farmer to develop his social faculties and consequently, the glad hand politician is a welcome visitor. The farmer considers that if he plows his land and gets the best fertilizers and new harrows and plows, there is nothing more that he can get himself which will help him. Consequently, when the politician speaks with absolute conviction about new railroads and steam boat lines and new manufacturing, as being a benefit to the farmer, the farmer not having studied the question, believes that the politician is speaking the truth. All these things do help the farmer, but the politician rarely tells the farmer how much these things are going to cost him indirectly. To the average farmer, the government of the country seems something a long way off in which he has nothing to do directly. He wants developments and he gets them. But he benefits in them personally, far less than he otherwise would were he truly awake to his own interests. Manufacturers, railroad magnates and bankers become enormously wealthy and agriculture which is the basis of all wealth, pays for the wealth of others. How many big manufacturers are there whose wives cannot afford to wear diamonds? How many farmer's wives wear diamonds? When the farmers awake to their true interests, the Ottawa politicians will dance to a different tune than they do at present.

Suppose the farmers should go before a manufacturer's association and discuss the benefits that would accrue to manufacturers if the government would grant bonuses for the raising of cabbages. The manufacturers would tell the farmers to talk about something else. Yet the farmers are supposed to listen with delight when the manufacturers through the newspapers tell the farmers how much agriculture will benefit by a bonus on pig iron.

The Eastern Townships is twenty years behind the times. There are many citizens in the Eastern Townships who still actually believe that a grog shop helps their business. These purblind beings when they talk about prohibition remind us of blind kittens when they mew.

The Allied Trades Association is interesting itself in procuring books for the workmen. The workmen don't want books for their recreation. They want booze. If you don't believe it read the trade reviews of the rotund brewers.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The crop of wild oats we have sown is growing beautifully.

We keep one eye out on higher ideals the other eye out on the almighty dollar.

The people cannot trust the ordinary council to bring about local prohibition. The whiskey councillors have first to be eliminated.

The rural communities get hot air from the politicians and the manufacturers get protection and fat plums from the farmers' representatives in parliament.

Political corruption has reigned in the States, and now a gigantic fight is on between the people and the industrial monsters the people's own corruption has nurtured.

The farmers should organize political clubs for the interests of the farmers. They should cease to discuss the question of tariffs for manufacturers and look out for themselves.

A man will not buy votes unless it pays him. The voter who sells his vote will find in the long run that as a citizen he has lost more than he has gained in hard cash.

We have not yet made up our minds whether we will run against the Honorable Sydney in 1912 or not. If we do run and win we will make the rummies run at Ottawa.

Hayti is having another revolution. There may be almost as many men killed in the revolution, if it becomes real active, as there are men blown up by dynamite on the G. T. P.

In an editorial in the Montreal Gazette it is said that by the cutting off of a license about a third of the business is lost to the trade. Prohibition then does diminish drunkenness.

If the Laurier government has any sense it will take the Intercolonial Railway out of politics and let it be run in a business way. The Intercolonial will pay Canada if it were run for business and not politics.

We have received from the Department of Agriculture a directory of the breeders of pure bred live stock in Canada. Any farmer desiring to get a copy of this directory can do so by writing to the Veterinary Director at Ottawa.

Municipal elections will take place in January. How many local municipalities intend to elect prohibition councillors? The liquor traffic is a dead weight upon the prosperity of a community?

It has long been known that rats convey the bubonic plague from place to place. It is asserted in San Francisco that fleas are the agents which convey the plague from rat to rat. The scientific world, no doubt, is waiting in breathless suspense until it discovers what agency conveys the disease from flea to flea.

Many people look to Free Trade as a means of preventing combines. The English and American tin plate manufacturers have combined and the amalgamation will control the trade throughout the world. The industrial world is rapidly becoming controlled by an algarhy of international plutocrats.

Canada is at the beginning of a marvellous development. In the scramble for a share in that prosperity the speculators and charter mongers and manufacturers will probably get the cream, unless the farmers and common people put aside mutual suspicion and act together for their common interests.