

RECORD OF PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY UNDER LIBERAL RULE

Some of the Steps Taken by the Laurier Government to Promote Good Times.

Government to Promote Good Times.

A Story of Constant, yet Wise Progression. A Story of Energetic and Enthusiastic Application of Sound Business Principles, Judgment and Experience. A Story of a New and Greater Canada; of a New Business Age. The Farmers' Wants Attended to. Industries of all Kinds Stimulated. Labor Conditions Ameliorated and Improved. The Facts Laugh Conservative Pretensions and Criticism to Scorn.

The Conservative Party, with an assurance truly astonishing, claims the credit, through the national policy, for all the prosperity the country is now enjoying, and denies that the Liberal Government has done anything to promote prosperity. In Parliament and out of it, on the platform, in the press—the cry is raised, "The Liberals have not performed a solitary act of benefit to the country. To the N. P. chiefly belongs the credit of the good times."

The cry is a silly and absurd one! The Conservatives themselves in their heated hours do not believe it, and their only possible object in raising it is to divide the electors so that they may not perceive the actual truth, and accord credit where credit is due. The Liberal Government does not claim that ALL our prosperity is the result of its acts, but it does claim, and with justice, that its legislation had administration have been along the right lines—have stimulated and sustained the trade and commerce of the country, and have in a very material way promoted prosperity.

WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

At the outset of this enquiry into the matter it is necessary to bear in mind the conditions that prevailed prior to June, 1896, when the Liberal Government took office. Business was then practically stagnant, and there was a steady exodus of the cream of our population to the United States; the domestic peace of the country was seriously threatened by an ill-divided measure of coercion; the then Government was corrupt and incapable, and the members of it were at war among themselves; there was even a "nest of broilers" in the Queen's Privy Council; the administration wheels were clogged and the Government was slugging marking time; the corrupt methods that were revealed in the large spending Departments had thrown a dark cloud over the future of the country, and profusionally effected Canada's standing in the eyes of the world. All these untoward circumstances tended to make the business populace feel uneasy and gloomy.

The picture is a dark one, but it is not overdrawn. The darkest pages in Canada's history were recorded during the closing years of the Conservative regime.

The task set before the Liberal Government was, under such circumstances, by no means an easy one. To restore order from practical chaos; to set the wheels of progress and development in motion; to clean out the Augean stable; to stop the exodus and restore confidence in the country, required wisdom, great business experience, ability and courage. Happily for Canada her new administrators were possessed of the requisite qualifications, and their efforts were highly successful, as is evidenced by the condition of the country to-day, and during the past three or four years.

The new Ministry, recognizing fully the greatness of our national inheritance, immediately resolved to make the development of the magnificent resources of the country their primary aim and object. Enthusiastic Canadians every one of them, they proceeded to their task with great earnestness of purpose and devotion to duty. They had the interests of the people thoroughly at heart, and did not spare themselves in their efforts to advance the common weal. No body of business men ever worked harder than they have done since they took office. Night as well as day the heads of the most important Departments have toiled. Step after step was taken to help along the infowing tide of commerce, to facilitate the transaction of business, to develop the mineral, forest and agricultural wealth, to extend transportation facilities, to populate the country and open up to settlement hitherto unknown sections. The record of the Government in these re-

spects is a glorious one, and upon it the Liberal Party appeals with confidence to the people.

We propose now to enumerate and explain at some length some of the steps that have been taken with the object of promoting prosperity.

STEP NO. 1.—REFORM OF THE TARIFF.—REDUCTION IN TAXATION

The Tariff brought down by the Liberal Government was a judicious, business like, well considered and very material measure of reform, in view of all the circumstances, and particularly in view of the interests that had arisen under the National policy. Careful thought was given to the conditions of trade in all parts of the Dominion, and a Tariff was framed, based upon revenue, not protection, as a principle, a Tariff which does no injustice to any class, and which materially reduced the burdens of the people, and particularly those bearing on the farming community.

THE EFFECTS OF THE NEW TRADE POLICY

The effects of the new trade policy may be summarized as follows: FIRST—In 1896, which was the last year of the Conservative administration, the average rate of customs duty on the total goods—dutiable and free—imported into Canada, was 18.28 per cent. Last year, 1899-1900, the average rate was under 16 per cent. This is equivalent to a reduction of about 15 1/2 per cent. from the Conservative rate. The reduction will be greater this fiscal year, considering the fact that the rebate under the Preferential Tariff was increased from 25 per cent to 33 1/3 per cent from the first of July last.

SECOND—If the Conservative Tariff had not been repealed, between eight and ten million dollars more Customs taxation would have been imposed upon the people.

THIRD—The Farmer—the mainstay of the country—was especially benefited by the Tariff changes, and rightly so. He now has WHAT HE ASKED FOR, namely, free binder twine, free Indian Corn, free barbed and other fencing wire, free cream separators. The rates of duty on many agricultural implements, hardware, woollens, cottons, linens, glassware, hats and caps, furs, and many other articles of necessity to the farming community were also reduced substantially.

Under the Conservative Tariff rates there would have been paid during the fiscal year 1898-9, the large sum of one million dollars in customs duties on articles chiefly used by the farmer WHICH WERE ADMITTED FREE UNDER THE LIBERAL TARIFF.

Here are a few samples of the reductions made. The calculations are based on the trade of last fiscal year not being now available:

Articles	Duty paid on importations 1898-99.	Duty that would have been paid under Conservative Tariff Rates.
Indian Corn	nothing	\$549,877
Barbed Fencing	nothing	102,300
Wire	nothing	126,888
Galvanized Iron or Steel Wire	nothing	42,989
Cream Separators	nothing	45,000
Forks, pronged	\$ 2,763	8,858
Hay Tieders	1,162	1,628

Government, and it has been productive of the most beneficial results alike to Canada and the Empire. It marked an epoch in the history of the Empire. The London Times described it as the most gratifying and remarkable step yet made towards a closer union of the Empire. Kipling—the great and only—burst into verse over it, declaring that we had proved our faith in the heritage by more than the word of mouth. The adoption of that policy, coupled with the visit of our distinguished and talented Premier—the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier—to Great Britain, was the best advertisement Canada ever received. The country was made known to the nations of the civilized world as it never had been, and its status was markedly increased. At one bound it took its position as a powerful factor, with magnificent potentialities in the world of commerce. Prior to the adoption of that Tariff the reputation of Canada in Great Britain was very poor, thanks to the mismanagement of the Tory administration which had so loudly damaged the country in the eyes of the Motherland, and as a consequence had checked the flow of British capital here which was so necessary to the development of our resources.

The London Times—the great organ of British public opinion, writing the corrupt methods of the Conservative Government, stated:

"Here in the Mother Country there can be only one feeling, that of deep regret, for the wrong done to the fair fame of the eldest of our daughter States."

The London Telegraph said:

"Enough, unfortunately, is already known in England to make it clear that only the most judicious and drastic purification can remove the life in Canada from the stain of corruption, the like of which has not been seen in our own country for hundreds of years."

The London Echo stated:

"No country can prosper whose public Departments are in league with fraudulent contractors and whose Ministers are open to offers which, unfortunately and to our sorrow, were only too well warranted by the facts, unseasonably rejected our country and seriously retarded its progress."

But, thanks to the Liberal Government, a startling change has been effected. Canada has not only been completely rehabilitated in British eyes, but it has marched to the front and taken the proud position of the most prosperous, the best conducted, and the most progressive of all the British Colonies. It has shown, moreover, to the world that a new power has arisen in the West."

For substantiation of these observations we have only to peruse the comments of the British Press.

"THE TIMES," LONDON.

"The new departure—the Preferential Tariff—is most gratifying to all who desire to see the Empire knit more closely together. It is the most remarkable step yet made towards the fiscal confederation of the Empire."

"THE FINANCIAL TIMES," LONDON.

"The prosperity of the Dominion, thanks to a Government which, with Sir Wilfrid Laurier at its head, has reached as near the ideal of a self-governing British colony as it is possible in this imperfect world, has been extraordinary, and yet it has had few of these ephemeral features which will tend to the belief that it is short lived."

LONDON CORRESPONDENT "NEW YORK TIMES."

"For the first time in my experience—England and the English are regarding Canadians and the Dominion with affectionate enthusiasm."

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"We are not gratified merely for what Canada is doing for the Mother Country in the field, or in the less glorious sphere of commerce. What appeals most strongly to our instincts is the credit example Canada is giving to her younger sisters."

"THE BULLIONIST," LONDON.

"The English want lessons such as Canada is teaching them to-day, such as we are pleased to think they are learning. The day of a close-knit Empire may be nearer than we dream of, but when Confederation is an accomplished fact the work of Canada's statesman will not be forgotten."

"THE BRITISH MERCURY."

"Apart from the question of sentiment we have an additional interest in the success of the colony through being its best customer. Canadian products are finding a greatly increasing sale, and the preferential reduction upon British goods has also helped to augment the volume of trade."

STEP NO. 2.—THE BRITISH PREFERENTIAL TARIFF.

The granting of a Preference in the markets of Canada to the goods of Great Britain was probably the most popular step ever taken by a Canadian

Government, and it has been productive of the most beneficial results alike to Canada and the Empire. It marked an epoch in the history of the Empire. The London Times described it as the most gratifying and remarkable step yet made towards a closer union of the Empire. Kipling—the great and only—burst into verse over it, declaring that we had proved our faith in the heritage by more than the word of mouth. The adoption of that policy, coupled with the visit of our distinguished and talented Premier—the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier—to Great Britain, was the best advertisement Canada ever received. The country was made known to the nations of the civilized world as it never had been, and its status was markedly increased. At one bound it took its position as a powerful factor, with magnificent potentialities in the world of commerce. Prior to the adoption of that Tariff the reputation of Canada in Great Britain was very poor, thanks to the mismanagement of the Tory administration which had so loudly damaged the country in the eyes of the Motherland, and as a consequence had checked the flow of British capital here which was so necessary to the development of our resources.

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"Canada may well look forward with confidence to the future. Secure in the finances of the country and secure in the ties of relationship with the Mother Country, the colony has a prosperous career before it and will, with credit to us as well as credit to itself in the race that the world has set."

Let us look now briefly at the actual practical effects of the Preferential Tariff.

In the first place, it has effected a large reduction in the duties paid by the Canadian consumer as compared with the duties paid by him under the Conservative Tariff.

The following figures illustrate this:

Articles	Conservative Tariff 1898-99.	Preferential Tariff 1899-1900.
Cotton manufactures	23.50	23.00
Woolen manufactures	22.01	21.91
Silk manufactures	30.33	29.93
Fancy goods	29.87	29.02
Max, hemp & jute	22.19	20.16
Sts, caps & bonnets	30.00	29.50
Gloves and mitts	35.00	32.25
Furs	15.95	13.83
Iron and steel mfrs.	21.02	12.61
Drugs, dyes & chems	22.07	17.54
Earthenware & a d	30.00	22.54
Books and printed matter	23.55	10.98
Glass and mfrs of	23.35	19.35
Leather and mfrs of	19.30	13.78

These articles form the principal imports into the country and they are largely imported from Great Britain. For instance, during the fiscal year 1898-9, 73 per cent of our imported woolens, 88 per cent of Henna, 87 per cent of cottons, and 50 per cent of hats, caps and bonnets, came from Great Britain under the Preferential Tariff.

In addition to these direct reductions in the duties collected there have been very large indirect savings to the people through the operation of the British Preferential Tariff. That tariff, as a matter of fact and actual experience, controls the prices on our importations from all foreign countries of such articles as Great Britain can supply us with. The foreign merchant competing with the British merchant in the Canadian market is obliged to reduce his prices to effect the reduction in duty on goods coming from Britain. The Canadian consumer consequently is benefited by the reduction in prices. To illustrate this argument, take the case of woollen clothing. The rate of duty on the article is 35 per cent from foreign countries and 23 1/3 per cent from Great Britain. On \$1,000 of such goods imported from Britain \$233.33 duty would have to be paid; on the same value imported from other countries \$350.00 duty would have to be paid. The Canadian merchant is, therefore, in a position to sell to the United States dealer, or any other foreign dealer, "On \$1,000 worth of woollen clothing which I can buy in Great Britain I would have to pay \$233.33 duty, while on the same value of the same clothing which I might import from the United States I would have to pay \$350 duty, or \$117 more than on the goods from Britain. The British dealer, therefore, will get my orders unless you reduce your prices below his, sufficiently at any rate to compensate for the difference in duty. If you will make me a reduction in your price of \$117 in \$1,000 I might be disposed to give you my order, but under no other circumstances would I pay to do so."

The American and other foreign dealers have to reduce their prices to effect the reduction in duty on British goods. This applies to very many of the most important lines of goods that we import. More particularly does it apply to cottons, woollens, silks, fancy goods, hats, caps and bonnets, gloves and mitts, furs, umbrellas, drugs, dyes and chemicals, earthenware, glassware, leather manufactures, books and printed matter, paper manufactures, vegetable oils, soap and iron and steel manufactures. The total importations of these articles in the year 1898-9 amounted in value to \$50,000,000. Other articles could be mentioned, but these are the most important. In all these lines Great Britain competes in our markets, and in most of them she supplies us with the largest proportion of our importations.

The business men of Canada who make purchases outside the country know full well that these statements as to the Preferential Tariff controlling the prices of goods sold for the Canadian market by foreigners in competition with Great Britain, are sound and true, but let our good friends, the Conservatives, should desire more testimony on the point, we will call in evidence the Toronto "Mail and Empire" newspaper—the chief organ of the Conservative Party—and an authority which the Conservatives surely will not dispute. The following editorial was contained in the columns of that newspaper on the 26th June, 1899:—

"MAIL AND EMPIRE" (Editorial).

June 26th, 1899.

OPENING OUR MARKET WIDER.

Of late there has been a falling off in the quantity of British goods entered for consumption in Canada.

Importers have been keeping their shipments of British goods back or in bond in order to get the benefit of the further drop in the preferential discount.

AT THE SAME TIME, CANADIAN BUYERS IN THE UNITED STATES MARKETS HAVE NOT FAILED TO POINT OUT TO THE HOUSES THEY DEAL WITH THERE THAT THESE WILL HAVE TO LOWER PRICES IN ORDER TO COMPETE WITH BRITISH MERCHANTS ON THE NEW FOOTING THE LATTER ENJOY IN CANADA.

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The "preference" opens the Canadian market wider to American goods.

In its eagerness to score a point against the Liberal Government, the "Mail and Empire" was obliged to admit fully the contention of the Liberals that the Preferential rates apply directly and indirectly, so far as the Canadian consumer is concerned, to the total importations of articles such as Great Britain does or can supply us with. The Tory organ, in making that admission, effectively disproved Conservative allegations that the Tariff has not been substantially reduced.

SECONDLY, The Tariff has resulted in largely increased sales of British goods to Canada. For years prior to its adoption Great Britain's exports here had steadily fallen off. The Preference has once again created the decline and the increase in the trade.

The figures for the last year are subject to final revision but will be found to be approximately correct.

THIRDLY, The Preference has resulted in a wonderful increase in the exports of farm and other products of Canada to Great Britain. The generosity of our policy created a strong feeling of gratitude in the British commercial mind, and, as a consequence, increased the demand there for Canadian products, which, fortunately, our farmers and producers, aided by the excellent cold storage equipment developed by the Liberal Ministry of Agriculture, were able to meet.

THE FOLLOWING FIGURES IN THIS CONNECTION ARE INSTRUCTIVE:—

Articles	1897.	1898.	1899.
Exports of Canadian Farm Produce to Great Britain since the Preferential Tariff came into effect:			
Exports of animals and their produce and agricultural products (all the produce of Canada) to Great Britain:	1897. \$47,108,253	1898. 67,484,222	1899. 80,032,542
Exports Canadian butter to Great Britain:	1897. 10,413,131	1898. 10,467,530	1899. 10,120,036
Exports Canadian Cheese to Great Britain:	1897. 183,942,040	1898. 196,220,771	1899. 189,220,088
Exports Canadian Eggs to Great Britain:	1897. 185,827,737	1898. 185,827,737	1899. 185,827,737

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which he put into operation in the year 1897. The result is that Canadian butter for export is kept cool from the moment it is made until it reaches the British retailer. What has been the effect of this? An immediate advance in the price of Canadian butter in the British markets. In the season of 1899 the price of Canadian butter averaged fully eight shillings a hundred more than the Australian butter in the British market, and the price to the Canadian producer at the creamery was fully 2s. per lb. more than at any time during the Conservative regime. The demand in Britain for our butter also increased largely, due to the generous Imperial policy of the Liberal Government and to the excellence of our product.

In 1896, the total exports of butter amounted to six million pounds; in 1898, 11,253,787 lbs.; in 1899 they had jumped to twenty millions, and in 1900 to 23,220,737 lbs. In 1896 the value of these exports was \$1,002,080; 1898, \$2,044,080; 1899, \$3,700,873 and in 1900 \$5,122,555.

There were also increases in the price