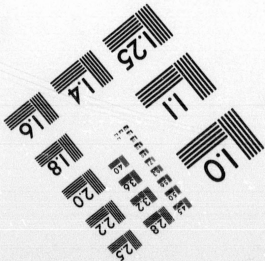
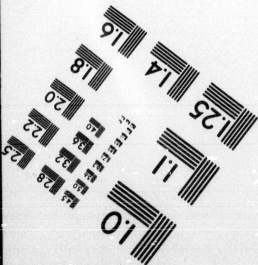
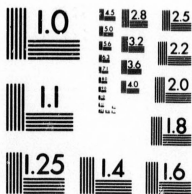


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SPEECH
—OF—
SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT
AT INGERSOLL,
Nov. 14th, 1889.



After some preliminary remarks, Sir Richard proceeded as follows :—As you are aware, I have always inculcated the duty of plain speaking on public affairs, and in that respect, at any rate, I think I may say that I have not failed to practice what I preach. In fact, it has not infrequently been made a charge against me, not merely by my opponents, but by some of our own weaker brethren, that I have at times quite outstepped the limits of moderation and have called a spade a spade much too plainly to please those worthy persons who think with the old French lady that a sin is not at all so serious a sin if the offenders occupy a sufficiently good position in society, and who declared, as regarded one particular offender, "that Providence would think twice before damning a man of his quality."

Such, my friends, is not my creed nor my practice either. I have never yet been able to see that there was any sufficient ground for adopting a different standard of morality in public than in private life. I cannot see that it is at all a lesser crime to take a large sum from the public treasury than a small sum from a private till.

FALSEHOOD AND FRAUD THE SAME IN ALL RANKS.

I cannot see that falsehood and fraud are any less serious offences when committed by men in high position than when committed by men in low, and if the charge against me be that I have held and acted on this opinion I plead guilty at once.

On this present occasion I wish more particularly to call your attention to certain matters which occurred during the late session and to present to you certain considerations in regard to the probable effects of the trade policy of the Liberal party which have not been much dwelt upon as yet.

1889

I think it is all the more important I should do this, because public attention for a good while back has been more or less directed to certain other issues which were interjected as it were into the regular business of the session (somewhat as I conceive to the detriment of the latter) and which at any rate have prevented the matters I am about to mention from receiving much consideration so far. Now I have no intention of denying that the questions alluded to are in themselves of great importance. It is likely enough they will exercise a very powerful influence on the future of both parties in the state, and I am by no means inclined to question the courage and sincerity of those gentlemen who saw fit to raise them.

TRIBUTE TO MR. M'CARTHY.

They may have been mistaken, for my own part I think they were—but I do not dispute that Mr. McCarthy and his friends acted boldly and honestly, and (more especially in Mr. McCarthy's case) that they ran considerable risk and made no insignificant sacrifices by advocating the views they did. Moreover, it is quite true that they were logical and consistent in claiming the same right to interfere with the acts of the legislature of Quebec which they had previously asserted as regards the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba. All I say is that while I am quite willing to give Mr. McCarthy and his friends full credit for honesty and sincerity in acting as they have done, I claim for myself and for my friends in the Liberal party that we also acted honestly and sincerely and with at least equal consistency in so far as our previous professions of respect for provincial rights were concerned.

But be this as it may, let all who will argue as they please as to these moot points of legal jurisdiction, there are other questions affecting the moral and political well-being of the people of Canada which came up for discussion during the late session, and as to which there was no possible doubt but that they came rightly under the cognizance of the Dominion Parliament, which I wish to discuss with you to-night. Here let me say that I doubt if all even of our own friends have fully comprehended the great importance of the indirect results which will arise from the adoption of the policy of the Liberal party in favor of Continental Free Trade or Unrestricted Reciprocity, call it which you will.

SECONDARY RESULTS OF RECIPROCITY IMMENSE.

Its secondary results will be enormous, and so is its bearing on our moral and political welfare.

I have observed that our opponents are fond of taunting us with being willing to sacrifice our freedom for material

benefits, ready to sell our inheritance for a mess of pottage, and if that were true I would agree with them in asserting that no mere material gain would justify such a surrender.

Sir, it is most true that neither individual men nor yet nations collectively live by bread alone, and it is therefore more particularly to the moral benefits which Canada may expect to receive from greater freedom of intercourse with the United States that I now invite your consideration.

MATERIAL BENEFITS UNQUESTIONABLE.

In a material point of view, indeed, I hardly think that any man who is not in some way personally interested in opposing reciprocity can pretend that it would not be for the interest of much the largest part of the people of Canada to have perfect freedom of intercourse with a kindred nation speaking the same tongue, governed substantially by the same laws, resembling us in almost all ways, separated only by an imaginary frontier line for full 3,000 miles—with whom as it is in spite of two absurdly hostile tariffs we transact full half, and that the most profitable half, of our entire trade and commerce—and among whose citizens (not so much in spite of, as because of, our own foolish tariff) you will find to-day one-third of the whole adult male population born in Canada within the last fifty years. I say of the *adult male population*, Mr. Chairman, because it is quite well known that an enormous percentage of the great emigration from Canada to the United States has always been composed of that especial class of our people to their great gain and our great detriment.

On this point I will say nothing now, only pausing to observe that recent events seem to have pretty clearly established these four facts:—

First, That unrestricted reciprocity will profit us greatly.

Secondly, That there is every reasonable ground to believe that any Canadian Government which can convince the people of the United States that they are honestly desirous of trading with them and are willing to negotiate on fair terms, have a very good chance of securing it.

Thirdly, That the present Government are not in the least desirous of bringing it about in view of the threatened displeasure of their owners and paymasters, the several protected combines and associations which now tyrannise over Canada, and lastly, that if the said Government (notwithstanding they have again and again denounced the said project as treasonable and in the highest degree injurious to the best interests of Canada and declared that all who advocated it were traitors) are ever convinced that the only way to keep

their places is to support unrestricted reciprocity, they would not lose twenty-four hours in posing before the people in this matter as they have done many a time before as the very warmest supporters of a scheme which they had up to that date opposed and ridiculed to the utmost. Sir, history would only repeat itself, and Sir John A. Macdonald would do no more in this case than he did once before in the case of the project of Confederation, which, to my own certain knowledge, he only adopted when it became quite clear that he would be politically overwhelmed if he did not.

ALLEGATION CANNOT OBTAIN RECIPROCITY.

One word, however, as to the oft-repeated allegation that it is quite idle to discuss this question, inasmuch as the United States will never agree to it.

Sir, this assertion is on a par with many other statements I see made by ministerial organs.

Apparently they cannot so much as allude to this matter without involving themselves in a perfect mass of contradictions.

One day we hear from one section of them that unrestricted reciprocity in natural products would ruin the Canadian farmers.

Another day we hear from another division (nay, sometimes from the very same papers which at first preached the very opposite doctrine) that the present Government are most anxious to secure that sort of reciprocity—and ruin, I suppose, the Canadian farmer.)

So you have these worthies declaring, in the teeth of the plainest evidence to the contrary, that the Yankees will not treat with us at any price; and, to make assurance sure, we have Government twice over, in two successive years, deliberately refusing to make the smallest advance or even to attempt to open negotiations with the United States.

Pray, what do they expect the people of the United States to do? Manifestly this thing is of more importance to us than to them, and yet our legislative Solons will not even ask for it!!

They first shut the door in the faces of our neighbors and then complain that they won't come in.

MORAL AND POLITICAL BENEFITS FROM RECIPROCITY.

And now, sir, it becomes my duty to point out how and why I hold that great moral and political advantages would accrue to Canada from adopting the Liberal policy in this respect.

To do this effectively we must first review the present political situation.

In theory, no doubt, our form of Government is a good one. In theory we hold that the popular will is supreme. In theory we are agreed that it is best carried out through representatives who are to be the true and faithful trustees of the people, and whose duty also it is to see that the people are kept well advised as to public affairs.

This, I say, is our theory; but what, sir, is the practice we find in vogue this day?

Sir, I will tell you in two words.

GOVERNMENT BY ORGANIZED CORRUPTION.

The Government of Canada is to-day carried on by means of a stupendous and most costly system of organized bribery. In this the majority of the representatives and trustees of the people are accomplices, and careful provision is made to ensure that as large a proportion of the electorate as possible be kept hoodwinked and in ignorance of the actual facts.

Sir, this system has gone far. It has been pushed to a greater length in Canada than in any other English-speaking community having representative institutions of which I remember to have read. Sir John A. Macdonald's system has been compared to that of Walpole, but the parallel don't hold. In Walpole's day the English House of Commons, though it had good elements in it, was in no sense a truly representative assembly. Half the seats were rotten boroughs filled by the nominees of a corrupt and selfish oligarchy; communication was very slow and difficult; publicity as we have it hardly existed; the press could only publish reports of the proceedings of Parliament in disguise, and editors who commented too freely on the doings of the Government did so in peril of the prison and the pillory, if not of the hangman's rope. Such was the state of things which Walpole found but did not make, and it would be gross injustice to hold him responsible in any equal degree.

TRUE PARALLEL FOR MACDONALD.

No, sir, if a parallel is to be found for the system now existing in Canada it is not in England but on this side of the Atlantic you must look for it, and not in legislative assemblies either. There is one parallel and one only that I know of, and that is in that chapter of the history of municipal misgovernment which records the doings of the late W. M. Tweed, whilom chief of Tammany and ultimately denizen of Black-wall penitentiary. There, sir, the parallel is very nearly per-

fect. There you find power got and kept by very nearly the same identical means. There you find the same financial history. There you find the same insolent defiance of all honest public opinion. There you find, too, much the same difficulty in dealing with the offenders.

Both had secured the tribunals by which they could be judged. Tweed availing himself of the customs of that state had contrived to secure the election of his own creatures as judges. Sir John A. Macdonald has done much the same and by the same means as regards the majority of Parliament; nay, in one respect he has surpassed his prototype, for whereas Tweed found it impossible to secure the public press, Sir John A. Macdonald has to a great degree made a large part of that safe also.

Sir, this is a grave statement, and I make it deliberately and under a grave share of responsibility, as grave as if I stood to-night in my place in Parliament.

THREE NOTABLE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Of the truth of these statements I will now proceed to give you proofs. Last session we had several very notable instances of the extent to which the demoralization of Canadian politics has proceeded, and of these I will select three—one showing the utter indifference of the existing majority of Parliament to gross dereliction of duty on the part of a Minister—one the impudent abuses of the position of a private member for personal advantage—and one the "callous and cruel disregard" of the rights of helpless wards of the state on the part alike of Government and of the majority which sustains them.

CASE OF SIR CHARLES TUPPER.

And first of all I will present the case of Sir Charles Tupper. Two years ago or so Sir C. Tupper, being desirous for certain personal and political reasons (partly connected with the wholesale scheme of bribery by which he secured certain constituencies in Nova Scotia in the very throes of last general election) of inducing the House to build a certain line of railway, deliberately assured the House with the utmost emphasis and particularity that by building a bare 80 or 83 miles they would shorten the distance from a large part of Nova Scotia to the rest of Canada by "from 40 to 45 miles for every pound of freight and every passenger" going from the one place to the other. On this solemn and distinct assurance the road was undertaken. It is now nearly completed, and on the vote being brought up in supply it was ascertained

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after a long and full discussion, and was admitted by Sir John A. Macdonald himself, that so far from the construction of this 83 miles having shortened the transit by from 40 to 45 miles, the utmost that could be gained (and even that was stoutly disputed) was barely 7 miles! And that the country was to spend not less than \$1,500,000 and probably full \$2,000,000 for a road the construction of which had been secured by this most gross and deliberate misrepresentation on the part of Sir C. Tupper. This took place on the 5th April, and three weeks after, on the 27th April, having given the Government and Sir John A. Macdonald, the Minister of Railways, most ample time to prepare their defence, if they had any, I moved the following resolution:—

Hansard
1889,
Ap. 5th.

That the said resolution be not agreed to, but that it be resolved, That it appears from the statements made in this House by Sir Charles Tupper, then Minister of Finance, that "the construction of the road (Oxford and New Glasgow Junction), which I proposed to this Parliament to secure, shortens the distance between the whole of that great portion of Nova Scotia and the rest of Canada by no less than from forty to forty-five miles for every pound of freight and for every passenger that is carried."

That, on the faith of this statement, the House was induced to undertake the construction of this road as a Government work, and to incur an expenditure of not less than \$1,500,000.

That it now appears, from statements made in this House by the First Minister and others, that the distance, instead of being reduced from forty to forty-five miles, has only been reduced by a distance variously estimated at from four to seven miles, and that the statement above mentioned was without foundation in fact, and that the House was induced to undertake the construction of the said road by false representations.

And lest I should appear to be unfair, I add Sir Charles Tupper's remarks in 1887 in extenso:—

Vide
Hansard
1887.

"I can best illustrate to the House the position if I say that that corner of the Chamber is New Glasgow, that corner is Oxford Junction, on the Intercolonial Railway, and that corner is Truro. At present the people of the whole of the eastern portion of Nova Scotia, the whole of the great County of Pictou, the County of Guysboro', the County of Antigonish, and the whole Island of Cape Breton in addition, have, in order to reach Moncton, in New Brunswick, to travel to Truro; and this intersection, taking the hypotenuse of seventy-five miles—that the construction of the road which I proposed to this Parliament to secure shortens the distance between the whole of that great portion of Nova Scotia and the rest of Canada by no less than from forty to forty-five miles for every pound of freight and every passenger that is carried."

This, one would say, was plain enough and emphatic enough, and for fear of any mistakes I repeated all the facts in a speech in which I expressed without reserve the opinion in which all honest men will concur that the man who in private life had procured the expenditure of a large sum of money by such means ought to have been indicted for procuring money under false pretences.

GOVERNMENT SIT DUMB.

Hansard
1880,
Ap. 27th

Well, sir, what did the Government of Canada do? Did they dare to resent the imputation? Did they dare to defend their colleague? Did they pretend to offer any explanation? Not they. They were wise enough in their generation to know that with the evidence in my hands and recited in my resolution there was no defence possible, and, as Hansard will show you, they sat dumb and mute. All they could do was "to call in the members," who trooped in accordingly, and, having heard the facts read from the chair, decided by a large majority that in the opinion of the greater part of the Parliament of Canada a Minister of the Crown deserves no punishment and not even a censure for having deliberately induced Parliament to expend near two millions by the grossest possible misrepresentation!

CASE OF MR. TEMPLE.

Two days later, on the 29th April, this same docile majority were called on to vote a sum of \$30,000 to a certain bridge company, of which Mr. Temple, a member of the House, was a principal partner, under the following remarkable circumstances: Mr. Temple and some patriotic friends—zealous for the public good—had built a bridge across the St. John river, which they allege cost them \$375,000. This may be or it may not be. We will give them the benefit of the doubt and not inquire how much of this \$375,000 went for the "lawful" profits of the contractors and who the contractors were. It is enough that a paternal Government, anxious to aid so laudable an enterprise, advanced them out of the public funds, on a work which cost \$375,000, just \$300,000 at 4 per cent. per annum.

As I said, it was proposed to give Mr. Temple and his friends a further bonus in the way of a free gift of \$30,000, thereby reducing the sum total they alleged they had put into the bridge to just \$45,000.

At this stage I thought it well to cross-examine Mr. Temple as to the cost of working and maintaining the bridge and as to the tolls he expected to receive. Mr. Temple, to do him justice, was straightforward enough. He stated (you will find it all recorded in Hansard, page 1,621) that the maintenance of the bridge would cost \$2,000 a year, and that he expected to get \$30,000 a year in tolls.

Now, please observe. The bridge cost \$375,000. The maintenance was \$2,000 a year. The Government furnished \$300,000 at 4 per cent., equal to \$12,000 a year for interest,

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so that here Mr. Temple, by his own recorded statement, was to get \$16,000 a year, on a total outlay of \$75,000, being at the rate of over 20 per cent. per annum, and the Government deliberately proposed to give him \$30,000 as a free gift, thereby reducing his and his friends' total outlay to \$45,000, on which they were to receive \$16,000 a year, being interest at the rate of 35 per cent!!!

Mark the beautiful consistency of the whole arrangement. If the bridge had been a failure, or if it is a failure, the Government will lose \$330,000 and Mr. Temple and Co. \$45,000. But if the bridge proves a success the Government will get say 3½ per cent. on its \$330,000 (allowing for \$30,000 being a free gift) and Mr. Temple and his allies will get just 35 per cent. on their \$45,000!!!

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT A FARCE.

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Sir, it is almost too monstrous to discuss. How dare the most servile of the Government's paid and subsidized hacks maintain that Mr. Temple was or is or ever can be a free agent in dealing with any proposal the Government may please to bring down? How can he venture to denounce any job however iniquitous? How can he pose as an impartial and unbiassed voter on any possible question of the expenditure of public money, and especially on any question of railway subsidies?

What a farce and a fraud it is to talk of the independence of Parliament in the case of such a representative, and how needless it is to add that these facts being established beyond the possibility of dispute, a decisive majority of Parliament, once on a motion of Mr. Davies and once upon a motion of my own, voted that Mr. Temple should have his \$30,000 as a free gift, and that it should not even be applied in reduction of the debt he and his friends owed to the Government, but should go to reduce the paltry fraction they had contributed to the enterprise.

After this you will hardly be surprised to learn that when Mr. Barron, in a motion which I will read to you, and which runs as follows:—

That all the words after the word "That" be left out, and the following inserted instead thereof:—"Mr. Speaker do not now leave the Chair, but that it be resolved, That it appears from a Return laid upon the Table of this House, that the Government of Canada, in the year 1880, acquired from the Band of Indians known as Shawanakiskic's Band, a surrender of the Indian title to the merchantable pine timber of the Whitefish Lake Indian Reserve, or Reserve No. 6, in trust, to be sold for the joint benefit of the said band on such terms and on such conditions as to Her Majesty's government of Canada should seem proper, 10 per cent. of the bonus derivable from the sale of the said timber to be divided

Hansard
1880,
Ap. 29th

Vide
Hansard
1880,
page 1494

among the said band, the remainder of the proceeds to be invested for their sole joint benefit and for the benefit of their descendants in such manner as to said Government of Canada should seem to be most conducive to the interest of said band."

And it appears that at and prior to the time of the sale thereof, hereinafter mentioned, the Government of Canada had been officially advised that the said reserve contained "a large quantity of valuable pine timber fit for lumber much more than the Indians would be likely to require for their own purposes."

And that in consequence of the reserve not having been surveyed or laid out until recently, the Government of the Province of Ontario had no means of knowing of the existence of said reserve, and having no such knowledge, proceeded in the year 1872 to sell, and did sell, the pine timber thereon for several thousand dollars, all of which was well known to the Government of Canada prior to their selling the same, as hereinafter appears.

And that it further appears from said Return that the Government of Canada, without conferring with the Indians of said band (or any of them) as to the price to be obtained for said pine timber, or in any way whatever enquiring as to their views or wishes regarding the same, and without communicating to them, or any of them, as to the sum of money for which they proposed to sell said pine timber, sold and disposed of the same, covering an area of 79 square miles, at a private sale, without competition of any kind, to one Honore Robillard, now a member of the House, and a supporter of the said Government, for a nominal sum of \$316.

And it appears that the said pine timber is, and was at the time of the sale thereof, of a value in excess of the sum of \$50,000, and, by reason of the aforesaid facts, the Indians have been grievously wronged, and the trust they reposed in the Government of Canada has been violated and misused.

That in view of the facts aforesaid this House expresses its disapproval of the sale of the pine timber for the nominal sum of \$316 and of the manner in which it was sold, and this House declares it to be a gross violation of the trust reposed by the Indians in the Government of Canada, and it is the duty of this House to record its condemnation of the transaction.

moved to censure the Government for having sold a timber limit containing 50,000 acres by private sale (without one word of notice or advertisement) for \$316 (being exactly two-thirds of one cent per acre), and likewise stated in his place that this same limit was resold within three months for over \$50,000, (although the only defence attempted by Mr. Dewdney was a practical admission of the facts as stated, inasmuch as he alleged that the Indians after all would do very well as they would get a large sum of money out of the stumpage dues, which, as you are aware, they would under the regulations have got in any case whether the limits sold for ten dollars or ten hundred thousand) still the majority, nevertheless, with a fine fellow-feeling for Mr. Robillard (who appears to have been the intermediary in this case, though he denied having benefitted by the business) decided that such conduct on the part of the Government of Canada was highly proper and quite in accord with the duty of a guardian towards his wards.

WHAT A COURT OF EQUITY WOULD SAY.

Sir, I said then in the House, and I repeat now, that had such a transaction occurred in private life there is not a

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court of equity the wide world over which would not have held such a faithless guardian responsible to the full extent of his own fortune for such shameful abuse of his position towards his *cestui qui* trust as that of which the Government and the majority of Parliament were guilty in this instance towards the Indian wards of the Crown.

Mr. Chairman, these transactions are important, *per se*.

They involved large sums of money. They involved important questions. But they are insignificant compared with what they prove. They are but symptoms. Symptoms of deep-rooted disease, and symptoms which can only by any possibility exist where all proper sense of public morality has disappeared or is on the verge of disappearing.

WORTH OF PUBLIC OPINION.

Talk of public opinion and public morality where such things are permitted. Sir, the thing does not exist. There is a certain famous chapter in a certain natural history which treats of "Snakes in Ireland" and which reads as follows:—"Chapter on Snakes"—"There are no snakes." As brief and terse a formula may well serve the future historian who wishes to treat of the public morality of Canada under the reign of Sir John A. Macdonald. Better at once strike the "not" out of half the decalogue and proclaim boldly that it is *not* wrong now-a-days and here in Canada to lie or to steal or to defraud the helpless of their inheritance.

CONDITIONS OF GOOD GOVERNMENT.

Sir, there are three fundamental conditions which are essential to the good working of our form of government:

First—That representatives are trustees *de jure* and *de facto* and must act as such.

Second—That statements made by Ministers of the Crown to the Parliament must be reliable.

Third—That the public and general body of the electorate will exercise due vigilance and will severely punish falsehoods by Ministers and breaches of trust by members of Parliament, or else we may as well confess that representative government in Canada has become a costly fraud.

Sir, what is the position in Canada to-day? It is this: A large parliamentary majority have declared and put on record that in their opinion deliberate falsehood on the part of a Minister deserves no censure. That it is quite right that a member of Parliament should profit by his position, and lastly, that they see no harm in guardians literally throwing away the property of their wards, and apparently their constituents out-

side support them in this view of the case, and a large section of the press do the same and general public opinion is indifferent.

This is a state of things for which it is very hard to find a parallel. It means an utter and total debasement in which almost the only sign of feeling left is a disposition to abuse those who dare to expose the men found guilty of such transactions. I will not stop to argue the point, but it is worth considering whether all this does not go to show that there is a serious flaw in our mode of applying representative institutions to government and whether our existing methods are not in danger of failing, notably both as regards Parliament and people, so far as the administration of Federal affairs are concerned?

POINT TO BE CONSIDERED.

It is worth considering. Certainly as matters stand, it appears to work better in our local legislatures, perhaps because these are much more really under the eye of the people, and because the electors take more interest in the questions which are there discussed and comprehend them better than they do Federal affairs.

Anyhow we are in great danger of having nothing but the husk of free institutions left us. The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice and body and spirit are those of a corrupt and tricky imposter.

Sir, I repeat we are losing sight of the very A B C of all sound representative government, which is that every representative is a trustee, and that if a trustee uses his position for his personal advantage that trustee is a rogue—a honorable rogue it may be, or even a right honorable one—but none the less, but all the more, a rogue, the higher his rank and the greater the trust reposed in him.

WHOLESALE BRIBERY OF PRESS.

One thing is certain. The system is very nearly perfect. It makes due and regular provision for bribery. Take our Auditor-General's reports for the last five years. Run your eyes over the returns, which show the sums annually expended in subsidizing the press, and you will find that in those five years something like a million and a half of dollars have been appropriated (misappropriated I should say) in regular annual donations to something like one hundred and fifty newspaper supporters. Take this very last year alone. We find a sum total of \$327,000 paid for subscriptions, printing and lithographing, out of which about \$180,000 appears to be regular subventions to faithful supporters.

Here, sir, is a short analysis of the sums paid in 1888, from which it appears that there was paid to the

London Free Press.....	\$ 3,990
Toronto World	1,587
Ottawa Citizen	2,657
Montreal Gazette	8,322
Minerve	4,244
St. John Sun.....	14,001
Moncton Times.....	10,932
Quebec Chronicle	6,201
Halifax Herald and Mail.....	10,402
Winnipeg Call	2,857
Regina Leader	5,450

Auditor
Gen's
Report,
1889,
Pages
13-26

and to 140 others sums ranging from \$300 to \$1,500 a year.

Why, sir, in the last five years there are individual papers which have received \$60,000 and \$70,000 each, and, mind you, these annual subsidies are only what appear on the surface. All this takes no account of divers other methods whereby editors and journalists are kept straight—it does not show who are “sessional clerks,” i. e., paid correspondents charged at so much per diem to the public funds—who are or were given trips to Europe and elsewhere as extra emigration agents—who were appointed to minor but well paid temporary appointments of various sorts—it deals merely with the regular paid supporters on record in the Report.

WHAT WOULD BE SAID IN ENGLAND.

Sir, what would be said in England or in the United States if it appeared on the face of the public accounts of those countries that in England from ten to fifteen millions of dollars, and in the United States from fifteen to twenty millions of the public funds had been spent in four or five years in subsidizing several hundred newspapers in those two countries? And yet, relatively to our own population and wealth, a million and a half here is far more than fifteen or twenty millions there.

Or what would be said if it appeared that the *Times* and the *Telegraph* and the *Daily News* had each severally drawn their £10,000, £20,000 and £30,000 a year from the public chest, and that hundreds of other papers had been likewise annually subsidized?

Do you suppose that a Government which was convicted of having done this thing would endure for twenty-four hours in either of these countries? Or do you suppose either that such newspapers (once the fact was established) would retain

their influence or their circulation one moment either? No, sir, they would, by the bare fact of the discovery, become mere worthless paper rags, utterly useless even to their employers and purchasers.

PRACTICAL RESULTS OF ALL THIS.

Now consider, I beg of you, what all this practically means.

You know very well that as matters stand, the vast bulk of our electors from the very necessity of the case *must* form their opinions as to Federal affairs from the information given by and in a great degree on the advice of their daily and weekly newspapers. I do not say it should be so altogether, but I do say it is so. Now here is probably quite one-half of the total electorate of the Dominion, possibly more, compelled to derive all their knowledge of most important transactions from polluted sources.

IMPOSSIBLE TO GET HONEST REPORTS.

Sir, I don't say newspaper editors or politicians either are much worse than other men, but how in the name of common sense can men who are in the regular receipt of an annual subsidy from the Government of the day and who know full well that if that Government is turned out they lose their subsidy, which is often of absolutely vital consequence to them—how, I say, can you possibly expect these men to give their readers a fair, true, honest, unbiassed report of what happens in a city in many cases thousands of miles away, and in regard to matters of a highly complicated character?

The thing cannot be done. It is not in human nature or in the nature of newspapers to do it. They must speak well of the bridge that carries them over the water, and they do so no matter how rotten they may know it to be.

POISONING THE WELLS.

Mr. Chairman, there is one act which even among savages and barbarians is looked upon as inhuman—not to be tolerated even under the extremest exigencies of war, and that is the poisoning of the wells from which friend and foe alike must quench their thirst. But here in Canada we have a Government which does worse—which does not hesitate deliberately to poison and corrupt the very sources of information from which alone the ordinary voter can learn how public affairs are being administered and whether he is well or ill served by those to whom he must perforce entrust the guardianship of his interests; and I say that of all the corrupt acts of the

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Government, of all the signs of the degradation and debasement of public opinion which are everywhere manifest, there is not one act so fraught with evil consequences, not one sign so significant of degradation as the manner in which the public press has been openly and systematically debauched year after year with the full knowledge and apparently the full approbation of almost every class of the well-to-do supporters of the Government, and with very few evidences of any great disapproval even on the part of those who were not supporters.

ONLY ONE REDEEMING FEATURE.

In all this I see but one redeeming feature. If I am correct in believing that a very large portion of the electorate can or do only form their opinion of public affairs from what they learn in their newspapers, and if these newspapers systematically keep them in the dark, it follows that a vast mass of the supporters of the Government are really in utter ignorance of their evil doings. This is bad enough, but it is at least infinitely better than if they sustained them with full knowledge of what they were doing.

INDUCEMENTS TO CERTAIN CLASSES.

As to the other important classes you have seen in the case of Mr. Temple, what sort of inducements are held out to members of Parliament to betray their trusts, and Mr. Temple is only one of many who by means of railway subsidies to roads in which they are personally interested—by grants of timber limits, by secret shares in contracts, *et hoc genus omne*, are all personally interested in sustaining the present state of things.

As for constituencies and provinces the market is an open one and the auction going on all the time. From Nova Scotia, bought with the promise of an expenditure of ten millions at the last general elections, to little villages in doubtful ridings, secured, or attempted to be secured, by erecting public buildings at a cost of \$20,000 or \$30,000 to accommodate a post office, of which the net returns might reach \$300 a year, you have the same open, impudent proclamation that if you support the Government you will share in the plunder—if you don't you will get nothing.

APPEALS TO CONSTITUENCIES.

Why, to such lengths has this practice gone, that though I don't think that the practice is so common in our own province, I don't believe that one bye election is held in Lower Canada or in the Maritime Provinces in which Ministers, or their accredited agents, have not gone on the hustings and told the constituents, if you elect our member you will get what you

want in the way of harbors, piers, public buildings, railroads, etc., but if you don't elect our member you may depend upon it you will get none of these things. A grosser violation of the act regulating the independence of Parliament was never perpetrated, and the law does not reach such a case. We can deal with a man who sells his vote, or with a man who buys it, but when a Minister of the Crown attempts, by bribes of several hundreds of thousands of dollars and promises of improvements, to buy a constituency the courts of law are silent. There is no redress.

But perhaps of all the several deleterious influences which have combined to bring about the present disgraceful state of things none have contributed so much to make politics and political relations a mere thing of barter and sale as the introduction of the protective system.

I do not intend to occupy your time by any discussion of the economic merits of free trade and protection. You know my views, but let us admit that something may be said from the economic point of view in favor of protection.

Were everything that could be urged as true as I believe it to be false, it would leave its effects on practical politics untouched. This is a side of the question which is far too commonly passed over. Now, I know something of the effect of the protective system on politics in the United States and a good deal more of the way it works out in Canada, and I say this in all seriousness, if your object is by direct legislative enactment to make honest government impossible—to establish a large, permanent, effective corruption fund and generally to demoralize all political relations you could hardly imagine a better agency than the protective system. It is not so much the fault of the men who clamor for it and make profit of it. It is inherent in the thing itself. Why just look at its everyday practical results.

DIRECT OPERATION OF THE LAW.

Here by direct operation of law you make it the interest of a number of the most pushing, energetic business men in the community—men who if not always wealthy have almost always a large command of ready money—you make it, I say, the direct interest of these men to control legislation and the legislature for their own ends. Of course they will try to do it, and there is only one way they can do it. Being subsidized they must subsidize in return.

Here, if nowhere else, you will find a most complete and perfect unrestricted reciprocity.

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It is a most profitable thing to have the arrangement of the tariff absolutely in your own hands, and few investments pay better than to turn the Minister of Finance into a speaking trumpet for the benefit of the manufacturers' association. Sir, I don't greatly blame the protected manufacturers, who after all form in truth but a small portion of the whole body of manufacturers, most of whom cannot be protected and many of whom lose more by a protective tariff than they can ever gain by it. Nor do I allege even that all protected manufacturers give bribes. There are exceptions, but we are talking of the natural and general tendency, and as to that I say that the inevitable effect of making it by law these men's pecuniary interest to control legislation is to put an overwhelming inducement in their way to use their money (as they themselves would and do say) to protect their business interests without caring or indeed knowing what the merits or demerits of either political party may chance to be. Hence it is, in obedience to the ordinary laws of human nature, that where ever a protective system is established you have, as in the United States and as in Canada to-day, a steady perennial source of corruption—a continual temptation—a perpetual blister applied to the most ^{of} important parts of frail mortality.

Supplement this, as we have done, with a complete disregard of the very underlying fundamental principles of representative government in general, and of our Federal constitution in particular, exemplified by the legal fraud which, (under the most impudent pretence that every railroad which touches any of our great Trunk lines—in plain English, every possible railroad—is thereby made a work for the “general benefit of Canada”) has arrogated complete control of every Provincial railroad, and is made the excuse (contrary to the plain meaning and spirit of the B. N. A. act) of a most lavish system of grants of Federal money to a set of railways, not one in ten of which has even a shadow of an excuse for being so aided on grounds of general utility—and then tear up, on the slightest provocation, the whole financial basis of the agreement made by the several provinces, (on the strict adherence to which the very existence of our Confederation ultimately depends) and you have made almost as effective a provision for the utter and complete disintegration of our whole political system as one can conceive.

This is exactly what we have been doing (and very little else) for the last ten years, except piling up debt and taxes in

the ratio of about six to one, as compared with the increase of our population.

Of course it is all steady treason to the constitution, and equally, of course, it could not be done except by the aid and connivance of the majority of the electors—both of which purposes seem to have been very fairly attained by the several instrumentalities I have just enumerated.

EFFECT ON PUBLIC MEN.

This sort of thing does not go on either without producing certain inevitable results on your public men. As to your average member of Parliament, he simply accepts the situation. If the people who send him demand a high standard of honesty, he will be fairly honest too—if they are indifferent, why he will do as others do and see no harm in it.

Your bad man, in such circumstances, finds himself in a sort of rogue's paradise. This is the very opportunity he has always been looking for, and he uses or abuses it to his heart's content—grows rapidly worse himself and does his utmost to make others like himself.

On honourable men the effect, though in a different way, is almost as bad. Either they quite politics in disgust and refuse to serve the public any longer—or they are apt (even in their own despite) to grow cynical and contemptuous, and rather to content themselves with exposing the results of all this than in trying to remedy them.

What might be the effect on saints, or on angels, I cannot say, never having met any in the political arena, but as regards politicians in general, I think you may accept my sketch as a substantially accurate one.

Now, my friends, if you have borne in mind that all these various influences for mischief have been steadily at work for the last ten years, and some of them for a longer period, it will hardly surprise you to hear me state that we have now arrived at that pass that bribery is literally rampant everywhere, not merely among our politicians, but infecting whole classes of the community—not only in our legislative bodies, but among those who send them there, till it has come about that whole constituencies, if not whole provinces, are openly and undisguisedly for sale in the political markets, while a good part of the people look on and either approve these proceedings or regard them as part of the law of nature and inherent in the very constitution of things.

Sir, you may think I exaggerate. I only wish I did. But the history of the last few years will afford only too ample

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evidence of the correctness of these statements. I presume if there is any one thing more than another on which honest men of all parties ought to agree it is this, that no man engaged in constructing public works should be allowed to make presents to public officials, and least of all to Ministers of state. To this I add, nor in all conscience should such a one be allowed to contribute to election funds either while his contract is going on or while he has unsettled claims awaiting the action of the Government. Surely this is fair and reasonable, and yet four distinct times has a bill to this effect been introduced into Parliament and four several times has it been evaded or point blank voted down, and that, too, in spite of the fact that on one occasion the clause to which objection was taken, i. e., that forbidding contractors to subscribe for political objects, had been reported to the House by a select committee, of which the then Minister of Justice, Mr. MacDonald, now Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, was one, and though a clause of similar import had been recently made law in the United States. So also was another bill dealing expressly with the case of men making presents to Ministers also voted down; its rejection being moved, with a fine sense of the fitness of things, by Sir Hector Langevin, himself the recipient of a testimonial subscribed for by just such persons as I have mentioned above.

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MINISTERS SHOULD NOT TAKE GIFTS.

Now, surely if there is any one maxim in political ethics better established than another—if there is any one thing which ought to commend itself to every honest man of every party in Canada, it is this—that under no circumstances should a Minister of state permit himself to accept gifts, either directly or indirectly, while he continues in office. Least of all should he accept them from public servants or from men employed in carrying out contracts of any sort. Sir, the reason is most obvious. From the very nature of the case the contractor in almost every conceivable public work is by the express terms of the contract left very much at the mercy of the Minister. That Minister can, as a rule, make his fortune or mar it. At any rate he can almost invariably affect the contractor's profits enormously, and, if displeased, involve him in a tedious and costly litigation.

TEMPTATION TO CONTRACTORS.

Consequently the temptation to the contractor to secure the good will of the Ministers by all means is irresistible. He is really not a free agent, not merely while he is performing

his contract, but until he has been finally paid for it, and every sound political rule dictates that such a person should be debarred under stringent penalties from purchasing the favor of ministers either by subscribing to "testimonials" (?) or to election funds. If a man's political supporters do really desire to testify their admiration by making him a gift of money, let them wait till he is out of office and then subscribe to their heart's content.

Sir, there is not much fear of corrupt influence then, but very few and far between were the testimonials subscribed for by admirers of the present Government while they were out of office. Perhaps their supporters thought Sir Hugh Allan had done enough in that way. Sir, these are no light matters, and they have led to no light consequences. Let us pause and summarize the results as far as we have gone.

I showed you a little while ago what occurs when Parliament deliberately disregards the very primary conditions on which representative government depends. I pointed out that a large majority of Parliament have virtually declared by their votes that they hold it perfectly justifiable for a Minister of the Crown to induce Parliament to incur an expenditure of nearly two millions of dollars by representations which he must have known to be utterly without foundation—that this same majority approved of a gift of \$30,000 of public money to an enterprise in which a member of Parliament was largely interested and which by the statement that very member himself made in his place was expected to pay him and his friends twenty per cent. on every dollar they had invested in it. That they had likewise refused to censure the Government for disposing of property of the wards of the state by private sale without due notice or advertisement for something like one two-hundredth part of the sum for which the purchasers within a few months re-sold their bargain; and further that in these several cases the facts were so clear, so established beyond all possibility of dispute that neither the Government nor their supporters were able to contradict them. And I gave you in detail from the Auditor-General's report a statement of the sums ranging from \$2,000 a year to \$14,000 which was annually paid to the leading newspapers which support the Government.

It is our duty now to glance, though in the very briefest manner, at the other evidences which have accumulated showing the wholesale fashion in which provision is made for debauching entire sections of the community and the extent to which this practice is actually carried—though not I hope with the knowledge and concurrence of the great body of the supporters of the Government, who, I am willing to believe, are

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kept in ignorance of what transpires mainly through the agency of the hired and subsidized press to which I referred. Mr. Chairman, the instances I gave you are only sample bricks. If you ask for further proof of the widespread nature of this systematic corruption you will not have far to seek.

Let us now consider what are the natural results of the action of Parliament in refusing to prohibit contractors from subscribing to election funds and making gifts to Ministers of State. Remember that such a refusal is tantamount to a declaration by Parliament to all and sundry having contracts with the Government, that if they know their own interests they will do those things which Parliament refused to forbid and that there was no fear these parties would not learn their lesson and act upon it. That you may learn what this sort of moral teaching by Parliament costs the people of Canada, take one instance, the case of Mr. Onderdonk, late railway contractor under the Government. Now, I cannot say I blame Mr. Onderdonk very greatly. He was a contractor. He was to all intents and purposes officially notified by the action of Parliament that in Canada contractors are expected to subscribe to testimonials to Ministers and to do the handsome thing when elections are impending. He did make gifts and he did make himself busy in various localities at and before elections, and very profitable he appears to have found it. Why, sir, at the very outset it is on record that this Mr. Onderdonk was deliberately awarded a contract for a sum fully \$200,000 higher than was asked by another tenderer. It is further on record that when the contract was over the Minister of Railways, in open defiance of the report of the Minister of Justice and of the award made by the arbitrators whom he had himself appointed, paid this Mr. Onderdonk another \$200,000 for worn out railway plant which had been valued at \$72,000; and lastly we have taken over the road from Mr. Onderdonk in a condition which has involved us in a litigation with the Canadian Pacific Railway, the mere law costs in which have already involved an expenditure of over a quarter of a million dollars and which if it goes against us may mean a loss of from five to six millions of dollars more.

Mr. Chairman, we have many Onderdonks, though it is not often we find them operating so openly or on so large a scale. But if any of you object to my singling out this or that special instance, or this or that particular individual, though it is in this way I can best illustrate the practical working out of the system, I am quite ready to oblige any such party.

Hansard
Mar. 28,
1892.

Hansard
1897.
Pages
1034-1087.

Public
Accounts
1888,
Page 85 to 90.
LXXXV-XC.

If you want to know how railway subsidies and tariff corners pan out, if you want examples of the wholesale character of the bribery now going on, turn to that page of the public accounts which gives a list of the subsidies to local railways. Here you will find something like one hundred and one grants to a hundred and one local enterprises, all of which have been solemnly declared by Acts of Parliament "to be works for the general benefit of Canada" and therefore entitled to assistance from the Federal Treasury. A more monstrous perversion of the plain meaning of the British North America Act was never perpetrated. Run your eye over this list and you will see that roads of two miles, of three, of five, of six, of seven, of ten, of twelve miles long—roads to this man's wharf and to that man's cotton mill or coal mine, roads from one point in a particular county to another in the same, or perhaps in an adjoining county, are gravely declared to be "roads for the general benefit of the people of Canada" and are forthwith dowered at the expense of the state! Looking over the whole list I doubt exceedingly whether there are half a dozen out of the whole hundred and one which could advance even a pretext to be so considered; and I have no doubt at all—it is apparent on the very face of it—that in all the other cases subsidies to these roads are neither more nor less than bribes, sometimes intended to put money into the pockets of a Minister of the Crown; sometimes of a Parliamentary supporter; sometimes of an influential outsider whose good-will it was desirable to gain, sometimes to influence a constituency and now and then debauch a whole Province, but in the majority of cases no more justifiable in view of the plain sense and meaning of the B. N. A. Act than would be a grant out of the Dominion Treasury to build you a public school house or to repair your highways, or to execute any other purely local improvement. Remember, also, in judging of the effect of this particular form of corruption on members of Parliament that a railway charter, with a subsidy of several thousands of dollars per mile attached, is often a very valuable franchise, which can be sold outright for a large sum of money, and that it has been proved again and again on the floor of Parliament and in courts of law that many members are not only interested in such enterprises, but that they have actually charged large commissions for every cent of such subsidies obtained through their influence. So of our tariff at large. Not content with inaugurating a system under which a very small number of our citizens are enabled to tax the whole remainder of the community for their own particular benefit, we find every year an innumerable variety of changes,

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for the most part involving a fresh burden on the general public for the profit of two or three favored parties. These corners, for they are nothing else, engineered through for the most part in happy ignorance on the part of the House and of the Finance Minister of what they really involve, are becoming almost countless. Some years ago I had a list prepared, showing the number of alterations made in the tariff since it was first imposed in 1879, and they then amounted, I think, to 479 distinct alterations. I cannot say exactly how many have been made since, but I do not think the total number can fall very far short of 800, nearly every one of which changes means a fresh imposition on the consumers of the country without for the most part (if the statement of the Minister was correct) bringing in any additional revenue into the Treasury. Now, only those who have made those subjects a matter of special study can form any adequate idea of the amount of corruption and undue influence which this state of things enables a Government to exercise. I can only report to you what I have already said, that it is literally impossible to conceive a more effectual method of installing and intrenching corruption in the politics of any country than to give a large number of active, energetic business men a direct pecuniary interest in controlling legislation and in supporting this or that political party. Of how it works in practice take one very notable example. You may have heard what happened shortly before one general election a few years ago when Sir John A. Macdonald called together some 80 or 90 protected manufacturers and in good set phrase told them that the Government had subsidized them out of the public funds and that now they in turn must subsidize the Government, winding up by comparing himself to the boy who shook down the acorns for the herd below and intimating that the services of the boy must be remembered—and recompensed—as they were and have been—then and since.

MODES OF DEBAUCHING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

As to other well known means employed for debauching members of Parliament through the mediums of grants of timber limits for purely nominal sums, gifts of coal areas, of land to colonization companies promoted by Parliamentary supporters, and so forth, I will say no more just now. What I most especially want to enlarge on is the systematic and wholesale character of the system of corruption which prevails and the open, unblushing defiance of the plainest rules of right and wrong to which this system has led us.

As I have already pointed out in detail I do not believe that this could ever have been carried out had it not been coupled with the regular purchase of a large part of the press of the country, which has been done to an extent and on a scale such as has never been seen or tolerated in any other country having representative institutions, and which I would not ask you to believe had I not the proofs visible in the public records now under my hand. Sir, was I wrong in saying that we have here a system of bribery rampant in all quarters. Must I again enumerate the evidences? Must I again call your attention to the most shameful facts that we have Ministers of State openly voting subsidies to railways in which they themselves are very largely interested. That we have other Ministers openly accepting gifts (otherwise bribes) in the shape of testimonials from contractors and public servants. That we find Parliament, when appealed to, deliberately refusing to condemn such practices or the equally pernicious habit of demanding subscriptions from such contractors for election purposes. That we find members of Parliament like Mr. Temple and Mr. Rykert proved on their own confession to have obtained gifts of public money for enterprises in which they were concerned, or grants of land at purely nominal rates, which they resold forthwith at enormous prices, and we find such acts condoned alike by Parliament and the constituencies they represent. We have railway subsidies by the hundred and tariff privileges by the thousand granted to other members and to influential supporters, or used openly to bribe particular constituencies. We have half the press of Canada in receipt of annual subsidies of greater or smaller extent, and we have all these things established beyond possibility of a doubt from the public records. Am I wrong in saying that this is a state of things as yet without a parallel in English representative assemblies, and that under such conditions representative Government becomes a farce and a fraud. Sir, I repeat again there is but one redeeming point in this matter. I do believe, I cannot but believe, that to a very great degree this is possible, only because a great portion of the supporters of Government are, (chiefly by means of the organized corruption of the press to which I have alluded,) kept in ignorance of the real nature of these proceedings, and that if the true facts were known the doom of this corrupt Government would be sealed beyond redemption.

Sir, these things may be and perhaps are concealed from that too large class of voters who see nothing and read almost nothing but their daily or weekly paper of a particular political complexion, but it is idle to say they are not perfectly well known to others.

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THESE THINGS WIDELY KNOWN.

They are known or may very easily be known by every editor of every paper in Canada. So they may by every business man. So by every public man. So by every man of even ordinary leisure and education if they like to take the trouble and do not prefer to shut their eyes.

More than that, it would be easy enough to put these things down. Any half dozen members of Parliament belonging to the dominant party who had honesty and pluck enough to speak and vote in condemnation of such acts, and a very few honest voters attached to that party in each constituency who chose to remonstrate and threaten to withdraw their support could, in such a community as ours, and in the very closely balanced state of parties, make such practices too perilous to be continued, but we find them not.

CAN THIS BE REMEDIED?

In this state of things two questions arise. First, can all this be remedied, and, secondly, how will our policy help to do it?

As matters stand without some special influence I own it may be a task of great difficulty. I am no believer in the shallow optimism which teaches that if you will only wait long enough things will get better of themselves. History, practical experience and common sense don't say so. On the contrary things are quite as likely to get worse as to get better, and if we trust to time generations may pass away before there is any perceptible improvement.

Take the case of Walpole, or of England under Walpole. He did not introduce, but he systematized a very corrupt mode of administration. Being an able man, and perhaps in his way a patriotic one, he managed fairly well while he administered it, but see what followed. From 1740 to 1784 Walpole paved the way for a succession of corrupt and imbecile ministries—with one conspicuous exception for four or five years in the case of the elder Pitt—and these fools and knaves between them brought England to the very verge of ruin and cost her the loss of that most magnificent group of colonies which now form the United States. Why, sir, we here in Canada to-day, full 150 years after, rue bitterly the evil effects of the wretched misgovernment which alienated the United States from England and which would never in all likelihood have existed had not Walpole's successful corruption made it possible for those imbecilities to keep power.

THREE PROMINENT CAUSES OF MISCHIEF.

Mr. Chairman, the case is one which needs and justifies

strong measures. I will not go back to ultimate causes, but there are two or three plain proximate causes which call aloud for remedy. One is the usurpation of the power of local governments, (largely in the matter of railroads) and the diversion of Federal funds to mere local objects to the debauching alike of members, constituencies and Provinces.

A second is the effect of the protective system as already described, and a third is the personal corruption of the members of the Government, which eats like a cancer.

UNRESTRICTED RECIPROCITY DEALS WITH THESE.

Unrestricted Reciprocity strikes at the root of all these. As far as we are concerned it means almost complete free trade, and it will destroy all temptation to bribe or be bribed by the Government in that direction.

It will also (while it will enrich the people greatly as a whole) undoubtedly compel a rigid economy for some time to come, and will oblige us to do as the United States did, to live prudently and mind our own Federal affairs and let other matters alone. All this complete Reciprocity cannot help doing—nor this only.

Really the question as to it is not what are the arguments for it, but rather what possible good argument is there against it? It is not needful to ask who will benefit by it, but what portion of our community will not be benefitted?

TWO CLASSES OF OPPONENTS.

For myself, as I have often said, I know only of two classes whom it may injure, and those two are the class of specially favoured manufacturers who live by taxing all others for their own private benefit—and the men who make a dishonest living out of politics, and perhaps a certain section of the press.

WHY SO MISCHIEVOUS?

Now these men, though not very numerous, are yet influential and mischievous. It is a very old story that a very few paid and trained mercenaries (the pet instruments of all tyranny) have often defeated many times their number of honest citizens, and it is quite possible these men may retard the measure which threatens their occupations. But the ultimate result is certain. There are immense latent forces moving in our direction, and to these you may now add the weight of one entire political party.

Delay will simply intensify. Done to-day this thing may be done as I wish it to be done, easily and quietly and with no violent political disturbance. Left undone it may mean a revolution.

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Anyway one thing is clear, that free trade with the United States will lay the axe to the root of the tree which shelters all this brood of unclean birds, and, therefore it is that I invite all friends of freedom to rally to this cause, which is also the cause of all friends of honest Government—and of true political progress.

IF CORRUPTION IS NECESSARY.

Looking at the matter in its broadest aspect I say to all true Canadians that things cannot long go on as they are now going. If it be true (as I observe freely asserted by some who ought to know better) that Confederation can only be kept together by such methods—if falsehood and robbery are essential to its maintenance and corruption a necessary incident—if, in one word, honest dealing under our present form of government is impossible, then, in the best interests of the whole community, I say let it be got rid of as a moral nuisance, and at any cost.

For myself, I entirely repudiate any such doctrine. There is no doubt the difficulties in the way of working out Confederation were great enough originally, and there is no doubt either that they have been most fearfully and needlessly aggravated by downright bad government. To begin with, it was and is, a great misfortune that our several provinces differ so very widely in population, and that one great province is not at all homogeneous with the rest. It adds to our difficulties too, that instead of having a continent to ourselves as the Australians have, and the people of the U. S. practically had, (during the time of their early growth) we are, collectively, a small state alongside a very powerful neighbour—and, also, that our federation was done hurriedly and against the well-known wishes of a part of our people.

Still for all that our constitution is good enough if it be honestly worked, and its defects are remediable.

WHAT IS WANTED.

What is wanted, and without which no constitution will work, is steady vigilance on the part of the people themselves—an active public opinion—a keen sense of public honour—and a feeling that the shame of the Government is the shame of the whole country. One cause, it seems to me, and not the least cause of this debased state of public morality, is to be found in our present hybrid condition.

We are neither a free state nor a dependency. We need more power and a higher sense of responsibility. Here we are controlling half a continent and unable to negotiate on a footing of equality with the smallest state, so that when a

Pan-American congress is convened Canada alone has no part nor lot in it.

Sir, I care but little whether I am in office or out of it, or in Parliament or not, but I do care that Canada should be well and honestly governed, and it is just because I see that to attain this end we must do away with the protective system—that we must recognize the fact that Federation is necessarily a limited partnership and must be so administered—and that to do ourselves common justice we must rise to a higher grade of political existence—and because I also see that, circumstanced as we are, that all these objects can be best attained through and by means of unrestricted reciprocity that I have pressed upon you the advisability of securing it by every honorable means in your power.

NO ANSWER.

One word in conclusion.

It is no answer to all this to abuse me. Neither is it to say that others are as bad or would be if they had the chance. Such a statement is utterly false in the first place and would be no defence in the second.

If I have misstated the case, nothing can be more easy than to prove that I have done so.

Here are my evidences. Here are the Public Accounts. Here is the Auditor-General's Report. Here are the Votes and Proceedings of Parliament. Here is the official Hansard, and all of these I will now deposit in your Mechanics' Institute so that every citizen of Ingersoll who pleases may satisfy himself that the facts are as I have set them forth. Read, study, criticise to the uttermost.

CHALLENGE FULLEST INVESTIGATION.

I not merely challenge, I desire, the fullest possible investigation, knowing that the more you read and the more you examine the more certain you are to concur with me in the statement I have made that never, since first representative government existed—at least among English-speaking peoples—have every safeguard, every wholesome restriction, every relic of decent and ordinary precaution against fraud and speculation on the part alike of Ministers and of their Parliamentary supporters been more thoroughly set at naught than they are to-day in Canada on the part of the majority of the Parliament of this Dominion.

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