

## CANADA.

THE PROPOSED RECIPROCITY TREATY—  
TORIES PROPHEYSING BLUE RUIN—THE  
DAWN OF A NEW DAY.

A few days ago we were all startled. The proposed Reciprocity Treaty between this country and the United States was so much beyond anything we had anticipated, that it took our breath away. To say that this treaty, if approved, will make free 76.4 per cent of the Canadian exports to the States, and that it will make a lower rate on 14.4 per cent, leaving only 9 per cent, of the exports under the old rate, is startling beyond any expectation.

It is a remarkable coincidence. A couple of months ago we witnessed the marvelous pilgrimage of a thousand farmers, traveling, many of them, upwards of a thousand miles, to Ottawa, to demand lower rates. They went even so far as to intimate that they would gladly see any deficiency made up by a tax on land values.

Ever since the abrogation of the old treaty of 1854 which was brought about by the junketting and flattering suavity of Lord Elgin, the governor of Canada, all approaches on the part of Canadians to renew reciprocity have been repelled, so that a majority of the people were inclined to seek favors in that direction no more. The passing of the McKinley Bill in 1890 which struck many Canadian industries severely, added nothing to the friendly feeling of the people towards the United States.

This country survived. But it was an extraordinary sight for farmers from sight of Buffalo or Detroit, turned away from the markets and compelled to ship their butter, their eggs and their fruit, hundreds of miles across the ocean.

Then comes from President Taft an offer, like a bolt from the blue, to consider a reciprocity treaty—a treaty of peace after years of tariff war. That offer, coming as it did from a Republican President who had lately signed the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill, did not hold out much hope. We expected little, but we have received a great deal.

I have just looked over some tory newspapers. Oh! the blue ruin! Prices will

fall! Markets inundated! Industries closed! Blackness and darkness make up their headlines. What terrible things will follow if we allow an inundation of cheapness and abundance from those horrible States.

These Prophets of Evil, the legitimate descendants of Demetrius, the Silversmith of Ephesus, tell us what a danger is Freedom. If we are not driven like cattle to the right places to buy, we will run down some steep declivity and like the stupid, foolish swine of old, commit commercial suicide.

Some of my protectionist friends ask me: "Will not the Americans inundate this country with their cheap goods?"

"Certainly," I assure them, "Just as they inundate New York and Chicago. I never saw you run away from a bargain counter yet, on this side of the line. Why should we be afraid of a bargain counter on the other side of the line?"

But the arrant hypocrisy of all this is most amazing. These very parties who are crying "ruin, ruin," if we admit goods free from the States," have voted for years un-animously in favor of heavy taxation to bring the cheapest of cheap labor from the poorest countries in the world. They want not merely free trade in labor, but they want that free trade at high pressure to inundate the labor market.

The law compels the workmen to sell their labor cheap. Then it compels them to buy their goods dear. It helps the employers to buy their labor cheap. Then it enables them to sell their goods dear.

This statement I made to the Tariff Commission a few years ago. I then put this question: Can you gentlemen tell me of a single instance in the history of this country, when the law assisted the workmen in the slightest degree to buy their goods cheap and to sell their labor dear? Has it not been invariably the other way? To that query, the commission made no reply.

In addition to this, two-fifths of the goods imported into Canada are on the free list. Is that free-list for the poorest of the poor and the high rates for the richest who can bear them the easiest? Just the reverse. With the exception of coal and possibly tea, the free list is wholly in favor of the rich. After the wealthy manufacturers

have secured all the absolute free-trade for themselves, they now come with howlings of rage because the same right is to be granted in some degree to the toiling masses.

In all the objections to this reciprocity, two ideas are conspicuously absent. How will it affect the poorest of the poor, and how far does it accord with the highest precepts of religion? One man complains that it will destroy his fruit industry, another his stove industry and another his implement industry. Each man confines his vision, like Demetrius, to his particular shop or factory. How it will affect the multitude, they do not seem to think or care. As some of these men are living in palatial homes and maintaining sumptuous establishments, their cries of "ruin" don't terrify us. But the ruin that we can see in the low, degraded, beastly life of the shacks and slums, is only too manifest as evidences of the terrible results we are now producing. As to the question of human rights, which must lie at the basis of religion, these opponents seem to be utterly oblivious. They place their gifts on the altar; but they forget all about the reconciliation to the brother. "Kick thy neighbor out of the market," is the first clause in their creed. "Love thy neighbor as thyself," yes, if he stands on Canadian dirt, but if he stands on United States dirt, treat him as a foreigner, who has no rights that we are bound to respect.

Let us be thankful and rejoice that the rifts are coming in the clouds. Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, has voted nearly five to one in favor of the removal of taxation from buildings. "And still the world does move."—W. A. DOUGLAS, Toronto, Canada.

THE Woman's Political Study Club of Bayonne, N. J., is continuing its regular meetings at Exempt Fireman's Association Hall, 23 West 34th St. On the evening of April 17th Mr. Arthur H. Grant will speak on the rebirth of the American City, and on May 1st Mrs. Florence Frohwein will speak on Cleveland—a city with Ideals. The Women's Political Study Club, of which Mrs. Amalia B. DuBois, is now president, was organized as long ago as 1890.

## MAINE.

The progress of the Single Tax movement in Maine is at present potential rather than actual. There has been a deal of agitation over the subject of taxation during the past few years, but it was wholly unorganized and poorly directed. To properly explain the situation it will be necessary to go back some little time.

Approximately one-third of the state area is rugged upland about six hundred feet above sea level, and mostly in timber. These lands were owned by the state up to within thirty or forty years ago, but since then have been transferred to private hands by the old familiar processes. Nearly all the large fortunes in the state are founded on the enhanced value of these spoils.

Owing to the fact that these wild lands are largely in unincorporated towns, they are subject only to their pro rata share of the general property tax levied by the state. This amounts to five dollars on the thousand, or less than one fourth of the rate in towns and cities, and is the source of great dissatisfaction. In the effort to evade the provisions of the constitution, the state has increased the general property tax during the last few years, and apportioned the proceeds among the several municipalities for roads, schools, and charitable institutions, but the effect has been so to increase the taxes in the farming towns that there is great dissatisfaction, as shown by the political landslide last fall.

At the legislative session of 1907, provision was made for a tax commission, and in their report two years later they recommended that the state tax be apportioned on the land values, and that the state and local assessors be required to value lands and buildings separately. The wild land interests played upon the fear and credulity of the farmers to such an extent that both propositions were defeated, but the state tax was increased from three to five dollars instead.

During the late landslide, several Single Taxers were elected to the legislature, so early in December a conference was held at the suggestion of the writer, and the Maine Tax Reform League organized. The avowed object of this organization is