

Commercial Union.

Food products are as cheap, in many cases cheaper, in the United States than in Canada, and the former market would be of no advantage to our agriculturists in respect of these goods; indeed, there is reason to believe that the effect of free trade in natural products would be to cause the importation into Canada of quite as much farm produce as would be exported across the line. In some respects the gain would doubtless be ours. Horses and barley would realize a better price, but these are about the only articles that would be affected to the gain of the Canadian farmer. All other grains and live stock are determined in price by the British market, and Great Britain must continue to be our best customer, no matter what tariff arrangements may be made with the United States. On the other hand, it is reasonably certain that reciprocity in natural products would be a menace to the Canadian farmer so far as wheat and oats are concerned, through the exposure to competition from Chicago and other western points. We know from the trade statistics that the effect of the duty imposed in 1879 on American grain has been to enlarge the home market for the coarse grains of the Canadian farmer, to contract the importation of American corn, and to give the Canadian grower a better price for his wheat, relatively to Chicago, than he obtained under the policy of free imports. But, as we have said, Canada is ready to enter upon reciprocity in natural products with the neighboring Republic, believing that mutuality of advantage will result therefrom. The commercial union project is of a very different character, and in every respect that it differs from limited reciprocity it is to the disadvantage and prejudice of the Dominion. It proposes discrimination against Great Britain, the sundering of a political tie that binds us to the Empire; the surrender of control of the tariff; the removal of the means of obtaining by indirect taxation revenue required for the public service; the exposure of manufacturing industries to an unfair and unequal competition; the cessation of the growth of inter-provincial trade, and a possibly severe check to the commerce of our seaports.—*Montreal Gazette*.

Adulteration in Coffee.

It is but right that consumers should be apprised of the fact that certain coffee manufacturers in this city have been roasting peas and other foreign substances, mixing them with whole coffee, and grinding them into an adulterated article, which is sold for genuine coffee. Consumers however can protect themselves against this imposition, by buying the whole coffee and grinding it themselves. Those who prefer an admixture of chicory can add it to suit their tastes. When it is considered that peas are selling at 1½c. per lb., one can readily understand what profits can be realized by mixing only a moderate proportion of peas with coffee. We are not aware that roasted peas are at all hurtful when taken into the human system in the form of a decoction, but that does not lessen the deception that has been practised upon the public, by palming off an adulterated for a pure article.—*Trade Bulletin*.

Columbia River Salmon.

An Astoria paper says a visit to the different Astoria canneries shows that this is a period of enforced dullness. From reports received from outside canneries up the river, the same condition of affairs appears to exist in every cannery on the Columbia. There are few fish. The cannery employes are working, some of them, not half time, and very little salmon are being put up. Well informed canners estimate the pack on the river up to the 1st from 176,000 to 210,000 cases. Probably 200,000 would be a fair estimate of the total salmon pack on the river from April 1st to July 1st this year.

Usually there is a May run, a June run, and a July run. As for the April run it is a thing of the past. Time was when the boats in April caught some salmon, but that time is past, apparently never to return. This year the usual May run did not appear, and the June run was also absent. For the last ten years the river has usually been full of fish from the fourth of July as long as the canneries wanted to run. In 1883 they began coming in, in great numbers, on the 2nd, and swarmed up the stream through the remainder of the month. In 1884 they were a little later. In 1885 salmon were plenty after the 8th. In 1886 they were in profusion from the 10th onward. They are looked for daily, and probably canneries will be favored by a run of fish any day now.

Whenever salmon come they will be packed. The canneries are all well equipped with men and material, and should occasion offer from 15,000 to 18,000 cases in a day could be packed on the river.

The victims of the pack of 1887 depend in a greater degree than ever on the July run, as the total pack to date is away behind those of former years.

In every cannery groups of disconsolate Chinamen are standing around, viewing with hungry eyes the few salmon tossed on the dock on the boat that was so fortunate the night before as to catch eight or ten. As the Chinamen work by the case their wages are small when there is only three or four hours work for them in a day.

Fishermen are practically earning nothing. At one of the best canneries on the river, noted for its skillful fishermen, the high boat for the entire season is only 830. At another the lists show the high boat for the season on the 1st inst. to be 851. When it is remembered that in former years the average catch to the boat for the season was 3800, and that some boats were credited with 8000, 9000 and even 10,000 fish for the season's work, it will be seen how the run has diminished.

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