

against the system of protection, the formation of a government pledged to tariff reform, and the gradual drawing near of the time when the work of introducing the reform must be begun, is sufficient, in a tariff-bolstered country like the republic, to cause fear and trembling throughout the land.

While the inauguration of a policy of tariff reform will work good in the long run, it is certain to produce more or less disturbance at the beginning. In a country where protection has run mad for so many years, as it has in the United States, there are bound to be many disturbances of an acute nature, even allowing for the greatest care in introducing the work of reform. The return from an unnatural to a natural condition of things must cause inconvenience and contraction in many industries. It will have something of the effect of the collapse of a period of trade or real estate inflation. The knowledge that the work of overhauling and reforming the tariff is soon to commence is certainly already having its influence in the United States, though it is quite probable that the condition of uncertainty, previous to the work of reform, will lead to greater disaster than will be caused by the removal of the artificial props to tariff bolstered industries.

OUR COMMERCIAL CONDITION.

It is gratifying to note the firmness with which Canada withstands the influence of the general financial and commercial demoralization in the United States. Canada is considered by many to be largely dependent upon her great neighbor commercially. It is quite true also that the commercial affairs of the two countries are largely intermingled, notwithstanding the existing tariff barriers on each side of the boundary line.

It is the policy of some writers to represent Canada as a fringe of settlement extending along the northern boundary of the great republic for some thousands of miles, and largely dependent upon that country. Without arguing this point, it may be stated truthfully that so far the "fringe" has not been greatly disturbed by the crisis which the great republic has been passing through. While perhaps greater caution has been observed in this country since the trouble started in the States, there has, generally speaking, been no withdrawal of confidence. This country has gone on in the even tenor of its way, and there have been no financial and commercial failures in response to the epidemic of failures of all kinds occurring in the republic. Our financial institutions appear to be on a sound basis, and public confidence has not been shaken in the integrity of our commercial position.

At the same time, it is useless to infer that the crisis in the States will not cause losses in this country. In lines of produce and manufactures which are largely exported to the republic, the stagnation of trade there, and general depression of values, is bound to be reflected upon Canadian producers, by the cutting off of a profitable market. The lumber industry in this country, for instance, is sure suffer from the depression in the United States. The low prices for farm produce, which is largely attributable to the crisis in the States,

must also seriously affect Canada, as our chief exports are in this line. Another way in which Canadians have suffered, is in their investments in United States stocks, which have shrunk all around to a remarkable extent. Altogether, however, we have withstood the shock firmly and with unimpaired confidence in our commercial and financial structure, notwithstanding our intimate business relationship with the country which is now in the throes of financial panic and commercial depression and disaster.

PRICE OF BREAD.

The Winnipeg daily papers have just discovered what THE COMMERCIAL pointed out months ago, namely; that the price of bread in the city is out of all proportion to the price of flour. The way matters have been going here for many months, the consumer has been getting no benefit whatever from the unprecedentedly low prices of flour. Who then is reaping all the benefit which should go to the consumer? It must be the bakers. It is said that the bakers have decided not to reduce the price of bread until it is known how the harvest will turn out. This is a remarkable decision, as it is difficult to see the connection between the harvest returns, and the present relative price of bread as compared with the price of flour.

Fur Trade News.

The Leipzig correspondent of the *Fur Trade Review* writes as follows on July 10:—"Business is quiet, and only a limited number of transactions have been noted. Orders for the United States were promised for July, but have not yet been placed, and even black dyed astrachan is required now only in small quantity. Flat moire skins are in the best request for America and France. A new demand is noted for astrachan linings; flat sorts, which are preferred, have advanced; broad-tails are in fair request; the supply is small, and prices high. Black dyed Persians have sold continuously for different countries. A good many skins were very recently taken by a visiting French furrier. Imports of fresh raw Persians are limited, and prices are about ten per cent higher than during the Easter fair. Parcels of gray krimmer have been taken for America. Cheap sorts of squirrel linings, especially black, sell well. Better grades only in limited request. Parcels of raw squirrels, belonging to Russian dealers, have been bartered for American furs at depressed prices. Squirrel tails sell somewhat better, owing to the new moderate demand for boas; foxtail boas in moderate request. Russian mink sells slowly; ermine is taken to some extent for linings; Kolinski linings have met with a satisfactory demand; raw skins are still high in price, and tails have an uncertain value. Thibet articles and susliki linings neglected. Parcels of white hares have been purchased for French account; otherwise the article is neglected; sheared hares in a new shade of beaver imitation are shown, but sales so far are unimportant. Russian marmot is dyed in large quantity for the mantle trade. White fox is in limited request for dyeing. Russian wolf rather quiet; the demand for bear continues, English firms being the buyers; prices on Russian badger are little higher than in the spring. Transactions in American furs have not been large. Berlin furriers have taken the usual quantity of skunk and mink. Mink tails continue high in price; but sales are small. Beaver is nearly neglected; the principal article for the mantle trade is nutria, which is taken for Berlin, Paris, London and New York; the importers though having only lower grade skins, have sold good supplies to our retailers. Musquash has sold bet-

ter since the London June sales; spring skins for manufacturing seal colored articles have been specially well demanded; lower sorts of raw musquash sell slower than the better grades, linings already having been made up in quantity and the sales being limited; the high prices of black musquash prevent large sales. Fresh raccoon from the London sales, and directly imported parcels, have sold satisfactorily for Russia; dark sorts of American otter continue in demand for Galicia; some red fox and American opossum have been sold. Australian opossum sold as usual. Blue gray kangaroo, the new article mentioned in our July letter under name of Renard, has been quite favorably received by wholesale furriers. Monkey is too dear for German consumption. In European furs parcels of foxes have been purchased for Russia, at prices a little earlier than at the close of the Easter fair; stonemarten skins and tails neglected; fitch in moderate demand only; land otter, for plucking, taken for America; dressed black cats sell fairly well to France and Italy.

The London correspondent of the *Fur Trade Review* writes on July 10:—

Since our last business has certainly not improved, but on the contrary, for during the last fortnight trade has been almost at a standstill. Whether this is to be accounted for by the holiday mood which has prevailed over the Royal wedding, or to the continuance of the very hot weather, we are not in a position to say; but, perhaps, it is a little of both. Bears, black, brown and grizzly, which have been selling very freely all the year, are now quiet. Nutria is the only article selling in any quantity just now. The mantle houses being very busy with their autumn orders, are turning out large numbers of jackets trimmed with this fur. Skunk dyed American opossum are in fair request. The drop in the price of raw skins has enabled the dyers to turn out a skin at a fair selling price. Sable dyed Australian opossums are also being taken up by the mantle manufacturers, and look very well as collars and trimmings. Skunk is still in fairly good demand, and will improve as the season advances. Mink does not sell at all freely at the moment, which is to be accounted for by the fairly good demand for the mink dyed musquash which, of course, comes much cheaper than the real article, and looks very well when made up. Persians—Good grades only are selling, the poorer skins being much neglected. Thibet crosses—Only the very pick of the basket will sell; poor goods are not wanted at any price. Martens are not in such good demand as was expected, but no doubt a little later on they will sell. Squirrel linings continue very dull, and there is not much feeling for fur lined cloaks, so that we should not be at all surprised to see a drop in the price of these goods. Kaluga sell but very slowly, and it is only the very low price now reached that make these goods go off.

The "Robber Baron."

The American Manufacturer notes that Mr. Andrew Carnegie, speaking of the condition of the steel business, said recently:—"The robber baron has ceased to rob, and is now being robbed. The eighth wonder of the world is this: Two pounds of ironstone purchased on the shores of Lake Superior and transported to Pittsburgh, two pounds of coal mined in Connelville and manufactured into one and one-quarter pounds of coke and brought to Pittsburgh, one-half pound of limestone mined east of the Alleghenies and brought to Pittsburgh, a little manganese ore mined in Virginia and brought to Pittsburgh, and these four and one-half pounds of material manufactured into one pound of solid steel and sold for 1c. That's all that need be said about the steel business."

The re-organization of a cordage trust in the United States will be discussed at a meeting of cordage manufacturers to be held on August 9, in New York.