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CHEAPER FOOD.

"How much shall we in British Columbia benefit by the proposed reciprocity agreement?" is a legitimate question and one that deserves an answer. During a large part of the year, in fact practically all the time, British Columbia imports food products. At the present time all these food products have to pay duty, most of which duty will be removed under the reciprocity agreement. The following table shows the amount of Canadian and United States duty at present collected on each article, the whole of which will be removed if the agreement is put in force:

	Canadian Duty.	U. S. Duty
Cattle less than one year old....	25 per cent.	$2 each.
Cattle under $14 in value.	25 per cent.	$3.75 each.
Cattle over $14 in value.	25 per cent.	27½ per cent.
Horses under $150 in value	25 per cent.	$30 each.
Horses over $150 in value	25 per cent.	25 per cent.
Swine.....	1½c. per lb.	$1.50 each.
Sheep	25 per cent.	$1.50 each.
Lambs	25 per cent.	75c. each.
Wheat	12c. per bus.	25c. per bus.
Oats	10c. per bus.	15c. per bus.
Barley	15c. per bus.	30c. per bus.
Peas (dried).	15c. per bus.	25c. per bus.
Beans (dried)	25c. per bus.	45c. per bus.
Corn	Free.	15c. per bus.
Hay	$2 per ton.	$4 per ton.
Potatoes	20c. per bus.	25c. per bus.
Apples	40c. per brl.	25c. per bus.
Peaches	$1 per 100 lbs.	25c. per bus.
Butter	4c. per lb.	6c. per lb.
Cheese	3c. per lb.	6c. per lb.
Eggs	3c. per dozen.	5c. per dozen.
Pine lumber	Free.	$1.25 M. ft.
Salt (in bulk)	[illegible] per 100 lbs	7c. per 100 lbs

With this table before him it should be quite easy for anyone to see that the reduction in the cost of living will be very great. We have pointed out before, and we take this opportunity of doing so again, that not only will we benefit by the amount of the reduction of the duty on imported goods, but we will also be in a position to purchase much Canadian produce at a cheaper rate, as the removal of the duty will reduce the price by just that much. Just how much difference the reduction will make in the actual cost of living to each person only experience will show; but as there is a general reduction on most of the food staples the saving to each person will be considerable.

The table shown also indcates clearly the amount of reduction against Canadian goods going into the United States. The removal of the duties by that country is a concession which no one expected, and the Liberal government must be congratulated on having secured something which governments have been trping to secure for many years past, without success.

To Victoria the removal of the Canadian duties will appeal very strongly. Here we have for several years been crying out about the continual advance in the prices of food. Our board bills are much too high. A general reduction will be welcomed by everyone in Canada, but by no one more than by those who reside in this city.

NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The great development that may be expected as a result of the building of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was indicated by W. P. Hinton, general passenger agent of that line, who was in Victoria at the week-end. In discussing the possibilities of the development of Northern British Columbia, Mr. Hinton said the agricultural lands, in the belt through which their line passes, were capable of sustaining more farmers than there are people at present in the whole of the province. As there are usually ten other persons to one farmer in a district, it is easy to see what the possibilities of development are. Much of the land along the line of railway is well suited for mixed farming, and most of it will be easily brought under cultivation. This is only one small belt, and does not include the large Peace River country, where both Provincial and Dominion governments have large areas of splendid land, nor the Naas River country, neither does it touch the immense districts lying midway between the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Pacific railways.

Mr. Hinton was very enthusiastic as to the future of this province. He said that even this year, as a result of the completion of the new line as far as Kitselas, there would be a great rush of miners and others to the Skeena Valley districts, and much development work would be done this summer. The Grand Trunk people are making provision for extra freighting to the north by putting on the steamer Prince Albert to run between this port and Prince Rupert, the Queen Charlotte Islands being served by a steamer which has recently been purchased for the purpose.

Mr. Hinton, because of the position he holds, is a man who should know something about the prospects. He is fairly bubbling over with enthusiasm in regard to the future, and it may be assumed that he speaks of what he knows. The prospects of Northern British Columbia are almost boundless and the prosperity of one part of the province is reflected in every other. We on Vancouver Island will rejoice to see the progress of the north, and must reap some of the advantages which come from nearness to the scene of action, and especially from being an important distributing point from which all the coast steamships ply.

AN IMPERIAL ASSEMBLY.

Preparations for the Imperial Conference in May next are again arousing interest in the subject of Imperial Federation. Questions of tariff or no tariff, or reciprocity within the Empire or with other nations, have nothing whatever to do with the conference at present. It may be quite possible to have an Imperial Federation which would not in any way be affected by or dependent upon tariffs.

It seems hardly likely that any definite steps will be taken this year with a view to a federation of the Empire, but every Imperial Conference is a preparation for this great movement. The conferences bring the different parts of the Empire more and more into touch with each other and form the foundation work on which to build a federal constitution. It is possible that there may never be a written constitution of the Empire, but that it may grow naturally out of the conferences, which will be held more and more frequently until they constitute an Imperial Assembly. The premier of each self-governing British country, with other prominent men therefrom, might well be spared for a month or two each year to meet in London for the purpose of discussing matters of Imperial import. It would be useless for the men who constitute the Imperial Assembly to be other than leading men from the different national governments, for their decisions would then have no weight. What men could Canada send to such an assembly other than leading members of the Dominion government? The additional labor which these delegates much undertake in connection with their mission would perhaps add too much to their already onerous duties, but they might be relieved of some of the detail work at home in order to devote more time to Imperial affairs.

There should be no necessity for an Imperial Assembly to be composed of many members, but what is necessary is that the members shall be in close touch with the different home governments, in order that what they do or say may be binding upon each country represented. Under the British system of responsible government this is made much easier than it would be if we had such a form of government as that of the United States or France. In British countries the premiers are the first citizens, and the only men that can speak with authority. They are always able men, for only able men can command the respect and confidence of the people of such countries as Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa. An Imperial Assembly composed of Premiers Asquith, Laurier, Fisher, Botha, Ward, and such other men from the governments of each country as may be chosen would command the respect of the world. Their influence on world politics would be immense. Their decisions would be likely to be supported by the electors, and they would form the unifying body which would bind more closely the self-governing nations which now make up the British Empire.

OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS.

Often people unconsciously do something to help along a cause to which they are strongly opposed. In their opposition they bring out certain facts which otherwise would not have suggested themselves. This is what H. B. Aimes, the Conservative member for Antoine, Montreal, did a few days ago in the Dominion House of Commons. He was speaking against the reciprocal agreement between this country and the United States, when he said:

"If this reciprocity measure goes through, chilled beef and mutton from Australia will flow into British Columbia. And the same will be true of butter, cheese, poultry and eggs. New Zealand butter can be laid down in Vancouver at 24½ cents, or, with the present duty, 28½ cents, which is prohibitive. The millers of British Columbia will grind Antipodean wheat, for they will not pay the freight rates to haul over three ranges of mountains when they have only to pay ocean carriage from Australia or New Zealand to Vancouver.

"Taking the question by and large, it seems to me that natural products will be cheaper at the ocean ports and for a certain distance inland. They will be lower in winter. They may possibly be higher in summer, owing to the opportunity of sending to the United States."

And again: "I think it well to read to the House a few of the quotations showing what farm produce is worth in New Zealand. I have here a statement from the Weekly Report of the Trade and Commerce Department, page 138, which gives the average prices of produce, livestock and provisions for the provincial district of Auckland during the past year. Let me make a few quotations:—

Fat cattle, per head, $30.
Fat sheep, per head, $3.50.
Fat lambs, $2.50.
Beef ready for the butcher, 7 cents per lb.
Mutton, 6 cents per pound.
Veal, 9 cents per pound.
Pork, 12 cents per pound.
Lamb, 9 cents per pound.
Fresh butter, 26 cents per pound.
Cheese, 14 cents per pound.
Ducks, $1.25 per pair.
Fowl, 75 cents per paid.
Turkeys, $1.25 apiece.
Bacon, 15 cents per pound.
Ham, 16 cents per pound.
Eggs, 21 cents per dozen.

"These are comparatively small prices, when you consider that this farm produce, or nearly all of it will be brought free into Canada, and with only the freight rate against it."

We have contended since the proposal was first made that living will be cheaper here once the agreement comes into force. As Australia and New Zealand come under the "most favored nation" clauses of the tariff, lowering the tariff to the United States does the same to them, with the result that in time of local scarcity, when prices have a tendency to soar, we shall be able to get our supplies from outside. We have to get these supplies in, whether the duty is paid or not, and if there is no duty, the consumers get the benefit to the extent of the duty and the profit on the duty. It is a common thing for us to purchase meat from New Zealand, but we pay for the same class of article the same price we do for the home product. We are not told that it is New Zealand meat. If the agreement is ratified, the price for this will be considerably lower than we pay at present.

We want to trade with Australia and New Zealand. We subsidize steamers in order to have that trade and to make it worth while for the shipping companies to bring us their produce and to take away ours. If the vessels bring us more meat and other food, they will carry away more of our lumber, fish, and other products. The trade is mutually beneficial, and especially so to Victoria and Vancouver. If the products are carried in larger quantities they can be carried cheaper, and this too will affect the prices here. We have for a long time been crying for cheaper food, and that is what we shall get under the reciprocal arrangement.

TORONTO STAR AND RECIPROCITY

The Vancouver News-Advertiser says the Toronto Star is one of the leading Liberal journals of Toronto and that Mr. J. E. Atkinson, who is the president of the Star company and directs the policy of the paper, stated at a meeting of the Toronto Board of Trade that if the reciprocity agreement became law it would defeat the government at the next election. There is an element of truth in the assertion of the News-Advertiser statement as here cutlined. The Toronto Star is one of the leading newspapers of Toronto. It is one of the leading Liberal papers of Canada, indeed, one of the leading journals of Canada and one of the foremost newspapers in the world. But the essential thing contained in the statement, and the one for which it was penned, is not true, and the News-Advertiser, we believe, knows it is not true. Mr. J. E. Atkinson, the president of the Star company did not state at a meeting of the Toronto Board of Trade, nor indeed at any other meeting, that if the reciprocity agreement were passed it would result in the defeat of the government. Mr. Atkinson and the Star are strong supporters of reciprocity. They have ably and convincingly defended it. They know, as most Liberals know and a large number of Conservatives believe, that if the government were to appeal to the country on the reciprocity issue it would be sustained by the largest majority received by any administration in the history of the Dominion. And that is the reason why Conservatives have bolted the records of their own party and denied the policies of their strong leaders of the past. That and one other reason. The other reason is that the "interests" behind them fear the country would be so prosperous under a further measure of free trade that the citadel of protection might be assailed.

WHY DISFRANCHISED?

If the city solicitor is right in his contention that the owners of unregistered property cannot vote, either as property holders or as householders, it is plain that a great injustice has been done. The fact that a man who has agreed to purchase his house should be disenfranchised, while his neighbor who pays rent should be allowed to vote, is an anomaly indeed. That the provincial government should have imposed such conditions upon the city at a time when the legislature was in session seems unbelievable, and yet it is true.

The Czar-like action of the provincial government in its treatment of the city of Victoria is worthy of the severest censure. The city members are also greatly to be blamed for allowing such a state of affairs to come to pass. The members of the government are paid fat salaries to do the business of the country, and the legislators are given an allowance which well repays them for the time given to the legislative work. Yet when the city of Victoria needed some of their time in order that civic affairs might be put into workable condition, it was found impossible to prolong the session for a few days in order that these affairs might be given proper consideration. For some reason unknown to the general public it was necessary for the government to shut off the deliberations of the members of the legislature. No matter how crying may be the needs of legislation, and no matter under what disabilities the city may be for the next two years, the session had to close at a certain time. Not only will unregistered property-owners have to lose their votes now, but there will be no redress in time for the next annual election in January. The result will be that a great many residents and owners of property will be disenfranchised for the next two years.

It is difficult to compute just how many people of this city will be disenfranchised in this manner, but even if there were only one, it is an injustice which should have been remedied before the legislature closed its sessions. Apparently the Bowser-McBride government is riding for a fall. Not only is it treating with contempt the opinions of the people of Vancouver in regard to annexation and other matters, but now Victoria is held up to ridicule, and many of its best citizens are deprived of the right to vote. And why? No one knows. Apparently to serve the whim of the Attorney-General or the Premier in order to shut off discussion on certain measures which it was decided had to be crowded out.

The session of the legislature which has just closed was a short one. The members of the house were not overworked. There was no legitimate reason why the Municipal Clauses Act could not have been amended this year in order that the present condition of affairs might have been obviated. If it had taken several weeks, or even a month, no hardship would have been put upon the legislature. It is to do just such work as this that the members are elected.

There can be no excuse that the governmentt did not know what the effect of the delay would be. The matter was urged most strenuously by the city barrister when the matter was before the executive council, but it was deliberately turned down. The government was perfectly aware of what the effect would be, yet Richard McBride, the representative of this city, with calm deliberation, Disenfranchised hundreds of our citizens.

David Spencer, Limited

Opening Exposition of Dress Hats

Tuesday, March 7th

This display will be noted for the variety and exclusiveness of the hats assembled for this event.

French Millinery

The most eminent artists are represented in our showing of Parisian models for Spring.

Our Own Designers

Have had this event in view for some time, and their work represents creations that meet all the season's requirements.

Announcing for Tuesday, March Seventh

Our formal opening for the season in

Wraps, Costumes and Suits

For the purpose of introducing the Newly Enlarged Sections

In the displays, beginning Tuesday, every section presents charming and extensive varieties of Spring Novelties

CARRIES MONSTER CARGO TO ORIENT

Chicago Maru Leaves Port With Every Hold Crammed to the Hatches

Taking a capacity load of general freight valued at $415,239, and several passengers, the Osaka Shosen Kaisha liner Chicago Maru, left port yesterday morning at 6 o'clock for the Orient. As usual the Japanese steamship took a large quantity of wheat and flour together with a great deal of machinery for the new manufacturing firms in the land of the rising sun. At this port the Maru took on four passengers, making a total of 11 first cabin and 27 steerage.

Among the first cabin passengers was Edwin Orrett, local traffic manager of the line with headquarters at Tacoma, who has started on a business trip of the world. From Yokohama he will visit Tokio and other Japanese cities in addition to Osaka, where he will confer with officials of the O. S. K. at headquarters. Following this, Mr. Orrett's itinerary calls for a somewhat extended tour, which includes Manila, Hongkong and Northern Chinese ports. Thence he will proceed from either Harbin or Vladivostok across to this country via the trans-Siberian railroad. Before returning to this country, via New York, Mr. Orrett will call at a number of ports on the Continent, as well as at his old home at Chester, England. Although in the transportation business for many years he has never before been in the Orient and his coming trip through that section will give him an intimate knowledge of conditions in that section of the world. Mr. Orrett expects to return to Tacoma about the 1st of Judy.

For one port in the Orient the Maru has a complete flour mill. The machinery cargo consists of electrical machinery, laundry machinery and mill machinery. She has the usual shipment of sewing machines, totalling more than 1,600 cases valued at $20,000; she has 877 cases of electric fans valued at $20,000; 200 cases of telegraph apparatus valued at $15,000; 6,800 barrels of flour valued at $27,200; 1,242 cases of salt herring valued at $6,216; 437 bales of cotton valued at $34,960; 2,482 pieces of structural machinery valued at $23,794; 5,218 cases of canned meats valued at $15,776; 500 casks of beer, 200 barrels of whiskey; 250 tierces of lard compound; 133,245 feet of lumber; 2,000 cases of parafine wax. One of the modern items of her cargo is a shipment of vaccuum cleaners. There are also many cases of cotton clothing, shoes, paint, milk, etc.

Next of the Osaka liners to arrive here will be the Tacoma Maru, which is due to reach this port on March 24. This line gives a fortnightly service between Puget Sound and the Orient, but between the Chicago Maru and the Tacoma Maru is over a month. This long spell will be over come when the new steamshp Canada Maru is ready for the trans-Pacific run in a short time.

BISHOP DU VERNET HONORS MISSIONARY

Rev. J. H. Keen of Metlakatla is Appointed Honorary Canon

Prince Rupert, March 3.—In recognition of valuable services rendered to the whole diocese of Caledonia, Bishop Du Vernet has appointed Rev. J. H. Keen, of Metlakatla, an honorary canon.

Rev. Mr. Keen was from 1875 to 1882 a missionary at Moose Fort, in the diocese of Moosonee. Returning to England he held curacies in London from 1882 to 1890. He then came to the Pacific coast and was in charge of Masset, Q. C. I., from 1890 to 1899, during which time he translated the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John and the Acts of the Apostles into Haida. In 1899 he was appointed missionary in charge of Metlakatla, where he still labors.

Among natural scientists he is recognized as an entomologist. As a linguist he is the author of a Haida grammar, and is preparing a Tsimshian grammar. For some years he has been secretary-treasurer of the synod of the diocese and has otherwise rendered valuable assistance to the bishop.

BREAK COLUMN OF ENGINE.

Prince George Also Hit Wharf Making Landing—Rupert Goes in Her Place.

When the G. T. P. steamer Prince George, Capt. Robertson, was making her way into Seattle harbor on Sunday morning she struck the new dock there, forcing her way into it for some distance. It was pitch dark at the time and the vessel's engines were stopped, when out of the darkness loomed the wharf right in front. The order for full speed astern was given but while the engineer was executing it one of the columns of her engines snapped and the steam had to be shut off. Her momentum could not be checked and she struck the dock. The damage done to the wharf amounted to several hundred dollars but the vessel was uninjured, a little paint being scraped from her bow.

Last night at 10.15 o'clock the George returned to this city with one engine working and tied up at the outer dock. Fortunately the Prince Rupert, Capt. Barney Johnson, had completed her overhauling and was prepared to leave. The work of transferring stores, passengers and freight from the George to the Rupert was rushed with all speed and the latter vessel, sailing in place of the injured steamer, got away little behind time. She steamed from Vancouver on time to-day and will return to port next Saturday night.

The George arrived from Prince Rupert late on Saturday evening but proceeded to Seattle at the regular hour. She brought south 51 saloon passengers and 30 second class. Repairs will be immediately made to the George but it is not likely that she will go on the run for some time yet. She was to be relieved by the Rupert next Saturday but as the Rupert has been forced on the run it is expected that she will remain on it throughout the season.

BIG BUSINESS IN THE REALTY MARKET

Heavy Transactions in City Properties and Boom in Home Sites

Perhaps the best promise for the future of Victoria is the faith of the people who are investing their money in home sites; and that the promise will be a pregnant one is proved by the ever increasing loyalty to that faith. The past few weeks have been most productive for the city's development. The present has been laying up assets for the future with remarkable insistence and unwavering enthusiasm. The realty market has experienced a boom that would almost justify the dreams of the old discredited phophets of the city.

Perhaps one of the most agreeable features of the market during the past week has been the tremendous business that has been done in home sites. Nearly every real estate firm in the city can show a long list of properties of this class that have been sold to residents who desire to invest in a substantial stake in the city, and not a few of the firms can turn to pages showing transactions on a very large scale.

Duirng the past week the corner lot on Douglas street and Princess avenue, with a 200-foot frontage on the former, was disposed of by Cuthbert & Co. for $60,000. That is but one instance. During the week the firm has put through deals involving $170,000. One of the properties included in this amount brought $50,000, and another of smaller area, and situated near the Foul Bay car line, brought $24,000.

The Griffith company put through a deal the other day for $24,000. The property sold has a forty-foot frontage on Yates street, between Blanchard and Quadra.

Green & Burdick Bros. got $15,000 for a piece of property located on Discovery street, back of Douglas street.

Remarkable business was also done by Day & Boggs, who sold off an entire subdivision on Grafton street, comprising 32 lots.

UNIONISTS REJOICE.

London, March 6.—The Morning Post and other Imperialist organs this morning rejoice that the United States senate has done England's work in rejecting the reciprocity agreement with Canada, and expresses the hope that the Democrats will so confuse matters with low tariff amendements that the special session of congress will prove abortive.

The Pall Mall Gazette says that if Sir Wilfrid Laurier now persists in driving straight ahead with the agreement he will not only be challenging Canada's amour propre, but flouting several sagacious and very practical considerations. After Saturday's events at Washington reasons for delay at Ottawa are morally overwhelming.

MUCH WORK UNDER DAY LABOR SYSTEM

Pending New Election Civic Forces Are Being Increased by Engineer

The impasse which has been reached in civic affairs owing to the recent election having been invalidated and a new one ordered is indirectly proving a boon to the laboring classes in this city, for pending the new election it is the intention of the city engineer to do all the work passed by day labor. Mr. Smith said to the Times this morning:

"By the enabling bill we are prevented from letting any new contracts, but that does not prevent us from doing a large amount of work by day labor—work which had been authorized some months ago and which we may now proceed with. This consists in laying down a large amount of water pipe and making lateral connections on those streets which it is intended to permanently improve. I am, therefore, constantly increasing the force on this work and also on the sewer construction which had been started. There will be a large amount of work done by day labor until contracts can be awarded.

Mr. Smith added that just as soon as the new elections had been held contracts would be let for the big asphalt paving programme.

CHOLERA AT HONOLULU.

Federal Government Will Probably be Asked to Take Charge of Situation.

Honolulu, March 6.—It is believed that the territorial legislature, which is now in session, will ask the federal government to take charge of the cholera situation in Honolulu. Two more deaths and two new cases in the last twenty-four hours brings the total up to 18 cases and 10 deaths.

The legislature has appropriated $25,000 as an urgency fund for the board of health with which to handle the epidemic. The legislature will also pass a bill giving the health authorities full power to enforce sanitary regulations, the present laws being ineffective in this emergency.

There are trade secrets in the Chinese vermillion industry centuries old, which no foreigner ever has been able to fathom.