

# The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

"Persevere and  
Succeed."

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## EDITORIAL.

### EXPORT DUTY ON PULP - WOOD NEEDED.

The Toronto Globe has been for some weeks past prosecuting an inquiry into the wisdom of a public policy of pulp-wood conservation in Canada, either by out-and-out prohibition of export, or else by the imposition of an export duty on all pulp-wood leaving the country in an unmanufactured state. Those who have followed the series of pithy interviews which have been appearing in the Toronto journal from day to day, must surely be convinced of the wisdom of an export duty.

Sir William Van Horne, one of the best-posted authorities on pulp and paper questions, points out that the great bulk of paper consumed in the world is made from spruce wood. The supply in the United States has been so far exhausted that the spruce area of that country is confined to southern Maine, New Hampshire, and the Adirondack region of New York, and these regions would keep the American mills going for only three years or so if the Canadian supply were cut off. Canada and Scandinavia are the only other two great sources of supply, and many American firms are providing for the future by securing extensive Canadian limits. The Dominion's still vast pulp-wood resources are being exploited wholesale to furnish grist for the hundreds of pulp and paper mills of the American Republic, which country bars out Canadian-made paper by a high tariff. The result is to build up a flourishing manufacturing industry in the United States, leaving increasingly vast areas of our domain stripped by the pulp-wood exporters and by the so-called settlers, who squat on the non-agricultural lands for the mere purpose of realizing on the sale of pulp-wood, afterwards moving to new locations to repeat the method of despoilation. Yet, thin as the argument is, the "poor settler" is the man of straw put up by the financiers interested in the business of exporting pulp-wood, as a reason against the imposition of an export duty! It is true there are some bona-fide agricultural settlers in Quebec and Northern Ontario who eke out a none-too-abundant living by cutting pulp-wood for the exporters. We have observed in these regions that the men depending on tanbark and pulp-wood picking, make "a poor fist" of farming, as a rule. In fact, it is only a side issue till the timber is stripped, and then, if the land be rocky, as is often the case, and they really propose to farm, they move to a location where the conditions are favorable. But there is no reason to suppose that bona-fide settlers, clearing their homesteads, should find their market destroyed by the imposition of an export duty. Instead, such a move on the part of the Dominion Government would bring the American pulp mills right to their doors in Canada, just as the Ontario regulation prohibiting the export of sawlogs cut on Crown Lands caused the Michigan sawmills to move across into Canadian territory, to the tremendous advantage of this Province. An export duty on pulp-wood would not stop the cutting of pulp-wood in Canada, because the 1,200 American papermakers must have our supplies of spruce fibre to conserve their own. What it would do would be to throw a handsome revenue into the Dominion treasury, and result, also, in the speedy establishment of American-owned pulp mills in Canada, each of which would build up a town of 5,000 to 10,000 people, and contribute materially to the general prosperity of the country.

Of all forms of fiscal protection, export duties on raw materials are the least objectionable, and by far the most positively advantageous, especially in a country like Canada, with such magnificent

facilities for home manufacture. It is the part of prudence to conserve our raw materials, more particularly seeing that we hold the key to the North American situation. An export duty on pulp-wood is urgently needed. Failure to impose it would be a piece of inconceivable folly, of which Sir Wilfred Laurier and Hon. W. S. Fielding will not be guilty. The only reason for delay is to allow time to educate public opinion.

### SUCCESS TO THE FORESIGHTED.

To increase the productiveness or earning power of every day's labor applied to the land, in order that the farmer may not only be enabled to compete more successfully with city employers for a fair average class of Canadian workers, but that he may earn better wages for himself on his own farm, is unquestionably the true solution of the farm-labor problem; and the more earnestly it is applied, the more rapid will be the progress of agriculture, while the longer we dally with such purely expedient measures as immigration, the slower will be the progress of agriculture as an industry and the longer we shall be in bringing about satisfactory social conditions in the rural districts. This solution is so thoroughly in harmony with agricultural and national progress, that the only reason it has not been more readily and heartily tried is the habitual conservatism of the farming population. During the past decade, under the stress of sheer necessity, this conservatism in farm methods has been giving way, and we have already witnessed the adoption of many labor-saving devices and methods. But the point is that most of us, instead of looking ahead ten years ago and preparing for the impending advance in wages, clung to the old practices until economic conditions compelled us to change; and with compulsion always goes hardship. This brings us to the conclusion that it has not been the extent, so much as the suddenness, in the rise of wages that has inconvenienced farmers so much within the past eight or ten years. It caught us with old, slow-working implements and tedious practices and facilities generally. To change at once and secure new wide-cut binders and mowers, two-furrow plows and four-horse harrows, to tear out unnecessary cross-fences, and to lengthen and clear the fields immediately for the advantageous use of four-horse teams, was impossible. It took money and time, and when, combined with the inconvenience of sudden change, we had to reckon with the school-bred preference of the majority of laborers for city employment, it is no wonder the farm-labor problem assumed complications. It was still further aggravated by the hope in many minds that the supply of laborers would increase in time and wages once more go down. Consequently, many farmers, instead of promptly addressing themselves to the task of increasing the productiveness of labor, tried to make shift in the hope of a return to the old conditions. Credence was lent to their belief by the heavy migration westward, a migration that seemed likely to slacken in time, after which more labor would be left in the East. Under the circumstances, it is no wonder that many of us were inclined to welcome immigration as the hope of the situation.

But the Westward tide continued year by year, and the immigrants we secured to take the places of our own people took not too kindly to agriculture, and many of them proved not worth nearly so much per day as native-born and native-trained Canadian lads. Not a few, after a brief experience in the East, caught the Western fever, leaving

their erstwhile employers to train up new immigrants in the ways of Canadian farm life. The truth is that scarcely any large body of available immigrants are really and ultimately desirable as farm help. The most of them are either awkward workers, unused to our methods, or else they have objectionable traits of manners, customs or language which render them undesirable as co-workers and citizens. There are exceptions, of course, but we are speaking collectively. The worst of it is that where cheap help is secured and depended upon, the tendency is to militate against the introduction of improved methods, hence the farmer plods along in the rut with his help, and becomes, in effect, a low-wage worker himself.

Evidence accumulates that the farm-labor problem of the past decade, while a hardship for the time being, has, by hastening the adoption of labor-saving practices, resulted in an immense, permanent uplift to the industry of agriculture, an uplift which, though entailing undeniable hardships in the transition stage during which it was being brought about, has greatly improved the farmer's position in the long run, and will yet improve it still further. And, after all, the farm-labor problem has not been such a very severe hardship to the foresighted. It is chiefly those who resist progress that are crushed by it.

And so, looking to the future, there is every reason why we should study this great question of how to make labor more productive, for wages are likely to go still higher. Perhaps not next year nor the year after. Perhaps they may, by chance, be lower five years hence than they are today, though it is improbable. But in the long run, and allowing for temporary fluctuations, there is no doubt the tendency is ever upward. The history of the past quarter century is an index of the next. And as in the past, so in the future, success and prosperity will be to the wise and foresighted. There is the watchword—**FORESIGHT!**

### EXCESSIVE PRICES RESTRICT CONSUMPTION.

Reports from Alberta state that prices of lumber have been voluntarily reduced, not because the Attorney-General has prepared to bring suit against the Lumber-dealers' Association, but on account of the need of money on the part of the mill-owners. This indicates two things, says our Western contemporary, "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal," of Winnipeg. First, that the price of lumber was raised higher than the trade would stand, and therefore curtailed consumption; and that commercial evils will often right themselves without outside interference. The falling off in trade on account of high prices is something the mill-owners cannot well stand, as they have already put their money into the manufacture of lumber, and must get it out again. Piles of lumber and retailers' paper do not satisfy the demands of the banks when the date of the expiry of their loans comes around, and a failure to meet obligations through lack of business does not inspire confidence in financial circles, and, without this confidence, manufacturing cannot well be conducted. A lumberman must have a good market, and if the price is prohibitive of sales, it must be adjusted. The falling off in building this season indicates that the consumers are generally persuaded that lumber prices are too high. A lowering of prices will normally result in an active resumption of building operations, which should teach lumbermen and other dealers in such commodities that exorbitant prices turn the flood of material back upon the producer. The problem of marketing is not solved by the elimination of competitive selling.