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TELEPHONE 1274.

FREDERIC NICHOLLS, Managing Director.
J. J. CASSIDEY, Editor.
I. C. GARDNER, Business Representative.
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CUSTOMS RULINGS AND REGULATIONS.

The attention of the Customs Department has been called to the want of uniformity in the assessing of duty upon brass pumps imported. Collectors are instructed that such pumps, whether hand pumps or stationary, are properly dutiable at the rate of 35 per cent. under the terms of Item No. 407 of the Tariff, and they have been advised that so much of Departmental Circular Memo. No. 459 B, as indicates any other rate of duty on brass pumps, than as stated herein is hereby repealed.

It has been brought to the attention of the Customs Department that the practice obtains at some ports in the case of goods of small value imported by express, of ignoring for the purpose of duty any parcel of a less value than fifty cents, and of charging duty on a value of one dollar upon all parcels of a value of fifty cents or over. Collectors are instructed that for the future all parcels coming by mail or express must be entered at the exact cost to the importers of the same, and duty must be collected on such fractional parts of a dollar in each case.

A DELUSION AND A SNARE.

At the recent so-called reciprocity convention held at Minneapolis, Mr. W. M. Springer, who was chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means of the United States House of Representatives, proposed a scheme for reciprocity between that country and Canada, a feature of which was that in the exchange of products between the two countries should be included manufactured articles, the chief component parts of which were produced in either country; and in suggesting how such an arrangement might be carried out, he said -

Such an arrangement as I have outlined does not involve any interference on the part of either country with the tariff laws or political institutions of the other country. Each will be left free to form and to regulate its economic and governmental policies as the people of each country may determine in reference to other countries and as to themselves. Each country would be permitted to make treaties, commercial or otherwise, with all other countries so long as they did not interfere with the commercial treaties and regulations between the two countries. The people of Canada should be left perfectly free from any interference on our part with them in determining or maintaining the policy which may exist between them and the mother country. Whatever that policy may be, it will not prevent perfect freedom of commerce between this country and that. We may assume that the nearer the Dominion will approach free trade with the United States, the more satisfactory will that condition be to Great Britain.

All of which, while it sounds very pleasant to the ear, would resemble the apples of the Dead Sea which turn to ashes and bitterness on the lips. Then if the United States should impose a duty on wool, or on pig iron, or on machinery for the manufacture of textile fabrics, Canada would of necessity have to impose corresponding duties, and thus place it in the power of the Washington Government to regulate Canadian traffic in those articles with Great Britain or any other country. It is impossible but that the United States must impose a duty upon wool, but Canada imposes no such duty, and therefore Mr. Springer's proposed reciprocity would increase the cost to Canadian consumers of all fabrics composed in whole or in part of wool.

In one breath, Mr. Springer tells us that the people of Canada would be left free from any interference on the part of the United States in determining or maintaining the policy which might exist between us and the mother country; and in another breath he tells us that we would be free to make any commercial arrangement with the mother country that did not interfere with his proposed reciprocity. In other words, we would be free to do just as we pleased only so long as it pleased the United States, but no longer.

But the most ridiculous and one-sided feature of Mr. Springer's proposition is that the reciprocity of manufactured products should be confined to only such articles the chief component of which should be the product of the exporting country. Thus American sugar would be allowed to come into Canada free, because the United States is a producer of a chief component of sugar; but Canada would not be allowed to export Canadian refined sugar to the United States, because we do not produce sugar. So, too, with the manufactures of cotton and wool. We do not produce any raw cotton, and we have to import largely of wool grown in Australia, therefore no Canadian cotton or woollen fabrics could be admitted free into