

MOST of our readers will remember the great scare in England, a few years ago, caused by the result of calculations foreshadowing the early exhaustion of the great coal fields. The outlook was appalling. The consequences of such an event on the industry and prosperity of England would be too disastrous to contemplate. That alarm has long since subsided, but an excitement, almost equally great in some quarters, though of a very different character, has just now been created by the announcement of the discovery of new coal fields in Kent, in the southeast of England. The letter conveying the momentous announcement was delivered to Sir Edward Watkin, the great railway autocrat, on the 17th ult., and is likely to become historical. It is, certainly, not often that it falls to the lot of anyone in these days to write or receive a letter containing news of a discovery likely to have so important a bearing upon the future of a nation, or a considerable part of one. The statement made in this instance was that "coal was reached at 1,180 feet below the surface, under conditions favourable to the supposition that coal in sufficient quantity to pay for working lies buried near the spot where this was found, and at a reasonable depth along the South-Eastern Railway to the westward. A specimen of the coal was tested by burning and proved to be of good bituminous character. Mr. Boyd Dawkins, the geologist, has examined the specimens, and confirms the report. He writes: 'The coal measures with good blazing coal have been struck at a depth well within the practical mining limit, and the question is definitely settled which has vexed geologists for the last thirty years. Further explorations, however, now under consideration, will be necessary before the thickness of the coal, and the number of the seams, can be ascertained.'"

The discovery was not wholly unexpected by geologists, as various theories concerning the existence of this most precious of all minerals in the southeast of England, have been held and discussed for forty years past. It is, of course, yet to be demonstrated that the "find" is of the practical value we have assumed, though the signs seem so far to be altogether favourable. The result of the announcement has been to re-kindle hopes that have formerly been cherished concerning the existence of coal in the neighbourhood of Harwich, in Suffolk, where rocks of the Lower Carboniferous period were found in well-boring, many years ago. It is quite likely that capital, science and engineering skill may now be laid under contribution to test the foundation of that hope. The *Christian World* regards the announcement to Sir Edward Watkin with mixed feelings, the pleasure evoked by the promise of so great a gain to the industries and wealth of the country being modified by anticipations of the destruction of some of the loveliest scenery in the Island, which would be inevitable from the development of coal mines on a great scale.

THERE is no good reason, we suppose, why the newspapers should not receive their share of the plums dispensed by the victors in a great party contest, but there is something not a little remarkable in the great number of prominent journalists who have been appointed to important and lucrative offices by President Harrison. The *Nation*, without attempting to enumerate the editors in smaller cities and towns who have been given post offices, and minor places in the service, though the number of such is said to be very large, publishes a list containing the names of no less than twelve conductors of prominent journals, who have received or been offered ministerships, consulships, collectorships, treasurerships, and other important offices. The latest instance of the kind is the appointment of Charles E. Fitch, editor of the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, and Lecturer on the Ethics of Journalism in Cornell University, a Collector of Internal Revenue. It would perhaps be more politic as well as more charitable for those members of the guild who are passed by, to conclude that such appointments are but a fitting recognition of the superior merits of those who, by the processes of natural selection and survival, have been elevated to the high places of journalism. At the same time, it must be confessed that there is some room for suspicion. There can be no sharper thorn in the flesh to one in high office, than the trenchant criticisms of an able and influential journal. Nor would it be easy to devise a subtler form of bribery, than that in question. The journal whose chief proprietor or manager is enjoying a lucrative Government position is in the least likely to keep a very sharp lookout for the laches and wrong-doings of the Administration which has thus practically recognized and rewarded superior merit. By the same token the method is likely to be scarcely less effectual in retaining the loyalty

of other journalists, who may be thus silently taught to live in expectation of good things to come. It must be admitted, however, that such appointments are far less damaging to party purity, on the face of them, than such admissions as that which slipped, no doubt inadvertently, from the *New York Tribune* a little ago. This journal admitted in almost so many words that the Republicans bought the Presidency for Harrison in 1888 by selling the Governorship of New York to Hill. The *Tribune's* point was, if we remember aright, that the Democrats sold the former for the latter. The writer apparently, forgot at the moment that a seller implies a buyer. The *Nation* now says that not a single Republican newspaper in the land, so far as it has been able to discover, has ventured to notice in any way the *Tribune's* remarkable and certainly most damaging statement. Evidently American politics have not yet attained any exalted standard of purity.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS: RECIPROCITY CONSIDERED.

THE Trade and Navigation returns of the Dominion of Canada for the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1889, exhibit the following results with regard to the trade between the two countries for that year in the above commodities.

In "Animals and their Products," are included horses, cattle, sheep, swine, poultry, pork, beef and mutton (fresh, salted and canned), butter, cheese, lard, tallow, hides, pelts, furs, wool, bones, eggs, honey, etc. In "Agricultural Products" are included grains of all kinds and flour, meal and residue therefrom, hay, straw, hops, malt, fruits (green), trees and shrubs, vegetables, vegetable fibres, flax, broom corn, tobacco (unmanufactured), cotton, wool, etc.

In the summary below, the imports from the United States only include such of them as were actually entered for home consumption, and leave out of calculation such articles as merely passed through Canada for export to foreign countries. The exports to the United States necessarily include the whole of them, a considerable portion of which were not for consumption there, but merely shipped through United States routes for export to Great Britain, etc.

In order to a more thorough understanding of our trade in farm produce, the following summary includes our imports from and exports to Great Britain.

Summary of the Farm Produce and value thereof imported into the Dominion of Canada from Great Britain and the United States, together with the amount of customs duty collected thereon; also the values of the like produce exported from the Dominion to these two countries during the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1889.

	Great Britain.		United States.	
	Value of Imports.	Duty coll'd.	Value of Imports.	Duty collected.
IMPORTS—	\$	\$	\$	\$
Animals and their products (dutiable)	32,827	3,615	2,701,980	549,212
(Free of duty)	918,767	3,394,822
Agricultural products (dutiable)	91,926	16,269	3,296,721	550,248
(Free of duty)	1,025,649	6,522,162
	2,069,169	19,884	15,915,685	1,099,430
EXPORTS—	Value of Exports.		Value of Exports.	
Animals and their products	16,227,060		7,137,006	
Agricultural products.....	3,674,055		9,125,707	
	19,901,115		16,262,713	

One of the most striking features of the above summary is the fact, that the five millions of people in the Dominion of Canada purchase about as much farm produce from the sixty millions of people in the United States as they purchase from us; and if allowance is made for that portion of our exports which is not entered for consumption there, our purchases from them largely exceed their purchases from us.

Another feature is, that while our exports of animals and their products to Great Britain are more than double the value of those to the United States, our exports of agricultural products to the latter country are even in a larger degree greater than those to Great Britain. The disproportion is not altogether ordinary or natural. The small value of our agricultural product exports to Great Britain during the last two crop years was owing to the general failure of the wheat crop and the partial failure of the pea crop in the Province of Ontario, and these two crops usually furnish the greater part of our exports to the United Kingdom.

As the question of Reciprocity between Canada and the United States is exciting a good deal of interest and discussion, the Trade and Navigation returns of the Dominion may throw some light on the question of the advantages and disadvantages which would probably accrue to the farming interests of Canada through the establishment of free trade between the two countries in farm produce.

First, as to wheat, which is by far the most valuable product of the farm. It is universally admitted, that in almost every year, with anything like fair average wheat crops, both countries will have considerable surplus for export, and, under such circumstances, the prices are governed by the export value. In every year for the last

decade, the United States has exported from 40 up to over 100 million bushels in wheat and flour, and its tariff of duties on these two articles has not affected home prices. Unfortunately for Canada, this country has on several of these years suffered from failures of wheat crops, and has required to import from the United States, considerable quantities of wheat and flour, for home consumption. During the year 1888-89, the quantity so imported was 15,121 bushels of wheat, and 257,391 barrels of flour, paying duty at the rate of 15 cents per bushel, and 50 cents per barrel, contributing to the Dominion Revenue, \$131,965. During the six months ending 31st December, 1889, there were further large like imports of flour. This is not the place or time to discuss the propriety of imposing duties on imports of breadstuffs, the present subject being to show their effects on prices. It is perfectly absurd to contend, that, during the eighteen months referred to, and in two or three previous seasons of like character, the present duties on wheat and flour did not improve prices here and so benefit farmers. The relative quotations in the markets of Canada and the United States prove the contrary, and the fact that American millers have frequently paid 50 cents duty per barrel of flour in order to place their product on our markets corroborates this. It may be urged that these were exceptional seasons, and that the necessity of imports may never again occur. It is to be hoped that this may be so. But so far as the interest of Canadian farmers in reciprocity in wheat is concerned, there is the plain fact, that the experience of the last ten years shows that there never has been a time when the United States required our wheat, but there have been several years, when the present Canadian tariff has kept the price of flour here 50 cents per barrel above the prices which would have ruled under reciprocity or free trade.

The next important product of the farm is barley. For this grain the United States has been our only market, and prices there have governed those here, as the quantity used for home consumption forms too small a proportion of the crop to affect prices; and since the season of 1877-78 the exports to Europe have been too inconsiderable to have any influence on markets. The Trade and Navigation returns do not show fully the exports of barley from Canada, as some of them are not reported at custom houses here. The Washington returns of imports of barley into the United States from Canada show:—

	1884-5	1885-6	1886-7	1887-8	1888-9
Bush.....	9,986,494	10,197,115	10,445,751	10,445,751	11,365,881

The duty is ten cents per bushel. It is unquestionable that the removal of this duty, either through reciprocity or otherwise, would prove of very great advantage to Canadian farmers.

Next in marketable, but really of greater aggregate importance, as a product of the farm, is oats. This crop, in the Province of Ontario, in 1889, was estimated by the Bureau of Industries at over 64,000,000 bushels. The Canadian customs duty on oats is ten cents per bushel. In the case of this grain, as in wheat, the relative prices in Canadian and United States markets, during almost the whole of the last four or five years, have been so much higher in the former than in the latter country that it is absurd to dispute the fact that the tariff has largely conduced to the high prices realised by farmers.

The next important grain crop is peas. In seasons of good crops, the exports to Great Britain are six or eight times greater than those to the United States; the quantity of the latter consisting mainly of peas for seed, and as a large part of them is of the same kind of Marrow-fats as are exported to Great Britain, the American buyer has to pay export value and consequently the United States consumer pays the American duty. Some varieties are raised wholly for the American market, but the aggregate quantity of such is not important to the Province as a whole.

When considering the question of oats and peas in relation to reciprocity that of the free admission of Indian corn suggests itself. The present Canadian duty on Indian corn is seven and one half cents per bushel. During the year 1888-9 there was imported into Canada 2,894,838 bushels, on which the duty collected amounted to \$217,115. In favour of the free admission of corn it is urged that cheap corn would prove a great boon to those engaged in fattening cattle and hogs. It is sometimes contended, also, that this cheap corn would enable Canada to export a much larger quantity of peas, and that the forwarding railway and commercial interests would be benefited by this new movement inwards and enlarged movement outwards. This seems a narrow and somewhat dangerous position to take. There are an immense number of farmers deeply interested in maintaining the prices of corn and oats, which are very important crops in some sections. Millers, also, would find the value of their bran, etc., depreciated. The grower of peas should be very cautious in assenting to free corn as being unlikely to affect the price of peas. Canadian peas are now quoted about two shillings per cental, or nearly ten shillings per quarter, higher than Indian corn in Liverpool market. This difference in price is far greater than usual, and is owing to the short supply of peas and immense supply of corn. If under the free import of corn, farmers should use two or three million bushels instead of peas for feeding purposes, and thus add two or three million bushels of peas to the supply for Great Britain, they will find the present big difference in prices there pulled down very rapidly. By free trade in corn the revenue would suffer considerably, and so would the Canadian farmers who raise corn and oats for market.