

machinery and implements successfully to execute the work. American energy, with American ingenuity, which latter is typified in our mechanical devices, is certain, in the course of a very short time, to transform Cuba into a paradise of prosperity. That being true, a tremendous demand for agricultural implements will be excited at the beginning, which will be well sustained for many years to come.

"Cuba is naturally an agricultural center. She is just so constituted that she is sure to become a rich and opulent garden of luscious and marketable products. Her soil is adapted to the cultivation of both luxuries and necessities, and both are certain to flourish under American guidance and patronage. That of itself is conclusive testimony as to the outlook for an implement market. With the rehabilitation of enterprise down there, almost the entire field of agricultural needs will have to be supplied anew. The crushing ruin of war has swept the old tools of industry into destruction.

"America has no rival in the manufacture of agricultural implements and machinery. Our people stand supreme in every market. We can beat competitors on this side of the Atlantic; we can beat them in Africa, South America or wherever we meet them. Naturally, we will establish our pre-eminence in the West Indian markets now looming up anew."

What is said of American energy, skill and ingenuity in the production of agricultural machinery, and the excellence of it, may with equal truth be said of Canadian manufacturers and their products.

#### WEST INDIA TRADE.

With peace there will come a very rapid expansion of our trade with Cuba and Porto Rico. Though just now the people are greatly impoverished by the war, yet with peace in the islands it will take but little time to force from the soil crops of many kinds that we can take in exchange for goods of all kinds that will be in great demand, and, in a little time the big staples of sugar and tobacco will be flourishing. Meantime, iron ores, copper, fine hard woods and other products they have, are in demand at our coast cities and will find a ready market with institutions now suffering for lack of them. Best of all, our trade of all kinds will be direct, instead of roundabout through Spain, and, with lessened cost on both sides, the volume of trade both ways will be larger and more profitable than ever before. The great natural wealth of both islands will be rapidly developed by American enterprise and capital, and result in a great trade with our Atlantic coast cities and mainly with New York. Naturally, the West India trade belongs almost wholly to the United States, and henceforth will come here.—New York Financial News.

What our contemporary says of the great natural wealth of Cuba and Porto Rico may with equal propriety be said of the British West India Islands. Those possessions have been for years in better political condition than the other islands under Spanish rule, and in that respect, at least, have that much of a start of Cuba and Porto Rico in the race for material greatness. All these islands produce almost identically the same things. In many of these things Spain has heretofore supplied her wants largely from her West India possessions, the surplus finding their chief and almost only market in the United States, in return for which many of their wants have been supplied, in a more or less roundabout manner it is true, from their American neighbors. This is

true to a great extent of the British islands, the imports into the United States from both the Spanish and British Islands being subject to identical rates of duty.

But a change of flag in Cuba and Porto Rico will work a great change in the Status as between them and their British neighbors, and while these latter will continue to be liable to the commercial restrictions imposed by the United States, there will undoubtedly be modifications in them that will give the former advantages that the latter cannot hope to obtain. Cuba and Porto Rico will be to all intents and purposes, parts of the American Republic, while the British possessions will remain as they are. That is to say, they will remain as they are, integral parts of the British Empire, unless from force of circumstances they find it to their advantage to make a change. Will the fealty of Jamaicans hold them to the idle observance of the fact that their late Spanish neighbors have a very decided tariff preference shown their products in American markets of which they are deprived, or will they demand an equivalent from the British Government? It is not in the power of the Canadian Government to solve this question, nor is it proper that it should attempt to do so. It can be solved, and that quite easily, by the abandonment by Great Britain of Cobdenism, and the adoption of a system of preferential tariff in favor of the products of all British possessions and against all other countries.

#### STEAM VS. ELECTRICITY.

In calling attention to the inroads being made by trolley railways upon the local passenger business of the steam railroads, The Western Electrician says:

Steam railroad managers are reminded of the growing importance of the electric trolley lines by the marked falling off in suburban traffic in all the large cities of the country at this season of the year. The steam roads running out of Chicago, which have heretofore enjoyed a profitable suburban business, complain that their cars are deserted for the trolley lines since the hot weather set in. Open cars are run on the electric roads and passengers are not annoyed by smoke and flying cinders. An additional inducement of considerable importance is found in the comparatively low fare charged by the electric railway companies.

In the ten years up to, and including 1893, the number of passengers carried on the steam railroads in Massachusetts increased at the rate of 5,825,000 a year. The next four they decreased at the rate of 4,766,000 a year. The decrease in passenger journeys from 1893 to 1897 was more than 19,000,000 or 15.65 per cent. While the number of journeys fell off 15.65 per cent., the passenger miles fell off only 6.66 per cent., showing that the average journey grew in length nearly twelve per cent. There are six steam railways entering Boston. These lost 12.2 per cent. of their passengers into and out of Boston from 1893 to 1897. There are five electric street railroads that enter Boston, and these gained in the same four years 31.2 per cent. in the number of passengers carried. This is the most significant feature of the report.

In all the reports thus far submitted it is evident that the greatest falling off has been in short trip passengers. The Lake Shore's decrease in this class was 227,539 persons. The Michigan Central carried last year in local travel 2,385,519 showing a falling off of 107,798 passengers. The experience