

THE CANADIAN GROCER
 & GENERAL STOREKEEPER

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 and General Storekeepers.

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SPECIAL TO OUR READERS.

As the design of THE CANADIAN GROCER is to benefit mutually all interested in the business, we would request all parties ordering goods or making purchases of any description from houses advertising with us to mention in their letter that such advertisement was noticed in THE CANADIAN GROCER.

OUR MONTREAL OFFICE.

Our Montreal Office is located at 115 St. Francois Xavier St. Our representative, Mr. G. Hector Clemes, will be pleased to have subscribers and advertisers call upon him there. He will also pay special attention to gathering business items and attending generally to the interests of this paper.

NOTICE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

Of late, owing to the greatly increased circulation and number of pages of THE CANADIAN GROCER, we have to send part of the paper to press two days earlier than in the past. We would, therefore, ask our advertisers to have all changes of advertisements reach this office not later than Tuesday afternoon in order to insure insertion this week.

It is commonly reported that Messrs. Davidson & Hay have bought, for six months ahead, the output of the St. Lawrence Sugar Refinery. Has this purchase any relation to the resolution passed at the last meeting of the Toronto Retail Grocers' Association, whereby that body bound itself to give the preference always to the granulated sugar turned out by the above-named refinery? The Brantford Association wants to know. Its secretary has written, asking the question of the Toronto secretary. The Brantford Association appears to have some mistrust that its sister association of Toronto is playing into the hands of the wholesale house aforesaid. The invitation to co-operate, which the resolution holds out to all associations, is therefore not accepted as promptly as if there were a clear understanding of the matter. The acceptance of the Brantford body will remain in statu quo, as it

were, until its question is satisfactorily answered. We think, however, that the association can easily be acquitted of the charge of collusion. Davidson & Hay's purchase was not likely either a cause or a consequence of the resolution in favor of the refinery named in it. That firm every year buys in round lots at this season, and did what it probably would have done if no resolution had been passed.

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Among the commodities we would buy of Jamaica if close trade relations and facilities for traffic were perfected between Canada and that island, is raw sugar. There is a counter temptation, however, to our inducements, and one that appeals strongly to a party in the island. It is that offered by the reciprocity clause in the McKinley Act, which grants free admission of raw sugar to the United States market on condition that the country from which it comes shall give equal concessions to the trade in agricultural and other products of the United States. The facts that the United States market is closer, that communication is more easily kept up with it, and that free entry of an important staple is offered to the island, would be of more weight if the desire of closer relations with Canada were not as strong as it is.

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The steps we have taken towards establishing a trade with Jamaica ought to be followed by as liberal an inducement to the sugar trade of that island as the United States has given. The subsidized steamship service we have now running, the interest we have awakened in our products at the Jamaica Exhibition, the opening up of a demand there for our goods are well enough, but they do not suffice in the face of better opportunities of trade offered by a rival nation. We ought to take the duty off the

raw sugar coming from Jamaica. If we do not there is danger that the Jamaicans will look more favorably upon the reciprocity clause of the McKinley Bill than they have done heretofore. If the Government cannot see its way clear to the removal of the duty off all raw sugar, let it discriminate in favor of Jamaican sugar. Otherwise it may be outbid for Jamaica trade.

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What the Government will do upon the sugar question is not yet manifest. Where to find a substitute for the loss of nearly \$3,000,000 to the revenue, which the freeing of sugar would entail, is a difficult problem to solve. It would be hard to distribute that amount as lightly over the same consuming area by adding to the duty on any other single article of consumption. Perhaps there is no commodity on which the duty is less felt than upon sugar. To obtain the equivalent of the revenue now yielded by sugar would involve the increase of the duty on at least two or three commodities, to make the change as little disturbing and as nearly imperceptible as possible. To put it all on tea and coffee would increase the cost of these goods about ten cents a pound, and that would be unpopular.

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Believers in the possibility of successfully and economically raising the sugar-beet in this country are opposed to the freeing of foreign raw sugar. They say that if we have a chance we can raise our own raw sugar, and that the removal of the duty on imported raw would be a wrong step, considered both from the point of view of revenue and protection. We may be able to produce our own raw sugar in due time, though we have left unimproved an excellent opportunity to do so under the ample protection we have enjoyed for years. It is to be hoped that we may make a success of sugar-beet culture, but the possibility that we may is not a sufficiently immediate argument against the removal of the duty now. It is said that when the Minister of Finance brings down his proposals upon the sugar question, Mr. Desjardins will advocate protection to a beet-sugar industry.