

# The Commercial

WINNIPEG, NOVEMBER 14, 1892.

## THE CONTEST IN THE REPUBLIC.

The result of the presidential election in the United States seems to be regarded as quite a surprise. The opinion seemed to prevail that the contest would be a very close one, and only the very enthusiastic among the Democrats could have hoped for such a glorious victory. McKinley appears to have been too much for the electors of the republic, who have heretofore borne with high tariff taxation with surprising patience. A year or two ago THE COMMERCIAL predicted that the great reciprocity policy of the Republican party, over which such a clamor was raised, was simply the last resort to hoodwink the people into a continued support of the high tariff system. This alleged reciprocity policy was a farce from the beginning. The leaders of high tariff saw that protection pure and simple was beginning to lose ground with the people. They could not hope to maintain office much longer on that platform and looking around for something new, this wonderful reciprocity policy was evolved and tacked to the tail of extreme protection. The nations were to be forced into giving the United States special trade privileges by means of tariff taxation. It was a bold and dangerous policy, but wrong in principle and foolish in practice. It was intended as a "boom" for the Republican party, but it has been a complete failure.

The Homestead strike has no doubt been a great thing for the Democrats. The result of the trouble has no doubt been to turn thousands of votes to the winning party. Great numbers of people who could not be moved by cool reasoning, would be readily susceptible to the sentimental influence thrown upon the situation by the Homestead trouble. It was a splendid accident for the Democrat, and happened at the time when it could be turned to the best account.

In Canada, public sentiment will be gratified at the success of the Democracy, though it is not quite certain that this country will have much to gain from the result. Still, the outlook for freer commercial relationship with the republic is now more hopeful. Sympathy for the downfall of the Republican administration could not be expected from Canada. The Republicans framed the McKinley bill, one of the principal features of which was the placing of a heavy tax upon every commodity of any importance imported from this country. The policy of the administration seemed to be to utterly destroy the export trade of this country to the republic. The downfall of an administration which sought to hamper this country in every way possible, short of open hostility, will not be received with displeasure in Canada.

President elect Cleveland's words upon the tariff and other important issues are those of a deep and outspoken thinker. There is an independent and statesmanlike ring about his remarks, which bring them into striking contrast with those of the wire-pulling, vote-trafficking politicians. We believe Mr. Cleveland

is more of a statesman and less of a politician than most of the other leaders in each party.

The result of the contest cannot but be interpreted as a great victory for free commerce. It is one which will resound throughout the world, and be felt in all civilized countries. The platform of the Democratic party upon the trade question was clear and outspoken. It was a straight fight against high tariff taxation, and a straight victory has been won. Let free traders all over the world take heart. "The day is the darkest just before dawn." The whole world almost has been bristling with hostile tariffs. Trade has been hampered and shackled in every direction, and there seemed to be no hope for relief in any direction. But a great victory in an heretofore apparently hopeless fight for reform has now been won. The day let us hope is now dawning, and as the light is increased, the shackles will one by one fall off, and commerce will assume the condition of freedom which nature marked out for it.

So far as the immediate future is concerned, in the matter of trade between Canada and the republic, there is good reason for hope that greater trade freedom between the two countries will soon come. If the victorious party is sincere in its published platform, it has already made a declaration which in a general sense favors more reasonable trade relationship with this country.

## Agriculture in Russia.

The condition and prospects of Russian agriculture constitute the subject of a recent interesting report by Mr. Law, commercial attaché to the British embassy at the Russian capital. The report considers the causes and results of the recent famine and the prospects for the immediate future. In summarizing this report the *Pall Mall Gazette* says: "That this is a large question may be gathered from the fact that the rural population of European Russia alone exceeds 80,000,000, and that it is spread over an area of about 90,000 square miles. Attention is specially directed to the black soil region, the natural granary of Russia, which formerly produced some 60 per cent. of the total yield of cereals, and which to day is suffering and poverty-stricken as the result of a series of bad harvests. 'It would seem,' Mr. Law says, 'that whatever may be the future development of industries other than agriculture, or of other provinces than those of the black soil, the general prosperity of the empire in the immediate future must depend on whether the condition of these black-soil provinces will continue to deteriorate, or whether there is a prospect of speedy recovery, and of a return to the days of satisfactory harvests.' There is a general consensus of opinion that the climate of the black-soil region has deteriorated, and this deterioration, taking the form of severe, prolonged and frequent drouths, with scorching hot winds and general severity of climatic condition, is chiefly due to the extensive destruction of forests."

"Forest planting and irrigation are the most evident remedies, and some attention has already been given to these both by some enlightened proprietors and in connection with the government relief works. Planting and irrigation are, however, very costly, and require time to produce effect, but there are immediate palliatives which should be within the command of every peasant. It is the lightly-tilled, unmanured soil which suffers first and most from drouth, and better tillage and manuring offer the palliatives which in bad seasons would save much. There is, however, small hope of immediate improvement. The communal system, custom and prejudices are serious obstacles in the way of the improvement

of peasant agriculture. Without improved implements and good horses and cattle better tillage is impossible, even where the desire to attempt it exists, and, unfortunately, the peasants as a rule have no money to buy better implements, no skill to make them, and the famine has carried off such numbers of horses and cattle that many will find it difficult to plow their fields, while the means of refertilizing them will be scarcer than ever. The outlook, therefore, cannot be said to be very encouraging. As to this year's harvest rye and other winter grain will as a whole be decidedly below average, while the spring sown grain crops which were at first favorably reported upon have been much damaged by locusts, drouth and hot winds."

## Money.

The *Montreal Trade Bulletin* of Nov. 4 says: "There is good enquiry for funds for commercial and speculative purposes just now and a large amount of money has recently gone into investment. Considerable funds have of late found their way into real estate; but a prominent real estate man stated a few days ago, that unless great caution was observed, the speculation in city and suburban property would be carried too far, the large profits that have been realized of late on different properties in the city having attracted the attention of people who are putting their money into real estate at present high values. Several large amounts have recently been placed at 5½ to 6 per cent on six months time. Call loans are very firm, one party, it is said, having paid 5½ per cent in order to secure a loan that had been called in. Discounts are steady at 6 to 7 per cent as to name, and altogether the money market has a firm tone all round."

## Heavy Grain Stocks.

Available stocks of wheat, both coasts, United States and Canada, on Saturday, Oct. 29, aggregated 87,330,035 bushels, 21,061,751 bushels more than on Nov. 1, 1891, 41,829,010 bushels more than two years ago, 31,021,230 bushels more than three years ago, and 30,884,023 bushels more than on November 1, 1889, as shown by the appended exhibit:

| Available wheat.       | Pacific coast. | Total U.S. & Canada. |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| November 1, 1892 ..... | 9,714,600      | 87,330,035           |
| November 1, 1891 ..... | 12,752,830     | 65,274,234           |
| November 1, 1890 ..... | 7,671,268      | 45,610,025           |
| November 1, 1889 ..... | 9,730,000      | 56,317,796           |
| November 1, 1888 ..... | 5,936,603      | 60,465,007           |

There is little room for doubt that there exists a larger amount of available wheat in the United States and Canada to-day than at any preceding period in our history.

Yet the increase of stocks of wheat available last month, amounting to 19,330,051 bushels, both coasts, was not the heaviest October increase recorded, as in that month of 1889 the gain in supplies amounted to 20,063,376 bushels.

For four months of the cereal year the increase of accumulated supplies of wheat out of farmers' hands, east of the Rocky mountains, amounted to 45,336,610 bushels to October 29 last, as contrasted with an increase of only 25,754,080 bushels in the like four months, July, August, September and October, 1891, as compared with a gain of 12,463,573 bushels in the corresponding months in 1889 and with 20,564,147 bushels in 1888. This showing has long been foreshadowed by our reports of available supplies made public each week. Combining stocks on both coasts, it is discovered that available stocks have accumulated in excess of home wants, planting and exports to the extent of 51,679,010 bushels since July 1 this year. The like gain last year was only 40,691,521 bushels; in 1889 it was 18,033,915 bushels, and in 1888 it was only 35,312,075 bushels, thus pointing to the past four months as having witnessed the most rapid marketing of wheat by producers within the first one-third of the new crop year on record.—*Bradstreet.*