

THE NORTHWESTERN MAIL.

"The mills of the gods grind slowly," says a well-known chestnut, and evidently the people along the Manitoba & Northwestern railway think there is more truth than poetry in this oft-repeated quotation. Weeks have run into months, and the months may perhaps go on make up years, before their cry for better mail facilities is heeded by the authorities at Ottawa.

One would suppose that in such an important service as that supplied by the post office department, no time would be lost in taking advantage of every occurrence to improve the service. Such evidently is not the case. No matter what the exigencies of the situation may be, a long routine of red tape must be gone through with before a matter can be brought before the notice of these slow-going postal officials. The department must be kept up with all due dignity, and it would be very undignified to at once take steps to remedy an existing evil, simply at the prayer of the plebeian masses.

In the case of the Northwestern railway mails, it is difficult to see why there should have been any delay whatever in adapting the mail service to the altered conditions. There is every reason why the change should have been made at once, and apparently no reason for the unreasonable delay which has occurred.

The mails for the country served by the Northwestern railway are taken from Winnipeg to Portage la Prairie by the Canadian Pacific, and there transferred to the Northwestern train. The returning mail is transferred in the same way at Portage to the Canadian Pacific for Winnipeg. Formerly the passenger train service of the Northwestern railway had its eastern terminus at Portage la Prairie, and close connection was made there with the Canadian Pacific to and from Winnipeg. Some months ago, however, the Northwestern railway secured a running arrangement over the Canadian Pacific, between Portage and Winnipeg, so that its trains now run right into the city. This arrangement broke the connection at the Portage with the express on the Canadian Pacific, and the Northwestern trains are not now run so as to make connection at Portage with the mail and express service on the former road. The result is that the Northwestern express leaves the city ahead of the mail train on the Canadian Pacific, and proceeds on to the end of the road. The Canadian Pacific train, carrying the Northwestern mail, leaves the city some time later. The Northwestern mail is dumped off at the Portage, but the express on the Northwestern road has already passed on, and the mail is left over for twenty-four hours at Portage. To remedy this state of things it would only be necessary to send the Northwestern mail direct from Winnipeg by the train running over this road, instead of sending it part of the way by a later train on the Canadian Pacific, and the balance of the way by the Northwestern train the following day. The change would have involved no extra work and would have caused no inconvenience to the local postal employees. The only thing necessary is that the department should order the change, and it would be accomplished. But the thing

still goes on in the old way, ridiculous as it is, while the people are obliged to submit to great inconveniences as a result of the unnecessary delay. A change, such as that made necessary by the running of the Northwestern trains into the city, should have been made within a very few days at least, and it shows supreme disregard for the public welfare, on the part of the Ottawa postal authorities, that this matter has been allowed to go on so long in this way.

UNITED STATES CATTLE.

A very strong effort is being made in the United States to improve the conditions under which cattle may be exported to Great Britain. This effort is directed mainly to impress the British public with the belief that there is no cause for alarm as to the existence of disease among cattle in the United States. The Washington authorities have decided to station three veterinary inspectors at the principal British ports, to examine cattle coming in from the States.

Unfortunately, just at the time that an extra effort was being put forth to prove the healthfulness of United States cattle, a cargo landed in Liverpool from New York, is found to be affected with pleuro-pneumonia. Under these circumstances and in the face of the actual existence of the dreaded disease among cattle imported from the United States, neither the newspapers nor the politicians of the latter country are likely to have much influence upon popular opinion in Great Britain.

The object of our neighbors to the south, of course, is to secure the removal of the restrictions placed upon cattle imported into Great Britain from their country. The fact that Canadian cattle are admitted into Great Britain free from the restrictions which have been placed upon importations from the United States, is a very sore point to the shippers of the latter country. That Canadian shippers should have an advantage not accorded themselves is very distasteful to them. Canada enjoys this exemption not as a favor shown here by Great Britain, but as an act of justice. Our cattle are free from the plague which devastates herds in the United States, and it is not only unnecessary, but it would be unjust to place restrictions upon cattle imports from this country, the same as upon cattle coming from countries affected with disease.

The advantages which we enjoy in this matter should stimulate our cattle men to even greater care in preventing the existence of disease among their herds, while shippers should use every precaution in making up their shipments. These individual efforts can be further seconded by the Government, in keeping up an efficient system of official inspection, and continuing strict quarantine on cattle brought into the country from the south.

GETTING EVEN WITH THE EAST.

Truth, published at New Westminster, B.C., endeavors to justify the imposition of a tax upon commercial travellers on the ground that it is an effort to get even with Eastern Canada on the tariff issue. *Truth* says:—

"On general terms, and as an abstract proposition, we agree that the tax complained of

is bad. If trade were free in this Canada of ours the thing would be wholly indefensible. But trade is not free, and the restrictions that exist in the general law are such that foster commercial and industrial trade of some kinds in the east while they are a hindrance to commerce here. This province is so highly taxed by the tariff that living is rendered dear, and prices of all commodities are immensely increased by it. If we are to have protection, as it is called, let us have it all round. The eastern merchant and manufacturer can carry on their operations much more cheaply than can those in the west, simply for the reason that the tariff compels us to purchase our supplies in a distant market and at much higher prices than would be the case if trade were free. This is to the advantage of the east and to the disadvantage of the west. Why, then, should things not be evened up a little by putting a local tax on the eastern man when he comes here to do business. The tax on commercial travellers is simply another form of so-called protection, and what is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander."

Evidently *Truth* believes that two blacks will make a white, or at least that the perpetuation of one wrong is excuse for imposing another. Would it not be better for British Columbia to make an honest effort to remedy the existing evil? The people of British Columbia have made very little effort to throw off the tariff burden, and if we mistake not, the whole body of representatives of that province in Parliament have supported protection.

While the commercial travellers' tax is an evil, it is a puny one in comparison with the greater injustices inflicted upon sections of the country through the working of our great National Policy. British Columbia, together with Manitoba and the rest of Western Canada, feels severely the burdens of protection, and it is not to be wondered at that an effort to strike back should be made.

The Tea Trade of India.

The London Colonies and India says that the past year was one of the greatest in importance that the Indian tea industry has ever seen. The efforts made to introduce Indian tea into other countries had been carried on on a larger scale in the past year than they had ever tried before. In United States and in Canada British-grown tea was the topic to which almost everywhere the trade was turning the most serious attention, and it was generally admitted that the future for Indian tea in those countries was assured. The statistics given in the report showed most extraordinary results. From January 1 to May 31 the figures were literally astounding, and they had almost entirely reversed the relative positions of the India and China tea that they held three years ago. The imports of Indian tea last year represented as nearly as possible £5,000,000. The imports during 1889-90 of Indian tea were 101,052,264 pounds, and of Ceylon tea 34,216,224 pounds, compared with 93,203,927 pounds of China tea. In 1884-85 the imports of China tea were 142,476,000 pounds, compared with 2,431,910 pounds of Ceylon and 61,472,112 pounds of Indian tea. The deliveries for home consumption of Indian tea had increased from 69,108,930 pounds in 1884-85 to 101,167,868 pounds in 1889-90, while Ceylon had increased from 2,046,560 pounds to 31,916,972 pounds, compared with a decrease, in the same period of China tea from 116,662,279 pounds to 55,335,572 pounds.