

absurd as to suppose it to be advantageous for a branch of trade to be in an unsound instead of a sound condition because articles may be temporarily "cheap." Looking back at the state of fire insurance in Canada previous to the formation of the association when some eight companies collapsed, we have little hesitation in saying that any company which would deliberately end an association which has already done so much would deserve to be stigmatized as culpably reckless, both privately and publicly; but as far as we can see no such misfortune need be anticipated.

CANADA'S WHEAT TRADE.

In our September (1888) issue we had an article upon "Russian Wheat," wherein we pointed out the danger Canada ran in competing for the English market, by the increased cost of production and the consequent necessity of demanding a higher figure than other countries for her wheat. That this warning was not untimely has been clearly illustrated in a recent speech, by Sir Charles Tupper in which he gave statistics proving that whereas the total imports of wheat into Great Britain in 1888 had increased nearly ten million cwt. over those of 1886, or about twenty per cent., the imports of Canada alone had fallen off almost two millions, or about 66 per cent., during the same period. To place the matter more plainly before our readers, we will give the exact figures and values, which are as follows:—

Total Imports.	Value.	Canadian Imports.	Value.
1886 47,404,344 cwt.	£17,888,155	3,080,964 cwt.	£1,182,728
1888 57,224,934 "	21,971,331 "	1,089,728 "	434,385 "

This exhibit everyone must acknowledge discloses a very serious state of things, and one which is not improved if we seek the reason thereof, for by taking the average relative prices of the wheat as given above, we find that whereas the price for the total imports shows only a trifling variation during the two years mentioned, being about 7s. 7d. and 7s. 8d. respectively, the average price of the Canadian wheat was 7s. 8d. in 1886, but had risen to 8s. 4d. in 1888. Thus we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that it is simply the advance in our price which has handicapped us in the great market for wheat, and that so long as the supply remains abundantly able to meet the demand, we cannot hope with our price at 8s. 4d. per cwt. to compete successfully with countries who can place the article on the market at 7s. 8d. It is all very well for Sir Charles Tupper, to urge the necessity of encouraging our trade with the mother country; but with the latter, commerce is simply business, with which sentiment has nothing to do. Great Britain will purchase her food and supplies from those who will sell them the cheapest, and she is quite willing to deal with Canada upon these terms; but, depend upon it, the day is very far distant when, upsetting her present fiscal policy, she will say to her people, "you must pay more for your wheat now, in order that I may assist Canada and help her farmers." If England has given up "protecting" her own farmers, how can we expect her to "protect" ours?

Now it is evident that from some cause or other the cost of producing wheat in Canada has become too heavy for us to compete with other countries where prices are low, and it will be well for us to face the situation squarely and endeavour to discover the remedy for the evil. Our views upon protective tariff have been enunciated more than

once in these columns, and while no unprejudiced mind will deny that protection in itself tends to raise the cost of living, yet it is only fair that "everyone should bear his own burdens," and that protection alone is not accountable for the unsatisfactory decline in Canada's wheat trade may be gathered from the fact that Germany and other countries under a protective tariff increased their wheat exports to Great Britain, during the years, the statistics of which we have given, and we cannot help thinking that the explanation of this to a great extent is that those other countries do not keep up and tax the people with nine governments for every four and a half millions of inhabitants. This is the heavy load with which Canada is weighted, and though the Hon. Mr. Foster in his able Budget speech is reported to have said in effect, that taxation and civilization go hand in hand, we do not suppose that he for a moment intended to convey the idea that the more heavily a people are taxed the more civilized they must be, because in that case Turkey and Egypt would be the most civilized of nations instead of two of the most barbarous. A certain amount of taxation is necessary to carry on the Government of any country efficiently; but when there are nine governments to be supported instead of one, you not only have to increase the "bona fide" taxation very materially, but when the population is so small that the legitimate business of each of these sub-Governments (if we may use the expression) takes up a mere trifling amount of time and labor, illegitimate employment creeps in, to meet which the people are improperly taxed or, to speak more to the point, politically robbed. This is the cancer which is sucking out the life-blood of Canada, for if a Railway Company is taxed it will probably increase its charge on the transit of grain; if a bank or a fire insurance company is taxed, each will put it on in its charge to the farmer for the advance or the insurance on the same grain, and if this meddling taxation is civilization we should be glad to have a description of barbarism. Until Canada rid herself by some means or other of this incubus of over-legislation and its necessary adjunct of over-taxation, she will always stand at a disadvantage in competing for a place in the world's markets.

AN INTERESTING QUERY.

A correspondent asks the following query:—"A party builds a house and takes out insurance thereon. A year or two afterwards he puts in bathroom and water connections. The policy as written reads "on the buildings" simply, making no mention of the water connections. What would be your opinion of the right of the insured to claim for loss on the bath and water fixtures in the event of a loss thereon by fire?

REPLY.

Although the term here used is simply "building," we take it to mean a "dwelling house," of which a bath room and water connections would naturally form a part. We also suppose, as this addition was not made until "a year or two afterwards," that the insurance originally taken on the property had been renewed in the meantime. Also, that such addition had been made within the knowledge if not with the consent of the company or its agent. Under this view of the case there can be no doubt as to the liability under the policy for any loss or damage by fire to the bathroom water connections. Such piping and fixtures, being of a permanent nature, become "fixtures" and not chattels, and are held as a part and portion of the building.