

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 31, 1892.

TARIFF WARFARE.

The *English Review of Reviews* has been discussing the tariff question from the standpoint of forcing trade by means of tariffs. It takes the view more than once expressed in THE COMMERCIAL, that tariff hostility is simply a system of warfare. Instead of forcing their trade upon other countries by arms, nations, particularly the United States, have undertaken to do this by a tariff system. It is necessary to meet force of arms with like weapons, and under particular circumstances, it may be necessary to meet hostile tariff with hostile tariff. The *Review of Reviews* takes the very sensible ground that war is not engaged in in a faint-hearted way. When nations engage in war, they do so with the utmost vigor, and strain every nerve to batter down the forces thrown against them. Therefore the *Review* deprecates Lord Salisbury's exceedingly moderate proposals regarding a light duty upon certain articles. If Britain is to undertake to combat hostile tariffs thrown up against her trade, she must do with vigor right from the start. She must strike with that same force which she would do, were she compelled to take up arms against any great power. That is common sense reasoning. There is no use in engaging in warfare unless it be with the intention of straining every energy to win. The most careful thought should be given to the matter, before entering into a tariff war, but once resolved upon, it must be carried out with vigor from the beginning. Following are the words of the *Review of Reviews* upon the question.

"There is no doubt much force in the argument that you cannot fight hostile tariffs unless you have weapons in the shape of import duties to put on or to take off, but is child's play to propose retaliation on principles of limited liability. War is not made, whether a war of tariffs or a war of campaigns, on limited liability principles. If Lord Salisbury really meant retaliation he would not limit his retort to the McKinley tariff to a trumpery duty on a few manufactures of luxury. He would, if he meant business, propose an import duty on United States corn (breadstuffs, etc.) and on United States cotton."

This reasoning is sound, regardless of the principle. There is no use in mincing matters in tariff warfare. THE COMMERCIAL has expressed the opinion long ago that Great Britain has power in her own hands to bring the United States to time in this matter of tariff hostility. No government could live in the United States which would refuse to come to a favorable trade arrangement with Great Britain for the free admittance of the products of United States farms in case Britain should place a tariff upon such products. We have the confirmation of this statement from various sources in the United States itself, as for instance witness the following from the Minneapolis *Northwestern Miller*, in commenting upon the article in the *Review of Reviews*. The Minneapolis journal says:

"Mr. Stead, editor of the *Review of Reviews*, strikes the keynote of the situation. If England were to tax imports of American wheat

and flour, she would at once have a club which would be adequate to batter down our McKinley-made wall. The farmer would rise and rebel against a high protective tariff, when he found the English gates shut against his wheat, and his howls and lamentations would bring any party to terms. The condition of the wheat-growing and flour-making interests of America, should England actually enforce such a measure, would be so deplorable that the mere thought of it is painful. The question resolves itself into this: Does England dare to impose such duties? Can she get along without our wheat and flour? Those who think she cannot should remember 1898. It is well not to push our advantages too far, nor to insist too strenuously on the enforcement of a policy calculated to drive buyers of our food products into a corner where stringent retaliatory measures are absolutely necessary to self protection. The United States, in its efforts to corral the world's business, has gone as far, and perhaps farther, than is safe for the continued prosperity of all her people."

SELLING WHEAT.

The great rash with which farmers in the United States have been harvesting their wheat, indicates clearly that the farmers have no knowledge whatever of commercial conditions, and are not guided to any extent in their actions by a knowledge of statistical or other conditions concerning wheat. Last fall a few agitators at the head of a farmers' organization in that country, succeeded in making a great many farmers believe that they would make money by holding their wheat. Wheat prices were then ruling at very fair figures, but the farmers were told by these alleged friends, that they would get \$1.50 for their wheat before spring, by holding. Many took this unfortunate advice, as is shown by the fact that a smaller proportion than usual of the crop was marketed in the fore part of the year. Later in the year they were obliged to sell at much lower prices than they could have obtained in the fall. This year, when prices are very low and commercial conditions never more favorable for an advance, the farmers are rushing in their wheat with unprecedented vigor. They seem to be acting as though the grain would become a total loss on their hands, if they did not get rid of it at once. Their foolish leaders of a year ago have deserted them, and having no knowledge of present commercial conditions of the wheat market, and remembering only their losses from holding last year, they are getting rid of the stuff as fast as possible.

The farmers are themselves to blame largely for the present depression in prices. They held a considerable portion of their last year's crop, and threw this in a mass on the market just previous to the advent of the new crop, thus forcing prices down at the beginning of the crop year. Since the commencement of the crop year, they have been doing their best to hold prices down, by rushing in their new wheat as fast as they can do it. While actual conditions are very favorable for higher prices, buyers across the Atlantic are restrained from advancing their views, on account of the large marketing of new wheat in America. With such vast quantities of new wheat being marketed on this continent, European buyers are apt to conclude that the crop is much larger than it is reported to be, and consequently they will be cautious. If farmers had market-

ed their wheat moderately in the early portion of this crop year, allowing a little time for the reduction of stocks of old wheat carried over, there is every reason to believe that prices would have appreciated considerably before this date.

GIVING PROPER CREDIT.

The custom followed by several papers of clipping articles from their exchanges, without giving proper credit, is not "gentlemanly" procedure. Some papers have the habit of merely marking clipped articles with the word "exchange," or "Ex," to signify that it is clipped from another paper. This is a poor excuse of a way of relieving a paper from the charge of piracy. It is an unmanly procedure in journalism, and in no way condones the offence of appropriating matter from other papers without proper credit. In every case where an article is taken from an exchange, journalistic etiquette demands that full credit should be given, and this should be nothing short of giving the name of the paper from which the article is taken. Readers of THE COMMERCIAL will sometimes find articles in this journal with the word "ex" or "exchange" printed at the bottom. These are articles which have come to us in a second hand way, and not knowing the name of the paper in which they first appeared, the "ex" simply is used to denote that the articles are not original. We would much prefer to give the name of the paper to which credit was due, if that were possible. Besides the principle that it is right to give proper credit from the standpoint of journalistic etiquette, it is also something which should be done in the interest of the reader, who has a right to know where the matter which he is given to read originated.

What a Visiting Miller Says.

An Ontario miller, who has spent some time in Manitoba recently, writes to the *Toronto Miller* as follows:—

"To a miller visiting Winnipeg perhaps the most disagreeable thing which he encounters is the constant complaint which the dealers there insist on loading on him with regard to the shortages in weights of cars sold to Ontario millers. That these complaints are without a shadow of foundation there can be no doubt, as has been proved over and over again, but there must be some reason for these complaints, and we will attempt to solve the mystery. It is well known that the local elevator man or buyer has to make heroic efforts each year to make his grain in the elevator come out even with his buying, and in consequence he has to weigh very closely, in fact, we are inclined to believe, sometimes too closely, and the result is that his principal bills the cars at the figures furnished by the buyer and when the inevitable shortage is reported he of course kicks. In a great many cases there is not the slightest ground for a "kick," as has been proved by actual results obtained from two of the most prominent firms doing business in Manitoba wheat in the city of Toronto—one showing a shortage of less than a hundred and fifty bushels on two hundred and fifty cars, the other reporting shortages on a dozen cars and an average of five out of nearly a thousand cars. If these gentlemen at Winnipeg have any serious grievance in this direction why do they not refer the matter to the Boards of Trade and let them take such action as will put an end to it instead of maligning all those engaged in the milling trade and making things excessively un-