

A PROTEST.

One of the most active and influential merchants on Broadway, New York, who has been selling to the retail dry goods trade for over thirty years, and who thus has not only watched but participated in the great changes which have come over business during this period, writes the *Economist* as follows:

"The late Presidential election has been the means of affording many object lessons to the right-thinking people of this country who are interested in the question, 'What is to become the future of this great Republic?' The great cry for years past has been 'Cheapen everything,' and it has gone to such an extreme as to seriously cheapen the people. A government like ours, in order to maintain itself, must find the ways and means of making its people not only independent but prosperous. One of the chief factors in making this country what it is has been its vast army of employers. Within the past few years there have sprung up numerous trusts, combines and consolidations which have decreased largely the number of employers, and increased the number of servants or wage earners. The department stores have probably done more in this line than anything else, consolidating under one roof many lines of trade and driving out of business the small store-keeper and compelling him to become a servant or employee. We are thus becoming a nation of servants instead of a nation of masters. The more masters we have, the greater number of employers, the more citizens we have who think for themselves, act for themselves, serve their country's best interests. The Government should regulate and control such combinations and prevent the combining under one roof of all lines of merchandising by law."

BEET-SUGAR INDUSTRY OF FRANCE.

The United States consul at Havre, in a recent report, describes the beet-sugar industry of France. The crop, he says, pays the farmer better than wheat or any other agricultural product, and hence a large acreage is under beets. In 1894 the area was 1,700,000 acres and the production nearly 18,500,000 tons, or nearly 11 tons to the acre. Fifty to 60 per cent. of all this is used for the production of sugar. The experience of French cultivators is stated to be that the cost of growing an acre of beets is £2, omitting the cost of fertilizers, which it is not always necessary to employ. It is said, too, that the leaves and stalks left on the field will furnish much more manure, after they have been fed to cattle, than the beet requires. The bounty paid on sugar exported from Germany has led to less activity in beet-sugar production in France in the last two years. Nevertheless, the total quantity exported in 1894-95 was 186,287 tons, of which 110,139 tons went to England.

The advantage of beet cultivation is that there is no waste; every part of the vegetable can be used in one way or another. The pulp, after the juice has been expressed for sugar, is largely eaten by cattle and is found to be very nourishing. The leaves and stalks, when fresh, increase a cow's milk; when dry they afford excellent winter food. "Altogether, the beet root, or the residue after the juice has been expressed, supplies, with the leaves and stalks, nourishment for cattle and sheep more abundant, perhaps, than any other forage that could have been cultivated on the land." It is said that the leaves are frequently used for adulterating tobacco. The French experience is that all land suitable for growing wheat will also grow beets; but it is necessary to avoid a soil too compact or containing too much clay. The report enters into some detail in the question of soils, position, manuring (when necessary), modes of cultivation, harvesting and preserving the crop, and a few words are added as to the manufacture of sugar. Something is said, also, as to experiments being made in France, under the authority of the Ministry of Commerce, for obtaining illuminating alcohol from the roots.

UNITED STATES RAILWAYS.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-six has been a year of disappointed expectations, and new railway enterprises were among the chief sufferers by the continuance of the financial depression. Early in the year, when the return

of prosperity seemed near at hand, railway projecting and railway building began to increase, and if enterprises which were undertaken had not been checked by the financial uncertainty attending the Presidential campaign, at least 2,500 miles of new track would probably have been added to the mileage of the country. As it was there were built only about 1,800 miles of road, and when we recall the conditions of distrust and fear that overshadowed the country for the greater part of the year, the wonder is that men could be found willing to advance in such times the \$25,000,000 or \$30,000,000 which the construction of even that mileage involved. In several cases work in progress was stopped by failure to obtain the funds which had been provided, and the completion of the unfinished lines will probably stand to the credit of the coming year. The number, location, and extent of the lines upon which track was actually laid during 1896 are summarized in the following table from the records of the *Railway Age*:

TRACK LAID FROM JANUARY 1ST TO DECEMBER 31ST, 1896.

States.	Lines.	Miles.
Alabama	6	37.
Arkansas	5	69.70
California	8	186.85
Colorado	4	26.43
Delaware	1	8.
Florida	7	79.
Georgia	14	97.50
Illinois	4	58.50
Indiana	3	17.30
Indiana Territory	2	65.72
Iowa	1	5.30
Kansas	1	1.43
Kentucky	3	15.
Louisiana	5	154.10
Louisiana	5	21.80
Maryland	1	27.
Michigan	11	145.91
Minnesota	5	58.36
Mississippi	3	57.50
Missouri	2	11.51
Montana	1	56.
New Jersey	4	10.57
New York	5	33.
North Carolina	5	40.50
North Dakota	1	28.30
Ohio	5	63.91
Oklahoma Territory	2	27.20
Oregon	3	12.50
Pennsylvania	15	90.42
South Carolina	1	10.50
Tennessee	3	28.
Texas	8	82.86
Utah	2	38.
Vermont	1	8.25
Virginia	2	9.
Washington	3	14.50
West Virginia	4	19.
Wisconsin	7	85.67
Totals in 38 States and Territories	163	1,802.39

SUMMARY BY TERRITORIAL GROUPS.

Groups.	No. States.	No. Lines.	Miles.
New England—Main, Vermont	2	6	30.05
Middle Atlantic—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland	5	26	169.29
Central Northern—Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin	5	..	371.29
South Atlantic—Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida	6	33	255.50
Gulf and Mississippi Valley—Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana	5	20	291.60
Southwestern—Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, Kansas, Colorado, Indian Territory, Oklahoma	7	24	234.85
Northwestern—Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana	4	8	147.96
Pacific—California, Oregon, Washington, Utah	4	16	251.85
Totals	38	163	1,802.39

It is a curious coincidence that the mileage of new track laid in 1896 is almost precisely the same as that in 1895, which our corrected returns showed to be 1,803 miles. It is possible

that a few miles may be added to the record of the past year, although our figures are based on statements by mail and wire direct from the chief engineers, and include, in cases where work was in progress, the mileage officially certified as expected to be added in the last few days of the year. It should be remembered that our figures show only main line track laid, and make no account of the work of grading and bridge-building for the very considerable mileage which did not reach the tracklaying stage.

How the new mileage of 1896 compares with that of the previous years of the decade, may be seen by the following figures from our records:

Year.	Miles.
1887	12,983
1888	7,106
1889	5,230
1890	5,670
1891	4,281
1892	4,192
1893	2,635
1894	1,949
1895	1,803
1896	1,802

—*Railway Age*.

UNITED STATES TRADE.

The statistics of United States trade for eleven months of 1896 have been made public, and those of December are closely estimated in a New York dispatch of Saturday. It appears that the year's international trade presents some gratifying features, and some of these may be read with interest by Canadian manufacturers and shippers who may find food for reflection. It appears that the exports and imports of the United States for the twelve months ending December 31st, 1896, were not far from \$1,625,000,000, that the exports were approximately \$932,616,439, and the imports \$687,066,716, showing an advantage in exports of more than \$245,000,000 in the year. This is a greater balance of trade than has been secured before since the year 1881, when the balance was near \$260,000,000, and is not far behind the greatest year—that of 1879—when the trade in the United States' favor was \$264,661,666.

The imports of free goods into the Republic for 1896 were valued at nearly \$315,000,000. Of exports of books, maps, engravings, and other printed matter, Great Britain was the largest customer (\$700,000), North British America next (\$500,000). Of cotton cloths there was sent to Canada something like \$2,000,000 worth. Of other cotton goods Canada was the best single customer, taking about \$1,200,000. Over \$3,000,000 worth of bicycles was exported during the year. Of this Great Britain and Ireland took \$1,200,000 worth, Canada \$515,000, and British Australia, \$350,000. In builders' hardware the United Kingdom took more than \$1,000,000, Australasia \$760,000, and British North America not far from \$500,000. Of sewing machines the United Kingdom took about \$810,000, and British Australasia received about \$200,000. Of other machinery there was sent about \$4,000,000 to the United Kingdom, \$4,000,000 to Europe outside of the United Kingdom, Germany and France, and \$1,500,000 to Africa. Exports of sole leather to the United Kingdom were about \$5,000,000 during the calendar year. Yet the United Kingdom also took about \$7,000,000 of other sorts of leather, and Canada and Newfoundland took about \$500,000 of finished leather.

Many countries wanted lumber. The United Kingdom took during the calendar year \$2,500,000; Germany, \$380,000; British North America, which has plenty of lumber of her own, took \$600,000; the West Indies more than \$600,000; Argentina, nearly \$1,000,000; Brazil about \$800,000; British Australasia, about \$500,000, and Africa, about \$550,000. But these exportations do not include those of shingles, shooks and spades, of which a large amount were sent to many countries; nor household furniture, of which there was exported more than \$3,000,000, and other manufactures of wood amounting in all to about \$32,000,000 when added to wood unmanufactured.

Mr. F. J. HUNTER, of the Bank of Montreal, Moncton, N.B., having been transferred to St. John's, Nfld., as manager there, the vacancy in Moncton is being temporarily filled by Mr. R. Clark, accountant of Halifax branch.