

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, APRIL 5, 1897.

FRUITS IN MANITOBA.

Prof. Saunders, director of the Dominion Experimental Farms, has issued a bulletin giving the experiences gained in trying to grow fruits in Manitoba and the Territories. He first refers to the native wild fruits of the country. The wild plum—*Prunus Americana*—is common in the Red and Assiniboine river valleys, and in other districts in Southern Manitoba. The bird or pin cherry is found all over the country. The choke cherry also grows over a wide area of country. The sand cherry has been found as far north as the Saskatchewan river. There are two kinds of wild black currants. There are also two kinds of smooth gooseberries. The June or saskatoon berry grows everywhere where there are bluffs or wooded districts. The buffalo berry is found in the river valleys and grows as far north as Peace river. Raspberries, strawberries and several varieties of blueberries are found over a wide range of country. High and low bush cranberries are found in various sections. The wild frost grape—*Vitis riparia*—is found only in the southern and eastern parts of Manitoba in the river valleys.

In cultivated fruits, success has not been attained with apples, pears, plums and cherries, but most of the small fruits have been cultivated with success. For the last eight years thousands of trees have been tested at the experimental farm, including all the hardy varieties of apples, crabs, etc., but without success. In the Red river valley, however, Prof. Saunders says that the Transcendent crab has ripened in several places, where cultivated in private gardens. The only variety which has succeeded at the experimental farms at Brandon and Indian Head is a small variety of Siberian crab—*Pyrus baccata*—and efforts are now being made to improve this crab by cross-fertilizing it with other hardy varieties. Efforts are also being made in a similar way to improve the native wild plums and the sand cherry. An attempt is also being made to improve the wild grape. Greater success is expected in the improvement of the native wild fruits, together with the Siberian crab referred to than has been attained in attempts to acclimatize imported varieties of large fruits.

SUPERANNUATION.

It is reported from Ottawa that the civil service act will be amended, and the superannuation regulations will be abolished. Regulations for the superannuation of persons who have grown old in the service, may be very good, when carefully administered, but in the hands of a political party there is likely to be a great deal of abuse in the administration of the rules. A scheme of compulsory insurance for members of the civil service would be a better plan than superannuation. Civil servants, as a rule

are well paid, and they should provide something themselves for the future, through a system of insurance. There also should be some permanent regulations to prevent the dismissal of civil servants, without cause, merely because a change of government has occurred. The dismissal of competent persons who had been appointed by a previous administration, should not be countenanced for a moment. Many of the dismissals which have taken place since the Liberal Government was formed, were made on the alleged ground of partizanship during the last elections. For this the unfortunates are more to be pitied than condemned. In many cases they were no doubt almost forced to do party work. If civil servants are to be dismissed for partizanship, they should be placed beyond the reach of being urged to work for the party during election contests.

THE UNITED STATES TARIFF

The newspaper press, daily and weekly, keeps pounding away at the absurd idea that the United States was actuated by hostility to Canada in bringing in the new tariff measure. Many of the papers are giving hot articles demanding retaliation. The following Ottawa telegram, which appeared in papers all over the country, is a sample of the nonsense that is talked on this question:

There seems to be quite a wave of indignation among the members, Liberal and Conservative, against the action of the United States congress in slapping Canada in the face, and the strong probability is that this indignation will find expression in legislation of a retaliatory nature.

The Toronto Globe, which ought to know better, indulges in the same kind of rubbish. The following is given by the Globe in its Ottawa correspondence:

"Members from every quarter of the Dominion say there is a very decided and deep-rooted feeling of exasperation among people in regard to the attitude of the government party in the United States. The hint sent out a few days ago, of the possibility of a tariff bill that would reduce materially the duty on goods imported mainly from Great Britain and maintain the present scale of duties on goods mainly from the United States, and also retain the reciprocity clause, permitting a reduction in various schedules in the event of the United States tariff on Canadian goods being lowered,—has been received with a shout of approval from all quarters. It would seem as if the ministers may have to restrain the order of members in the expression of anti United States sentiment.

Now, all this is very absurd and very silly. It is childish to talk about "slapping Canada in the face." A strong protectionist government is now in power at Washington, and it is the most natural thing in the world that a new high tariff bill should have been introduced by the new congress. The party was pledged to do this, it is also quite natural that the new tariff should hit Canada hard. It would have been impossible for United States politicians to frame a high tariff measure without hitting Canada hard. Some of the Liberal politicians in Canada have been so favorable to free trade or reciprocity with the United States, that they no doubt feel sore over the situation. We will all regret that the prospects are not favorable to greater freedom of trade between

the two countries, but we have no right to denounce the United States in this matter, and we have no reason to believe that their new tariff was made purposely hard against Canada. The new United States tariff bill is simply an outcome of the general trade policy of that country.

Talk of retaliation is ridiculous. We are free to change our tariff to suit ourselves, and the United States will have no right to find fault with us for anything we may do in the matter of duties. That will be our business, the same as the new tariff bill before congress is the business of the United States and not ours.

The people of the West will be glad to learn that the tariff upon imports from Great Britain will be reduced, but it will be foolish to have it appear that this is done in any spirit of retaliation against the United States. Great Britain offers us a free market, and is ready to take and does take vast quantities of our products. The United States exports the same commodities which we have to export, and is our competitor in British markets. We will seek to increase our trade with Great Britain because we there have our best market, and by reducing the duties upon imports from Great Britain, we will assist in extending our export trade in the same direction. It is not a matter of retaliation, but of our own trade policy.

We also wish to extend our trade with the United States, but if an exclusive trade policy is, for the present, in favor in that country, we have no reason to screech about retaliation. Of course the new United States tariff will no doubt compel us to revise our tariff in some particulars on imports from that country, but this should be done only where it is necessary to protect our own interests, and not in any spirit of retaliation.

If the people were to believe what they read in some of the papers, they would be carried away with the entirely false impression that the proposed new United States tariff was designed solely to coerce and cripple Canada. Some of the papers are indulging in silly cartoons, representing Uncle Sam pointing his big guns at Canada, etc. It is to be hoped that common sense will soon prevail in this matter, and that we will hear less about retaliation and more about our own interests in discussing the tariff question.

The Crow's Nest Pass.

Much public interest centres in this pass through the Rocky Mountains, a railway through which is so urgently demanded by reason of its importance to the rich mineral districts of the Kootenays, in British Columbia. The Toronto Globe recently contained a number of illustrations of the Pass, Crow's Nest Mountain, Elk River Canyon, etc. These are reproduced from photographs taken by Dr. G. M. Dawson, as far back as 1883. They give a vivid idea of the towering mountains, precipitous descents and shaggy river gorges which abound in the region pierced by the pass.

It must not be supposed, however, says the Globe, that the roadway to the Kootenay country presents any insurmountable features. Perhaps the most formidable place of all is the deep canyon through which