

Secondly, *better markets*.—The farmer requires a small amount of the produce of his farm for his own use; but all that he has over and above this amount is no benefit to him, unless there is a demand for it. Even a very limited demand for his surplus produce makes it of some use to him; but there must be a sufficient demand at a price which will cover the cost of production and pay a fair rate of interest on the capital invested, or continuance in the business will soon lead to bankruptcy. Hence Canadian farmers have imposed upon themselves heavy taxes for the building of railroads, in order to reach or create markets for their produce; but, after all, the demand for farm produce in the Dominion is limited and the prices are exceptionally low.

Now, in view of these facts, nothing can be clearer than that the farmers have reason on their side when they demand that no restriction on trade, which this Dominion has power to remove, shall be allowed to interfere with the price of grain, fruit, live stock, or dairy products in this country.

Not having studied the pros and cons of Commercial Union, we have nothing to say on that question, but simply lay it down as fundamental, that we should seek the best trade relations which we can possibly get, whether it be by negotiation with England, the United States, or any other country.

Ontario farmers, at least, seem to understand the situation and are waking up to the necessity of united action in a matter of so much importance. Let them get a clear understanding of what their interests under this head really are: then unitedly indicate their wish, and it must be granted. If, however, they allow interested men of any class to divide their ranks and play them off one against another, they will undoubtedly fail and bring upon themselves the well-deserved contempt of every other class.

Thirdly, *a reduction in the cost of living*.—This can be secured in two ways: by the practice of greater economy, and by cheapening the means of subsistence. As regards the former, I may say that I am not one of those who think that Canadian farmers are extravagant live-ers. As a rule they are extremely economical. For the most part, their houses are very plain and scantily furnished; they spend but little under the head of pleasure or recreation; they wear cheap clothing; and too often they sell the best and use the worst of their own produce. I think, therefore, that there is not much room for the practice of greater economy. There is no doubt, however, that a real reduction in the cost of living would be made by reducing the price of tea, sugar, boots, shoes, clothing, iron and other articles of daily consumption in the homes of rich and poor alike; but how to accomplish this object is a difficult question. Many interests are involved, and good men hold very different views as to what is best. Some would allow foreigners to trade freely in our markets, even while they exclude us from theirs; some want a revenue tariff; and others believe in high protective duties. The diversity of opinion is bewildering, and plain men are perplexed; nevertheless it is the duty of farmers, as representing the most important industry in the country, to consider the question in all its bearings and, having done so, to insist on such tariff laws and regulations as seem most likely to benefit the country as a whole.

COLLEGES IN HARD TIMES.

A large proportion of the college students in this Province come from the farm, and any serious reduction in the income of farmers is felt more or less in all our colleges, but especially in such an institution as the Ontario Agricultural College. Hard times affect the attendance at an arts college to some extent, but not nearly so much as at an agricultural college. This may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, and the reason is this: When a farmer sends his son to an arts college, or a medical school, he generally expects him to get an education which, without anything else, will enable him to make his way in life. Hence he will struggle hard to get what is necessary to put that son through college. But with the son that is to remain on the farm it is quite different. The father may be willing and even anxious to give him a good and thoroughly practical education; but no matter what the education may be, it will not take the place of a farm. If the boy is going to make his living by farming, he must have land in addition to his education; and the father, being unable to provide both, decides to keep the boy at home and do what he can to get him some land. Thus the attendance at an agricultural college is directly and materially affected by hard times amongst farmers.

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