

THE CANADA CITIZEN

AND TEMPERANCE HERALD.

Freedom for the Right means Suppression of the Wrong.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, MAY 30th, 1884.

THE BARLEY QUESTION.

MR. W. H. HOWLAND ON THE EFFECT OF THE SCOTT ACT
ON THE VALUE OF BARLEY.

A circular has recently been issued, and is being widely circulated, representing that the passage of the Scott Act would be a calamity to Canadian farmers, inasmuch as its operations would depreciate the value of the barley crop. Anxious to ascertain the facts in regard to this matter, a representative of THE CANADA CITIZEN interviewed Mr. W. H. Howland, one of our best known and most extensive grain dealers. The following is a report of the interview:—

Q.—I would call your attention, Mr. Howland, to an anonymous circular used by the opponents of the Scott Act, headed, "The Scott Act, Reasons why our farmers should vote against it," and ask you how you would answer the different statements which are made therein in regard to the barley question. Have you seen the circular?

A.—I have seen the document referred to. I have no objection to answering, and the first remark I would make about it, is that it has been written by someone who is absolutely ignorant of the facts of the case, or, who has a very poor opinion of the intelligence and knowledge possessed by the farmers to whom it is addressed.

Q.—You take objection then to the statement that farmers would sustain serious loss from the adoption of the Scott Act?

A.—I do. The writer of the circular who, very wisely, is anonymous, asserts that if the Scott Act is carried throughout Canada the loss to farmers, owing to the reduced prices of barley of fine color, will be at least \$800,000 a year.

Q.—On what ground does the writer claim that this loss would occur?

A.—The answer to that I have not yet been able to discover, though I have read the circular very closely. The writer admits that the value of barley of high color arises from the American demand, he also admits that out of 13,000,000 bushels of barley more than 9,000,000 bushels are exported to the United States. This would only leave 4,000,000 bushels of barley, on which there could be any loss whatever, as the balance exported to the United States would not bring a less price, on account of our having prohibition in Canada, and if prohibition were gained in the United States the price for light barley would be no higher than for dark.

Q.—Then where is the light colored barley principally consumed?

A.—The best grade, No. 1 barley, is nearly all exported to the United States. The proportion consumed here by our own brewers and maltsters of this grade is very small.

Q.—I notice the statement in the circular in question, that at least 8,000,000 bushels of the annual yield of 13,000,000 bushels is of high color, and the writer afterwards estimates the difference in value between this and the balance to be 10 cts. per bushel.

A.—The proportion of light colored barley varies very much. For instance, this year, according to the returns from the inspector of barley in Toronto, which afford a fair average for the whole Province for the eleven weeks of the largest deliveries during the fall, the proportion of the different grades was as follows:—Number 1,—53,520 centals; Number 2,—129,340 centals; Extra 3 and number 3,—160,200 centals. Now, of course, in more favorable years the difference is greater, but it is an extraordinarily favorable year when one half of the whole proportion is No. 1. This last year you will see that very little over one-seventh of the whole amount inspected in the City of Toronto was No. 1 barley, bringing the increased price. In '83 the proportion was only one-tenth. In such a year as this it will be readily seen that the difference would be a very small matter. However, let us keep in mind the fact that the difference in value between the No. 1, and the lower grades is entirely due to the American demand, which, as I said before, will not be cut off by Canada's adopting the Scott Act.

Q.—Then, the statement as to the loss to farmers, on light colored barley, from Canada adopting the Scott Act is entirely without any ground of truth?

A.—There is no ground for assuming that there would be any loss to the Canadian farmer on light colored barley by the adoption of the Scott Act.

Q.—I notice a very ponderous quantity of malt in pounds, 85,516,222 pounds. Is malt usually sold by the pound, that this should be so defined?

A.—No, malt is sold by the bushel, the quantity is about two million and a half bushels. The malting industry, if you may call it such, has been nearly destroyed by the action of the American Government in altering the duty in favor of American maltsters, and it is now quite unprofitable to export malt to the United States. The malt trade in this country is limited to the supply of our own breweries and distillers, and this is comparatively insignificant.

Q.—Suppose the Scott Act was in force over Ontario, would