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No. 960

EDITORIAL.

This canned-egg business is getting rather stale.

The unventilated passenger coach, with its stuffy, germ-laden, superheated air, must be a prolific means of spreading colds and similar affections. "I never travel on the train in winter," remarked an acquaintance lately, "without getting a cold."

A few broad rays of daylight were cast into the inner recesses of the Canadian National Exhibition management by speakers at the Clydesdale meeting in Toronto. There are some persons, however, who would like to see the door opened wider, and the whole chamber flooded with sunshine.

"The Farmer," an agricultural journal published in St. Paul, Minn., enters a vigorous protest against the proposed reciprocity arrangement on the ground that the interests of the American farmers are to be sacrificed by the free admission of Canadian farm products for the benefit of American cities and manufacturing interests.

"Intensive farming" does not necessarily imply working small farms. In these days of fast-working machinery, requiring ample horse-power, there are distinct advantages in medium-sized, as compared with small farms. Intensive farming simply means making more out of the land we have, whether much or little. Fairly large farms may be worked intensively.

Sir Donald Mann foresees that the increased prosperity resulting from reciprocity would mean more business for all our roads, east-and-west, as well as north-and-south. But even were it not so, it were still better to sell our produce in the most profitable markets, even though we had to subsidize our railroads yet further to enable the Old Country investors to earn dividends on their investment.

One of the first fruits of effort to improve farm methods or social conditions in a backward community is generally hope. This is often succeeded by a wholesome discontent which leads many persons not liberally endowed with balance and perseverance to try to satisfy ambition by a change of circumstances. The discontent of this second stage disheartens many earnest reformers. But it need not. Press on. Do not refrain from missionary effort, but multiply the effort tenfold. The solution lies ahead.

It is some time since we have heard of anything which promised greater impetus to Ontario agriculture than the operations of the American syndicates which are buying up some of the best farms in Kent and Essex, improving those which need improvement, and selling them to farmers in the United States. Few movements stimulate the progress of a community like immigration of a desirable character. Occasional transplanting is good for people. Some of the best farmers in the States are Canadian-bred, and some of the leaders in Canadian agriculture have come to us from across the line. Our great co-operative dairy industry was introduced by an American, Harvey Farrington. Another infusion of enterprising American migrants is just what is needed to make Eastern Canada a still better agricultural community than it is.

A bill to prevent "tipping" or gratuities, under severe penalties of fine or imprisonment, or both, has been introduced in the Dominion Parliament. The difficulty will be to enforce such a law.

Some of the greatest failures in business are men who die rich. There are those who accumulate money by niggardly self-denial and slavish toil; others do it by gouging the parties they deal with through all sorts of sharp practice. The really successful man is the one who makes (and judiciously spends) money by creative enterprise; i. e., by devising better or more economical ways of doing things than others have thought of, and then sharing the margin thus made with the employees who help to make it.

The management of the Ontario Winter Fair are up against a hard proposition, trying to house some horses inside and some outside the fair building. They have done their best, however, to arrange matters so as to entail a minimum of hardship. With every desire to promote the welfare of the small exhibitor, it is, nevertheless, apparent that the man with one horse is less discommoded by outside stabling than the man with a dozen. It is also right that, other things being equal, preference should be given to breeding stock.

One very excellent feature of the Taft-Knox-Fielding-Patterson reciprocity proposition is that it reduces the number of different rates in force. Besides the very large list of articles placed on the free list, it names uniform reciprocal duties for several considerable lists of items. The old idea of having a hundred and one varying percentages for as many different articles is needlessly troublesome, and renders it difficult to explain the tariff situation briefly and clearly. We heartily welcome the change, and trust it will be carried out further in future tariff laws. Taxation by tariff should be as simple as possible.

If through some foreign commercial agency a market had been opened by which Canadian manufacturers had found an immense new outlet abroad, would not every newspaper and every loyal citizen have rejoiced? Would anybody have been so foolish as to lament the gain for fear it might raise prices a shade in the home market? But when an agreement is proposed by which a greatly widened market is found for the products of our foundation industry, some newspapers would turn it down for fear it might enhance prices to the home consumer. How can the Canadian citizen be more greatly benefited than by a condition of prosperity resulting from a flourishing state of Canadian agriculture?

Canadian opponents of reciprocity have been torn by alternate spasms of fear, now that it would flood our home markets and swamp our producers, and again that it would hurt the Canadian consumer by making food supplies scarce and dear in the Canadian market. As a matter of fact, it would have no such acute effect in either direction. It would give the Canadian farmer a wider and better market than he already has, and, while possibly enhancing prices slightly in some cases to the Canadian consumer, by reason of competition from American buyers, it would operate to reduce seasonal fluctuations in price, and would certainly cut out many extravagant freight and express hauls.

Mutual Advantage in Reciprocal Trade.

Without a strong mental grasp of fundamental tariff principles, any attempt to measure the advantage of reciprocity must be like a search for harmony in Bedlam. The first principle of free trade is that each individual, each community and each nation can, by reason of natural and other conditions, produce certain articles more advantageously than they can produce certain other commodities. The second principle is that, just as it pays the farmer to haul wheat and butter to town, selling these, and buying tea, clothing and shoes, so it is likewise more profitable for a district or a nation to concentrate its energies mainly upon the industries wherein it excels, producing a surplus of these for export, and using the proceeds to purchase articles which can be raised or made abroad, and laid down at its door more cheaply than it could produce them at home. As regards this second point, there are exceptions to be made sometimes, for special reasons, such as the desirability of conserving exhaustible resources, but, in the main, the principle is essentially sound. The nation is but a group of individuals, and the relationship of the farmer to the merchant illustrates the relationship of one country to another.

Just here we hasten to clear up a current misimpression. Because a certain country produces a surplus of grain or fruit or machinery for export, it by no means follows that some section or sections of that country could not advantageously import those same commodities from a contiguous portion of a neighboring country, thus saving wasteful cost of transportation.

Recognizing, then, as a general principle, the mutual beneficence of unfettered trade between nations, we perceive that complete reciprocity between any two countries on a given commodity might, and in all probability would, be an advantage to the people of both. All the inhabitants of a country are consumers of products, and the whole population stands to benefit by such a broad measure of free trade as will enable each consumer to supply his wants most cheaply, and insure the employment of labor in those industries where it can produce the largest net result.

Still, there are some producers whose eyes are so riveted upon the particular market they are at present supplying that they miss the larger view, and fail to realize that the total or partial loss of this their present market would be more than compensated by the opening of a market near at home. Mr. Morden made a strong point when he reminded the Stamford fruit-growers that reciprocity would open to them a market of 40,000,000 Americans living within a few hours' railway journey of Niagara Falls.

Take horses. At the Ontario Horse-breeders' meeting in Toronto, apprehension was voiced lest the wiping out of duties should endanger the Northwest market for horses. And so, notwithstanding that President Smith pointed out the probable development of a very attractive market for Canadian horses in the Eastern States, there were some few men present who would have voted to sacrifice this for the sake of preserving the market in the Canadian West. That is, they would rather ship a horse to the West, at a cost of 13 to 20 dollars, of which about nine-tenths represents sheer waste, while part of the other tenth goes to pile up a ten-per-cent. dividend on railway stock, than to take their chance in a lucrative and growing market beside them in the Eastern States, allowing the Westerner to buy his horses where he could get them cheapest. A