

## The Week.

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THE remarks of Mr. George Baden-Powell on the Commercial Union movement cannot be pleasant reading for the Unionists, and it is not surprising that *The Mail*, after introducing Mr. Baden-Powell to its readers as "one of the best informed members on colonial matters," took occasion the following day to explain that "it stands to reason that a gentleman, even of his discernment, could not in the brief period of five weeks [the duration of Mr. Baden-Powell's visit to America] grasp the commercial situation and give a faultless opinion on it." But a man may have political instinct, and know something of political economy and the tendency of a well-defined movement of trade, without passing even five weeks in America; and, perhaps, during his brief sojourn here Mr. Baden-Powell used his powers of observation to better purpose than some among us who have never been five weeks out of the country. When, for instance, he says to *The Mail*:—"Nearly all along the border you have districts on either side of very similar natural resources. These border districts are not natural allies in commerce and industry, but natural rivals. They are endeavouring not to supply the wants of each other, but to compete one with another in other markets,"—he states a plain truth which, it appears to us, throws a very wet blanket indeed over Commercial Union. If we are not very like our neighbours on the other side of the border, producing and dealing in similar natural products, and competing with them in the same markets, what forces are at work drawing the two peoples together that will not equally well prevent that disintegration of the Confederation the Commercial Unionists warn us of? And if we are similar to them, commercially at any rate, are we not natural rivals rather than allies, and do both of two rivals usually find it profitable to make a common purse, as proposed under Commercial Union?

No one will be disposed to question the main theme of Mr. Wiman's essay on "Unrestricted Reciprocity," published in the *Mail and Globe*, and delivered at Dufferin Lake on Friday. Canada is unquestionably a country very rich in natural resources; and the Americans are very desirous to exploit it. But Mr. Wiman will have to talk much more to the purpose than in these picnic discourses before he will convince the Canadian people that the Americans do not expect to get very much the better of the bargain he and his friends are now pressing on the attention of the Canadian farmer. The offer is most tempting, and it is possible that the promise is not wholly without foundation; but, we repeat, the benefits attaching to Unrestricted Reciprocity may be purchased at too dear a rate. Indeed, the rate offered by these gentlemen appears to us to be a ruinous one; and, rather than purchase Commercial Union at such a price, the Confederation would do better to struggle on, if in comparative poverty, for another twenty years. This Canada, with all its vast possibilities, is now ours at all events, a possession that any young nation may be proud of; and if we sold it for the mess of pottage offered by our trading friends, what might our children say of us twenty years hence, when, their birthright sold, and the budding promise of Canadian nationality untimely cut off, Young Canada finds itself, instead of a vigorous, independent nation, placed on a level of mediocrity with some forty other States?

It is in questionable taste that Mr. Wiman comes here on our national holiday to tell us that, *though* we have been constant in our allegiance to the British Crown, we have enjoyed a freedom just as complete as the people of the United States. It must be most gratifying to the Canadians and British advocates of Commercial Union to learn that adherence to the British Crown is an influence usually adverse to the enjoyment of freedom; but perhaps the word "freedom" means something different in Mr. Wiman's adopted country from what it does here. We, at any rate, have for long been under the conviction that the connexion of Canada with the British system, rather than the American, has preserved a degree of true freedom intact here that has been nearly lost beneath the feet of the foreign mobocracy and the native plutocracy in the States.

To prove that unrestricted commercial intercourse would place success in Canada beyond a question, Mr. Wiman tells us that "the absence of

Custom-houses along the borders of the various States of the Union, as against each other, had done more to make the United States a great and prosperous nation than had a Republican form of government;" which profound observation, it strikes us, would show that to make a prosperous Dominion out of the Provinces of Canada, we have only to avoid erecting customs barriers between the several Provinces. That is the very course we are pursuing; and we have adopted, too, a feature of the United States system which Mr. Wiman omitted to mention. To foster the growth of a Canadian nationality, we have adopted a National Policy, which shall bar out Americans just as the United States bar out by their National Policy Canadians as well as Europeans.

MR. WIMAN asks why the French-Canadians who emigrate to the New England manufacturing towns, cannot be employed in Canada itself, the product of their industry, instead of themselves, being exported? This is a question the French-Canadians themselves are more competent to answer than the farmers of Dufferin; but apparently they don't see a cure for the evil in Commercial Union, which they manifestly regard with the utmost suspicion. Do they see in it a method designed to get rid of the cheap French-Canadian labour that troubles the native American workman in the New England States? Is it possible that they suspect this to be the *motif* of Commercial Union; an end to attain which Mr. Wiman and his friends are prepared even to see Montreal become, fifty years hence, "the greatest centre of manufacturing activity in the world?"

MR. WIMAN is quite correct in perceiving in the extreme smallness of the home market the chief difficulty the Canadian manufacturer has to encounter. But this home market is better than none at all; and while the Canadian manufacturer can retain it, with British connexion, there is always open to him a world-wide foreign market, a prospect that, with every other, save one, would be inexorably shut to him were he to sell out to his American cousins in the fashion proposed by Mr. Wiman.

THE prospect that Mr. Wiman holds before the amazed eyes of Canada in compensation for the ending of her industrial career, which he seemingly at this point takes for granted, is the inestimable privilege of supplying a nation of plutocrats—who, he intimates, are too dishonest and too little careless of their duty toward the wretched poor around them to count the cost of living,—with spring chickens, and lamb and green pease with mint sauce! All our manifold industries are to resolve themselves into this: our artisans, traders, manufacturers, merchants are all to turn farmers. "If Canada," we are told, "went into the chicken business, and did nothing else but produce 'broilers,' turkeys, and ducks, and if every farm in Canada was covered with this class of food"—why, Canadians would be as big fools as Mr. Wiman evidently takes them for when he buttresses such reasoning with such childish talk as the following:—"There is not a household in the middle States but once or twice in the week desires to have some lamb. This delicacy and green pease, with mint sauce, is, as you all know, one of the greatest delicacies known, and there is no earthly reason why thousands upon thousands of lambs should not be produced and exported from Canada to the United States." How mouth-watering! and one would suppose the farmers in the States never raise such a thing as a lamb.

BUT Mr. Wiman's audience must have been truly shocked at his observations on the possible profit of barley-growing under Commercial Union. Did he not know that he was in a Scott Act county, where farmers do not grow barley to supply brewers with the material of their wicked traffic; and that when he was dilating so eloquently on the wonderful demand for beer in the States, and speculating on the probable yearly increase in the demand, he was setting every Prohibitionist in his audience and in the country dead against Commercial Union? Prohibitionists must now, in conscience, vote against this wicked design. Perish Commercial Union, if it is to entice the Canadian Prohibitionist from his idol, and cause an increase in the flow of beer!

IT were a mere shadow-hunt to follow Mr. Wiman and the other speakers in their further performances at Drayton and Port Hope. The pervading tone throughout was, we regret to say, one of mere fustian. One and all assumed a state of things in Canada generally that does not exist. (A private correspondent at Galt, writing to us at about the time last week that this attempt to snare the farmers' vote was going on, says: "I am sure that many of the advocates [of Commercial Union] can have little idea of the condition of the farmers in this part of the country, settled by Scotchmen from Dumfries a century ago almost. . . . The whole country is the most wonderful example of prosperity and high cultivation."