

# The Farmer's Advocate

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### EDITORIAL.

#### Mr. Gray and the Embargo.

We give space in this issue to a letter from Mr. Patrick L. Gray, Secretary of the Edinburgh (Scotland) Branch of the National Canadian Cattle Admission Association, in which he takes objection to an article on the subject of the British embargo on imported cattle, published not long since in the "Farmer's Advocate."

Mr. Gray's letter seems to be divided into two sections: First, special pleading for the British feeder; and, second, assertions not in accordance with facts to try to prove his case and establish the position that Canadians would be advantaged by allowing the British feeder to do the finishing of beef cattle for them. At the outset let us assure Mr. Gray that we are not "opposing" embargo removal, because we believe the fewer restrictions imposed by either Great Britain or the United States upon live stock and its products from Canada the better for the Canadian farmer.

We need not quibble over the constitutionality of the embargo legislation—it has been the law of the Old Land since 1896, and will require an Act of Parliament to replace—that will be work for Mr. Campbell-Bannerman when he succeeds to power. There is certainly no excuse for continuing the embargo on the score that Canadian cattle are diseased, but we are not so sure that the British Government will take the ground that there is no risk of animal disease from abroad with open ports. That is their lookout.

If we except the great Province of Ontario, Mr. Gray is right in saying that Canada is not a maize (corn) growing country; but our corn area is extending, and we lie right alongside the world's greatest corn-producing area, upon which for feed we freely draw, and, moreover, there is practically no limit to our capacity to grow barley, oats, peas, flax, roots, and other high-class cattle foods. Mr. Gray need not worry about our running short of cattle feed.

When Mr. Gray asserts that Canada has only a comparatively small proportion of tillage land for growing cattle-food stuffs, he is either ignorant, or is misrepresenting this great "Dominion beyond the sea," where just such land can be measured by millions of square miles. Had Mr. Gray enjoyed the privilege of reading the "Farmer's Advocate" more attentively he would have known better, and also that Western grazing country is being rapidly cut down by the inrush of farmers who are introducing a different system of farming and cattle-feeding, by which it is quite possible to finish cattle on grains; and not only that, but the cultivated land can produce many more than the prairie would. If Mr. Gray was as well posted as he ought to be, he would realize that the system of agriculture on the "boundless prairie" is rapidly changing from ranching to grain-growing and mixed farming, and in the Province of Manitoba the fact is being borne home upon farmers that they must feed cattle if the fertility of the soil is to be maintained. Mr. Gray will have to argue for a long time to convince the thinking farmer of Canada that he will improve his soil by sending his stockers to Great Britain to be finished, and sell the feeding stuffs for that purpose.

The British feeder who wants to get cheap store cattle, as Mr. Gray himself confesses, is simply another middleman between the British consumer and the Canadian producer, scooping in profits that the latter ought to have.

Mr. Gray is correct about the condition in

which many of the range cattle reach British ports, largely by reason of the 2,000-mile rail haul before going on shipboard. Our editors have personally examined the cattle on arrival at the British ports, and this has been frequently referred to in the "Farmer's Advocate" as an argument for the establishment of a chilled-meat industry in the West, but at the same time, stalled Canadianians reach Britain fully equal to the best Americans. If our Canadian Cattle-admission friends were as anxious for the Canadian cattle-raiser, they would be advising him to finish more well-bred cattle at home, and would be arranging companies to start the chilled-meat industry in Canada, thus effecting a big saving in the freight on offal and providing for additional new Canadian industries. Everybody sympathizes with the gentlemen who locked up their capital in Old Country feeding pens and lairages—unremunerative under the present system. Gentlemen on this side of the Atlantic interested in the cattle-carrying trade naturally want to see more cattle moving, no matter whether fat or lean, and our statesmen sometimes indulge in political rhetoric.

If the British Government see fit to remove the embargo, that's their business; but if done for Canada alone, to be any good, it would necessarily be followed by the reimposition of a rigid quarantine against the United States along our entire 3,000 mile International Boundary Line, entailing enormous expense, and doubtless resulting in a similar U. S. wall against Canada. Our quarantine would at once check the incoming rush of American farm settlers with their stock into Canada. Are we prepared to do that? Hardly! Another thing, an embargo removal for Canada only would stop our export shipment to Britain by such ports as Portland and Boston. Restricted competition in cattle carriage might suit Montreal, but it would be hard for the Canadian cattle man. Were British ports opened to all-comers, with no preferential treatment for Canada, then there would be a rush of stockers from all quarters, which, with the ever-present risks of disease appearing, would make the outlook precarious, though we might have a temporary boom in the stocker trade.

Whether the embargo is on or off, the "Farmer's Advocate" will continue to advise farmers in Canada to finish more well-bred cattle here, Mr. Gray to the contrary, notwithstanding, and we can well afford to let our friendly competitors in the Old Land settle the question as seems best for themselves.

#### A Creamery Object Lesson.

The continued progress and stability of dairying is one of the most noteworthy and encouraging features of Canadian agriculture. As was so vividly set forth by Mr. John Gould, of Ohio, in the Christmas "Farmer's Advocate," progress, based on intelligence, has been its outstanding characteristic. That the business continues to perpetuate itself, continually advancing into new fields, is the best evidence of its inherent vitality. Old cheese factories and creamery buildings are being replaced by better ones, and new ones are making their appearance. A good example of the modern buttermaking establishment is the Petrolia creamery, illustrated and described elsewhere in this issue. Heretofore this great industry has not been as fully appreciated as it might have been in that excellent section of Canada where the natural conditions are peculiarly favorable for its development. Our article will be read with general interest, as it furnishes a good example of what can be accomplished by well-directed enterprise. The dairy season just closing has

been probably the best ever known in the long record of Canadian dairying. Past experience has shown that in those districts where dairying has been steadily pursued in the most thoroughgoing manner, there we have invariably found the most prosperous of farmers and communities. The Petrolia buttermaking enterprise deserves well of that section of Western Ontario, and we trust will fully realize the aims of those by whom it is being conducted.

#### Shall the Maritime Provinces Become One?

The "Farmer's Advocate" this issue contains two letters upon a subject which sooner or later must pass from the sphere of academic discussion to the realm of practical politics, viz., the proposal to unite the three Maritime Provinces into one.

Mr. R. W. Starr, who writes from Nova Scotia, is a veteran farmer and horticulturist of the Annapolis Valley, well informed as to history and current events. Mr. McCready, who so lucidly expounds the subject from Prince Edward Island's point of view, is a New Brunswicker, now editor of the leading newspaper in the Island Province. Like Mr. Starr, he is a broad-gauge man, though practical enough to take cognizance of facts as they exist.

There is no doubt the party to look with most favor upon such a compact would be Nova Scotia, while the most reluctant to part with Provincial identity would be Prince Edward Island. It might be thought the former, being the most populous and wealthiest of the three, would have the least to gain by Provincial consolidation, but to the other Provinces the case looks different. They no doubt anticipate that they would be virtually merged into the leading Province, in which the Capitol and Government offices would likely be situated, and which would necessarily have a dominating representation in the triune Legislature. The question will be asked, why should these communities tax themselves to maintain three Governments, when Ontario, with a population considerably more than twice as large, gets along admirably with one? The answer is that each Province has certain peculiarities of interests and conditions, and also, as mentioned by Mr. McCready, each Province has long since developed legislative machinery adapted to its needs. He further very well points out that the saving in cost through having a single legislative system would not be so much as might at first sight appear, seeing that expenses of members would be greater, sessions would be longer, and salaries would go up. On the other hand, we believe the wider field and more lucrative opportunity would result in the securing of a higher average calibre among the administrators, hence more efficient and progressive departmental administration. It is a tribute to the intellectual qualities of the Maritime people that they are governed so capably as they are. That they are split up into three political divisions is an unfortunate fact, arising out of geographic and other accidental circumstances, but since they have been thus divided, and grown up each community in its own Provincial household, union at this date involves difficulties. It had been thought long ago that something might be done to pave the way to union by uniting the agricultural interests through the joint establishment of an agricultural college, and when the present institution at Truro was projected Nova Scotia renewed her effort in this direction. The old difficulty, however, arose, the remaining Provinces feeling that the assumed location of such a college in Nova Scotia would make it primarily a Nova Scotian institution.