The Abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty and the Maritime Provinces.

One of our Halifax exchanges states that the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty has scarcely had any perceptible effect on the trade of Nova Scotia. On the contrary, it says:—

"The export of our great staple fish during the past year, has, we understand, been larger than ever. The *Citizen* states that there has been a great falling off in the export of our coal from last year, and especially from the port of Pictou. In this latter respect he is mistaken. The Mining Association have exported quite as large a quantity from the Albion Mines this season as it did the last, and with regard to the total amount shipped from all the mines of the Province, the difference in favour of the last year will, we are assured, be quite trifling, certainly not more than 10 per cent."

It concludes its remarks as follows:—

"We would be glad to see the Reciprocity Treaty renewed, but the experience of last year has convinced us that its loss will not permanently injure us, and that even the present loss is falling with three-fold the severity upon our neighbours that it is experienced by us. Patience and energy on our part will thus effect a remedy either way. We are in the right path, and we trust we will keep in it."

Regulation of Speed on Inclines.—Some experiments have been carried out on the Northern Railway of Spain with a view to employing the return steam to obtain a uniform rate of speed in descending steep inclines. A pipe is attached to the boiler, and dividing into two is connected with the two branches of the exhaust pipe, in close proximity to the cylinders and the exhaust posts. When the train is descending the incline and so soon as the maximum velocity desired is attained, the driver opens the cock connected with the pipe, pulls over the lever into back gear, and opens the regulator. The exhaust pipe acts as a reservoir, containing a quantity of expanded steam which excludes the air; a portion of this steam escapes into the chimney, and the other is absorbed into the cylinders and driven back into the boiler. The increase of temperature thus occasioned in the cylinders is counteracted by injecting some moist steam into it, and also more effectually by passing into the steam pipe a small jet of water, which the driver can increase or diminish at pleasure by means of a cock. The experiments conducted upon that portion of the line between Avila and Madrid have furnished very satisfactory results both regarding the speed of the train and the amount of its load. During two journeys made in March last, the driver, by varying the notch in which the lever was put in back gear, and by regulating the injection of the steam and water at the bottom of the exhaust pipe, was enabled to maintain a regular and uniform speed in the descent, and stop at the stations when necessary without requiring to put on a single brake and without heating any part of the machinery.—*Mechanics' Magazine.*

Washing Wool in Germany.—German wool is usually quoted as the standard for cleanliness, as well as fineness. It will not be amiss to give some idea of the pains taken in some of the best districts, to wash the wool before shearing. It is taken from a very valuable paper on German Agriculture in the last U. S. Patent Office Report.

"*Washing Sheep at Meruth in Hungary.*—The process of washing is done under the roof, and, accordingly, no sudden showers or rainy weather can interfere with it. Before the shower bath is administered to the sheep, their dirt and pitch has to be dissolved or loosened. For this purpose a soaking vat is put up, which is covered and tightly put together of strong plank or boards. It is filled with hot water, equal to eighty-four degrees Fahrenheit, the sheep are then placed in two lines and constantly handled until the yolk and dirt are dissolved, which ordinarily takes from fifteen to twenty minutes. The solvent effects of the hot water is increased by adding a few pounds of potash, and also by the lye arising from the natural oily matter of the wool. The sheep, after being well soaked, are placed under shelter where they have to wait their turn of the shower bath in order that the animal now too much heated, may not pass immediately from the hot soaking vat into the shower bath, this being from sixty-one to sixty-three degrees Fahrenheit. The water is let upon the sheep through a hose, with a strainer upon the end. It falls with considerable velocity, and is brought to bear upon all parts of the sheep until the wool is of a snowy whiteness. The sheep are then driven to a warm dry shelter, and shorn as soon as the wool is dry, generally about the sixth day. On an average, forty sheep are thus washed in an hour."

Shoe Business of Haverhill for November.—There has been an almost entire suspension of shoe business during the month of November, the wholesale sales in town amounting to only about $265,000. The tax assessed in this Division is the smallest for any month for three or four years, and the prospect now is that December will be less than November. Our manufacturers have curtailed their business very materially, and are manufacturing but few goods. There does not appear to be a large stock on hand, but the increased facilities for manufacturing by machinery, will enable our manufacturers to furnish all that may be needed at short notice. The wages of workmen are somewhat reduced, and they are not in demand. A reduction of from 14 to 25 per cent in the wages of the workmen has been made by the shoe manufacturers in North Bridgewater, but not so much in this place.—*Haverhill Gazette.*

The Gold Coinage of France.—M. Michel Chevelier, in a remarkable letter in the *Journal des Debats*, takes up the question of the coining of gold pieces in the mints of France, to which that newspaper had previously called attention. He states that for some years past the mints have turned out gold coins, which are almost always less than the legal weight and that in this way the Government which does the coining, makes a profit, which, though of no great importance, is unjustifiable. The law, he says, enacts that the gold piece of 20f shall weigh 6 *grammes* 451 *milligrammes*, and contain 9 0 parts of pure gold to 100 of alloy. Owing, however, to the extreme difficulty of fabricating pieces exactly alike, the law allows each coin to be two *millemes* more or less in weight and to contain two parts less or two parts more of pure gold. This is called "toleration." The Government ought naturally, according to M. Michel Chevelier, to strive to get the exact weight and proportion neither more nor less; yet it takes, he shows advantage of the toleration allowed to give only the minimum weight and the minimum proportion of gold. It has been said, he added, that if the pieces exceeded the legal weight, private persons would have an interest in melting them down and getting them recoined; but he shows that the operation for a kilogramme of coin would bring in 3f 10c and cost 6f 7oc, so that nobody would think of undertaking it.

New York Boot and Shoe Trade.—The last number of the *Hide and Leather Interest* says:—We have nothing new to note in the line of boots and shoes. Manufacturers in the city are moving cautiously, and only making up for actual necessities. Most, however, have fair assortments on hand adapted to the city retail trade. Jobbers are quiet, and but few buyers have been in the market the past week, and those mostly from near-by localities. We think the shoe trade have acted very judiciously in the matter of manufacturing, for the past three months, and there will be no cause for regret on their part. Many have held off in anticipation of a decline in leather; in this, however, we think they will be disappointed, for we confidently believe that leather has reached its minimum.

We look for a good demand during the last half of January, and shall be disappointed in our expectations if such is not the case.

Interesting Experiment.—For sometime a few of our shipbuilders and Lloyd's Surveyors have had it in contemplation to test the respective strength of solid and hollow masts. The experiment took place yesterday in Messrs. Reed's yard, Courtenay Bay. For the purpose two pieces of masts each 15 feet long, and 6 inches in diameter were constructed and hooped in a very way similar to an ordinary mast, the wood used being white pine. One was made from a solid piece, the other was hollow, constructed of staves about 1½ inch thick. To test the strength of the pieces, the ends were rested upon blocks, and a weight or pressure brought to bear upon the centre, and the result was highly favorable to the solid mast, which broke under a pressure of 5cwt., having bent only 7½ inches, while the hollow piece broke before a weight of 1½ cwt., having bent 12½ inches. Quite a number of gentlemen interested in shipbuilding witnessed the experiment, among them Messrs Lapthorne and Bezant, Lloyd's Surveyors, and Messrs Millidge, Nevins, shipbuilders and Mr James Hamilton, a practical mast builder.—*St. John Globe.*

London Markets.—Notwithstanding that the arrivals of English wheat up to our market, this week, have been very moderate, millers have shown great unwillingness to purchase either red or white parcels except on lower terms. Factors, however, have been very firm in their demands, and in the few sales effected, full prices have been realised. The imports of foreign wheat have been on a fair average scale, and all descriptions have moved off slowly, at about previous currencies. The supply of both English and foreign barley having been somewhat extensive, the barley trade has ruled heavy, at 1s per quarter less money. Malt has been in fair average supply, and sluggish request, at low rates. The oat trade has been moderately firm at previous currencies. The arrival of foreign oats has increased to some extent. Beans have given way 2s per quarter, at which very little business has been transacted. We have no change to notice in the value of peas. The flour trade has been very quiet. In some of the local markets wheat has ruled a shade higher in price. Spring corn, however, has moved off slowly. On the continent wheat has been somewhat drooping, owing to the want of large orders from England. In Scotland, no change of importance has taken place in the value of any kind of produce. On the whole, the trade has been very inactive. The Irish markets have been dull. Prices, however, have been fairly supported.—*Economist, Dec. 15th.*

THE LONDON GROCERY MARKET.

Ducasse, Claveau & Co.'s Monthly Price Current of December 8th says:—

Tea.—In this article we have little or no change to report since our last, as although importers have shown less anxiety to realise, and several parcels have been withdrawn, prices have shown no improvement, but, on the contrary, a decline has taken place in some descriptions. A few common red-leaf Congous have been taken by speculators, and black-leafs have also been in some demand for export. *Souchongs.*—There have been but few on offer, and prices are without alteration. In Oolongs there has been but little doing. In the Green Tea market, owing to the large arrivals that have taken place of the new Ping Sueys, compared with the small demand at present existing for all descriptions, prices have declined, and as we do not look for any increase of business until the early part of next year, they will doubtless still further recede. The 2000 half-chests Uncolored Japan, mentioned in our last, have been sold at prices varying from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 5d per lb; they were, however, of an inferior make. In Colored there is nothing doing.

Coffee.—No alteration of importance has occurred in this market, the prices of the quantities sold showing little deviation from those of last month. Native and Plantation Ceylon remain inactive, and in foreign there is but little doing.

Sugar.—In this article a large business has been done, although unattended by any decided advance in prices. The Refined market remains very steady.

Fruit.—Of the large quantities that have been offered since our last, Valencia Raisins have found buyers at steady prices. Currants have been in limited demand at barely previous rates, whilst in Figs, owing to the quantities brought forward being of a common description, little business has been done.

Wines and Spirits.—These articles have shared in the general dulness prevailing in all the Produce markets. In Wines, owing to the bad accounts received of the last Vintage, old descriptions are much firmer. In Brandy, a brisk trade has been done in expectation of higher prices from Cognac. The Rum market continues firm with, however, but little doing.

London Discount and Money Market.—The state of the market indicates some degree of suspicion and want of confidence in the outward appearances of abundant capital. Choice paper is almost as much an object of inquiry as it was in May and June last; and much discretion is exercised as to investments in mercantile bills. The smaller amount of paper in the market at present compared with that afloat seven or eight months ago, under these circumstances, very slightly affects matters; inasmuch as the mass of the public appear to prefer the loss of interest to any uncertainty with respect to the safety of capital. The state of the market has to-day been somewhat influenced by the remarkable favourable character of the Bank return. The Stock Exchange settling has long since ceased to produce any appreciable effect on the discount rates, as very small amounts of securities are in the hands of speculators. On the contrary, speculators have confined their transactions to sales for the fall; and have, in consequence, sold in advance of the realisations of the public. Large amounts of money have this year been netted by those who presumed on the disclosures made in the course of the failures and fatalities that have signalised the collapse of the extensive financial speculations of the three preceding years. The subsidence of distrust, or its confinement within defined narrow channels, and the accumulation of capital that results from the calling in of balances from every side, appear likely soon to promote a return to something like ordinary habits on the part of the public. As, notwithstanding the losses in the speculative mania, absorption by the moneyed classes has denuded the public markets of almost every class of established investment to such a degree that stocks are currently borrowed at the Stock Exchange settlings, in many cases, to enable sellers to comply with their engagements. There is much likelihood that the purchases to be expected at the opening of the year will occasion a further scarcity of investments. It is to be hoped that the plethora of money now in progress will not bring occasion for some new follies no less fatal than those from the effects of which the public are just now only slowly recovering.—*Economist.*