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CIRCULATION.

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RECIPROCITY IN COAL.

The article on reciprocity in coal, that appears in this issue, should arouse comment.

In the Maritime Provinces the question has long been discussed. With a few exceptions, the coal operators of the East appear to be vigorously opposed to the removal of tariff restrictions. On the other hand, there is decided, though not extensive, public sentiment in favour of reciprocity.

Throughout Quebec and Ontario reciprocity would be welcomed, merely because it is believed that the price of fuel would thereby be lowered. In the middle and far West there is a general sentiment in favour of reciprocity. It is urged that the adequate development of Alberta's and British Columbia's coal fields cannot take place until reciprocity is an accomplished fact. Roughly, this sketches the condition of Canadian opinion at present.

It is contended by western coal operators that reciprocity will benefit Canada generally, and that their eastern brethren will lose nothing if the tariff wall is razed. To this the easterners reply that free United States coal would swamp our markets completely.

We shall not reiterate here any of the arguments, facts, and figures adduced by Mr. Jacobs. Our intention is solely to arouse interest in a question that affects vitally the future of the Dominion.

Mr. Jacobs alludes to the surprising apathy on the part of the Canadian public in regard to reciprocity in coal. So marked is this apathy that the activity of Nova Scotian operators is thrown into undue relief. When Parliament was discussing the subject last winter, the views of the larger coal mining interests of the East were forcefully presented. Western interests claimed and received scant consideration. Hence there was little debate, and no constructive measures were suggested.

Apart from sporadic paragraphs in the public press, hardly one attempt has been made to ventilate the situation fairly. The pronouncements that have appeared in Montreal papers, presenting the case for the East, must be regarded as, in some degree, special pleading. Similarly, western views have been set forth in local publications.

The only presentation of the question from a national point of view came from the pen of Mr. D. D. Mann, in a recent number of The Saturday Evening Post. Mr. Mann, having spun webs of steel over half the continent, has become something of a publicist. And there are few men of affairs to whom we can listen with more profit. His attitude towards reciprocity may be summed up in two sentences from his own article: "I cannot, at the moment, think of any considerable