

Favors Free Trade.

"There are intimations that the importance of more intimate commercial relations between this country and Canada is appreciated by the present Administration, and has already received some consideration from it." The destruction of the commercial barriers between the two nations and the creation of a great and active market would be an immense commercial achievement, and as a political stroke would rival if not surpass the Louisiana purchase. On our side of the line the greatest obstacle to more intimate commercial relations with the Dominion is to be found in the belief that while Canada would be a desirable market for our manufactured goods, she would pour across the boundary crude products to an extent that would drive American farmers out of their business. The American farmers' fear of Canadian competition has been played on for years by politicians, and yet year after year Canada goes on buying more of our agricultural products than we buy of hers, and our farmers do not discover that Canada is the second or third best customer we have.

"It was even deemed necessary for the farmer to exclude Canadian barley and eggs three years ago in singular oblivion to the immense quantities of corn, wheat and provisions which Canada annually buys from us. In the fiscal year 1892 the breadstuffs sold in Canada amounted to \$11,401,494, while the amount we bought of her was only \$3,673,843, a condition of trade that ought to make the American farmer content to see the barriers somewhat reduced, if not entirely removed. The only two large items in our breadstuff imports from Canada were wheat and barley, both of special varieties, grown little or not at all here, and imported because of their quality, and not because of their cheapness. The wheat and flour we sold Canada were worth nearly seven million dollars, the corn nearly two millions and the rye over two millions.

"Much greater was the disparity between our exports and imports of provisions. Of provisions, dairy products and eggs we sold to Canada \$4,443,076, and bought of Canada \$595,891 worth. Of all the items in this schedule, the only one of which we imported any considerable quantity from Canada was eggs. All the provisions we bought of Canada amounted to less than \$57,000, and the butter and cheese we bought were less than \$27,000, while the quantity we sold was worth \$1,237,910. In the matter of vegetables and seeds, the trade was more nearly even, but the balance in our favor was about \$200,000. The aggregate of all these food articles exported by us to Canada in 1892 was \$16,855,054, while the amount imported from Canada was only \$5,079,615. And yet the farmers along our northern frontier have been told till many of them believe it that Canadian competition would ruin them. It is mainly this mistaken notion that, as to our people, prevents a commercial arrangement that would be of great value to us and of incalculable value to Canada."—*New York Commercial Bulletin*.

Rise and Fall of Tallow.

There have been such fluctuations in the prices of hogs products, and such movements in related interests of all kinds, as to make it worth while to our readers to inquire into the inwardness of these matters. Of course, it was not necessary to learn that there had been a general and unusual advance in pork and lard, in hams and bacon, for the well known reason that the hog crop of 1892 was very short, so generally short that even the vast and compensating sweep of production, which in our country often equalizes market, did not in this case do so.

But why did tallow and other products of the fatty kinds so closely sympathize with all the incidents of the hog market? Was there a short supply of cattle and sheep? Inquiry does not establish the fact of a short supply, either local or general in these. How then is

the very unusual rise in tallow, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢, or nearly 10 per cent., and its return downward to $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ to be accounted for?

The answer comes from two sources. First, on account of the failure of the farmers to furnish the usual supply of porkers, for various reasons, such as diseases in the herds of swine, the more profitable marketing of their corn, etc., and an increased demand for fats in preparation of "compound lard" and other articles in which the proportion of lard usually found ceased to appear, indeed, became "small and beautifully less." This increased use of fats as a substitute for lard, both legitimate and otherwise, accounts largely for the increased demand and the consequent upward tendency in prices. But this does not explain the matter fully. To get at the entire secret it would be necessary to know all about the second cause, speculation.

The supply of a certain leading produce is short, and speculation and enterprise are on the alert to win a harvest from this and other fields. Money is to be made, and who shall make it? and how shall it be made? are the questions of interest to the broker, the manufacturer, the jobber and the retailer, not to mention the army of consumers.

So, while the supply of cattle, sheep, etc., is acknowledged to have been about normal, the shortage in hogs increased the demand for other products, and this sent up the prices. Then speculation did its best in manipulating for profit, and still higher prices resulted. Now the retail dealer and the consumer come in with their important part to play and pay. Soap goes higher because makers use tallow. People complain at the change from old prices and fail to find the hidden cause, unless the dealer can take time to find out for himself, and then laboriously to explain to every customer. Well, tallow has been way up for these and other reasons. We have eaten more of it than we probably were aware, and now it is sinking to its normal value. The lessons of the tallow market are not very different from that of other products which from time to time become compensating elements in manufacture and trade. —*Commercial Enquirer*.

Mending Firebrick.

There are very few housewives, remarks the *New York Tribune*, who know that a simple cement may be made at home which will successfully join broken firebrick so that they may be used for years. There are few things more unsatisfactory than modern fire linings. The bricks are easily cracked, and last but a few months, while in other cases they are often in use for years. It is a great mistake to allow the firebrick to get in bad order. There is an iron plate back of the firebrick in every stove, but this is easily burned through, and it costs a large sum to replace it. Therefore, it is a matter of moment whenever there is a crack in the firebrick of the stove, and it should be mended at once, or the broken brick should be replaced.

The cement to mend these bricks consists simply of powdered soapstone, which may be procured of a druggist, mixed with an even quantity of common salt and wet to a paste with water. This hardens very rapidly after it is put on, and, as the soapstone is proof, it is lasting. Do not substitute powdered pumice stone or rotten stone for it, as they will not last as long as soapstone, though various things, even sifted ashes, may be mixed with salt in this way, to form a temporary cement in case of emergency. Some people prefer to line their stoves with potter's clay instead of brick, and it is said to answer the purpose very well.

Watts & Co., Brantford, Ontario, agents for Maple Leaf canned salmon, quote \$4.70 f.o.b. coast. This is 20 cents higher than Horse Shoes. They state that they will not meet the lower prices quoted by other packers as they have sold the bulk of their pack to England.

Minnesota Canal Project.

The *New York Engineering News* says:—"The Minnesota Canal Company has been incorporated in St. Paul, Minnesota, with a capital of \$20,000,000. The alleged purpose of the company is to build a canal between the Mississippi river and Duluth, deep enough to permit light draft boats loading at Buffalo, New York, to unload at St. Paul. They say the present cost of transporting a ton of anthracite coal from Buffalo is \$1.80, and they think they can reduce this to 80¢. The scheme, however, is very much in the air, as yet." The *Engineering and Mining Journal* says:—"Not only do the maintenance and improvement of existing water lines find more advocates, but plans for the construction of new ones meet with favorable consideration. The ship canal from the lakes to the Hudson; the Hennepin canal, which is to connect Lake Michigan with the Mississippi, and the proposed ship canals from New York to Philadelphia, from Baltimore to the sea, and from Norfolk southward, have all been referred to at different times, and come within the list of probabilities."

Alberta Stock Ranges.

Ever since settlers began coming into Southern Alberta, and lands began to be required for railway grants, there has been trouble with the ranch owners, who dislike the prospect of surrendering their leases and thus reducing the area of their ranges. Several ineffectual attempts were made to reach a settlement of the question upon an equitable basis, but one after another failed. Upon Minister Daly's recommendation an order-in-council has been passed under which the Government will cancel all outstanding grazing leases and give ranchmen the privilege of purchasing ten per cent of their present holding at the rate of \$1.25 per acre. This will sufficiently reduce the area under lease for grazing purposes to satisfy the probable demands of settlement for cultivation for many years to come.

Iron Trade Depression.

In the annual report of the American Iron and Steel Association, shortly to issue, Secretary Swank says that "the lack of prosperity of iron and steel industries in 1892 was conspicuously shared by the farmers of the west and the cotton planters of the south. Thus far in 1893 there has been no noteworthy improvement in the prices of western wheat and corn and southern cotton, while the prices of most iron and steel products are lower now than they were at the end of 1892. The general financial situation in this country and in Europe in 1892 was not favorable to the building of new railroads, and hence was not favorable to our iron and steel industries." The secretary gives over-production as the principal cause of the iron and steel depression.

Texas Timber Lands.

"The timber lands of the state of Texas aggregate 2,000,000 acres," says the *Dallas Morning News*. "Of the 245 counties in the state only forty are classed as timber counties, with ten growing the long-leaf pine and the remainder producing the short-leaved variety. The price of these lands ranges from \$2 to \$12 per acre, according to accessibility, quality and estimated stumpage. The state still owns about 90 per cent of these lands. The lumber product of the state for 1891 shipped on the railways amounted to 2,221,796 tons of lumber, or about 75,000 carloads, equal to one-fifth of all the state railway tonnage for the year."

The bank of Hochelega has declared a half yearly dividend of 3 per cent, and also 1 per cent bonus, the latter being the first on record among French Canadian banks.