

DEPENDS FOR RAW MATERIAL

on the outside world. At the time of the southern war she was cut off from her supplies of cotton, and millions of her artisans were reduced almost to starvation. Why? The ports from which the cotton came were blockaded; and under the laws of neutrality, Britain had no right to get the cotton. If Australia were independent to-morrow and her ports were blockaded, by a power friendly to Britain, Yorkshire would have no more right to get Australian wool upon which her industries depend than Lancashire can to get southern cotton. If England becomes, as she probably will in a few years, dependent upon Canada for a large portion of her wheat supply, the same argument would apply to wheat as I have used with regard to cotton and wool. Summing up the matter the position is this, that if a nation is at its centre the greatest consumer of food and raw material, and in its outlying parts is the greatest producer of food and raw material, it should be the first object of statesmanship to hold both under the same national flag; and thus the working man reserves to himself the right to keep the waterways of the ocean, which are the channels along which his industry moves, open. The old theory was that colonies were like fruit which dropped when ripe from the parent stem; it is a truer simile to compare them to the branches of a tree; the stronger they grow the more violent will be the wrench required to part them from the parent stem.

THE INTEREST FELT

in a place like Winnipeg should be accentuated by the known facts in regard to what is the chief protection. All authorities agree that the sources from which Europe now supplies demand for imported food will rapidly change within the next few years. We all know what immense interests are involved in the wheat trade between the United States and England, how it not only gives work to the farmer but to the canals, the railways, the great eastern ports and the trans Atlantic shipping. But the highest statistical authorities state that, with the present growth of population in the United States, coupled with the exhaustion of the wheat areas, that country will, within the next fifteen or twenty years, be unable to supply England with a bushel of wheat. Such a change will inevitably lead to a speedy and extensive development of the wheat areas which we possess. I often tell English audiences that I expect, in a few years, England will be drawing her wheat supplies almost entirely from her own colonies, and largely from the Northwest of Canada. Nor do I think this an exaggeration. The question then of our close connection with England is one of vital interest. Imagine the machinery of industry and commerce which will be set in motion on the farms, the railroads, the shipping of the great lakes and canals, and the eastern ports, if this country had every year to supply to England 100,000,000 bushels of wheat. The question of the national flag would then mean even more to us than it does now. There is

A FINANCIAL ASPECT

of this question which I would like to mention to the board of trade: England is the greatest money lending country in the world. The colonies are those which have the largest undeveloped resources. The position of England's colonies with regard to the money that they borrow is quite unique. When they borrow money they are able to spend it on railways, canals, and other productive works. When countries like Russia, France or the powers of South America borrow money they have to spend a large proportion of it on defences, military or naval. We are saved all this. I have sometimes put the point thus to Australian audiences: If as a private individual you wish to borrow money, you have to pay the insurance of your house, your shop or your goods. When the colonies borrow from England she gives them the insurance of her army and navy, the protection of which gives the cheapest capital in the world; and after that she throws herself

in the open market for everything that they produce. No young countries in the world ever borrowed money under such favorable conditions; and you will agree with me in thinking that the closest connection between the greatest money lending country in the world, and young countries requiring capital for their development will certainly be the best for the latter. The trade question has two aspects. In the last few years there has been a great change in public feeling in England. Free trade is no longer a fetish. Many statesmen and commercial men are ready to discuss the question of free trade. Many would be willing to adopt a preferential arrangement for the good of the empire, but there is a difficulty at present. Of the 160,000,000 bushels of wheat which England requires, Canada at present only furnishes about 6,000,000; the whole empire less than 25,000,000 bushels. Until we have increased our producing capacity it is unreasonable to expect England to change her whole policy in view of the intense commercial and industrial competition in which she is engaged. A great industrial depression might at any time drive England into a protective system; but nothing short of that is likely to do it at present. Such a change would no doubt develop very rapidly our wheat producing capacity. But there is another way in which this could be done; and it is a method which deserves consideration. If the stringency of our protective system were relaxed; if the farmers of the Northwest, by the admission of cheap English goods, were able to produce his wheat and meat, and other food products, twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than his rival on the south of the boundary line, there is no doubt that this western country would get a stimulus quite as great as any that would be given to it by a protective tariff. In this great question, no doubt, the supposed interests of eastern and western Canada are struggling against each other. Trade matters, however, are in a state of flux all over the world. The late elections in the United States show that this is true in that country. The true view seems to be that England and her colonies should look at trade questions as one nation; and then, whether the drift of events turns towards fair trade or towards free trade, our nation will be able to take the greatest possible advantage of the condition in which she finds herself. Federationists should not stake too much upon preferential trade. As I have shown, great fundamental political and commercial effects are involved outside of this. Safe trade is necessary, whether we have fair trade or free trade, and only national unity can secure us safe trade. I am only able to touch upon a few topics; but I believe if you study this question from all its different angles, you will find that, not simply from the sentimental point of view, but from the hard facts of business, the unity of the British empire is a thing to which every patriotic Canadian ought to direct his best efforts.

The Agricultural Depression in England

A number of the leading agricultural papers of Britain have of late been discussing the subject of the agricultural depression in England and have given thoughtful opinions as to its cause and remedy. In connection with that discussion the following letter from Mr. A. J. MacMillan, Manitoba's agent at Liverpool, to the editor of the Bradford Observer has been given wide publicity:

To the Editor of the Bradford Observer.

SIR,—Your leader this morning on the farming situation in the United Kingdom is timely. No doubt the true solution of the difficulty for British farmers lies in lower rents. This is unfortunate for landlords, and whilst they are to be pitied, it must be remembered that they are in

much the same position as those who invest money in stocks and shares which afterwards depreciate in value. The economic forces by which the world is moved have changed, and are constantly changing. Steam and electricity have, as regards markets, brought the prairie farmers of Western Canada and the United States of America practically to our own doors. It costs little more to ship grain and cattle from those distant markets to London or Liverpool than it does to send them from the interior of England to the same markets. In connection with this it must be borne in mind that the farmers of those western lands have a magnificent climate to aid them in their work, and rates and taxes are exceedingly low. In many parts of Manitoba, for instance, rates and taxes are not more than from £2 to £3 per annum on 160 acres of land.

I find in Great Britain and Ireland that some people endeavor to find comfort in the belief that ere long the United States will cease to export grain and cattle, requiring them for home consumption. It is possible, even probable, that before the end of the century the United States will export less grain and fewer cattle than today, but that in itself will not materially help the British farmer, because other countries are rapidly coming to the front as exporters of agricultural produce. Take Western Canada as an example. Last year Manitoba alone produced some 25,000,000 bushels of wheat and from 12,000,000 to 15,000,000 bushels of other cereals—in all, nearly 40,000,000 bushels. The area under wheat has doubled within four years. Less than ten years since Manitoba did not export anything. The province covers an area of 76,000,000 acres and only 1,300,000 are yet cultivated, so that the production of wheat and the rearing of cattle are there only yet in their infancy. Some ten years since Manitoba began to export cattle, and I believe nearly 4,000 head were exported last year, and the increase in live stock is even greater than that in the production of grain. What is true of Manitoba is probably true to some extent of other countries; and old country farmers, if they are wise, will note these facts and bear them in mind in making arrangements for the future.—I am, &c. A. J. McMILLAN.

Bradford, October 24th, 1892.

The Lumsden Dyking Co. have completed arrangements for the early prosecution of the work. It is expected that in the course of a few days reclaiming of the Sumas lands will be fairly under way.

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