

TRADE WITH THE BRITISH PROVINCES.

A GENERAL desire exists upon both sides of the frontier for a renewal of reciprocal trade between the United States and the British Provinces, but so far it has not been practicable to give effect to it. The objections to reciprocity are limited to a few extreme protectionists, but even in New England this feeling is far from being general. A meeting has been held in Boston and a committee appointed to secure a renewal of commercial relations between the two countries. The movement is sustained by the public opinion of the other leading New England towns. From Vermont we have a remonstrance against reciprocity presented to the Senate by Mr. Morrill, but even this seems to be urged against the details rather than the principle of reciprocity. That a sober second thought in favor of a closer commercial intercourse between the two countries has set in, seems to be indisputable.

At the last session of Congress a resolution was adopted, authorizing Mr. Seward to open negotiations for a renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty. Under these instructions the Secretary of State has been negotiating for some time with the Canadian and Imperial officials, but with what result does not as yet exactly appear. The Senate jealous of its power, has set up a claim that the Treaty making power devolves upon the Legislative and not upon the Executive branch of the Government. This assumption of authority is likely to seriously embarrass the negotiations, by presenting a diversity of views and power, and is therefore to be regretted.

The events that have transpired since the renewal of Reciprocity have immensely increased the difficulties in the way of a new treaty. The Provinces have duties ranging from 5 to 20 per cent. upon the same class of external products, and the authority of the Confederation is, to say the least, still a matter of doubt owing to the attitude of Nova Scotia. In the United States the tariff averages 57 per cent., showing a difference of from 30 to 40 per cent. between the extreme rates in the two countries. Owing to this fact and the difference in the cost of living between the two countries, the price of production in the United States is so high that the free interchange of goods would result disastrously to our manufactures. Capital would naturally flow to the point where it obtains the largest returns for its outlay. What is required is that the internal revenue and tariffs in the two countries should be equalized. The Canadians sell to us, but they buy in England. Our financial system drives away our natural customers from our markets. A true Reciprocity should, at least, admit the natural products of both countries, and this in the present condition of the excise and revenue laws on either side of the line, constitute the leading difficulties to Reciprocity.

These difficulties are so apparent that the idea of a Zollverein, on the German system, has been suggested. According to this proposition, the same rates of duties are to be collected in the United States and the Provinces, and the receipts are to be distributed according to population. Custom Houses on the frontier are to be abolished, and no obstacles placed upon the transmission of domestic produce. Upon this basis, if a total of \$200,000,000 of revenue should be collected, \$180,000,000 would go to the United States, and \$20,000,000 to the Provinces.

But this proposition, like Reciprocity, involves the difficult question of equalization of duties—of a reduction in the United States, and an increase in the Provinces. How far the Imperial Government would consent to any additional increase in the Provincial Tariff is scarcely problematical. For a long time the home authorities have complained of the high duties imposed on English goods by the British American Provinces. In comparison with this question of the equalization of duties as a preliminary to Reciprocity the other differences about mutual navigation fade into comparative insignificance.

The fact of the matter seems to be that the evils attending our vicious systems of irredeemable currency and taxation have been so intensified by time, that we are virtually shut out from the Canadian market as from other foreign markets. Our commercial and financial laws isolated us from the commerce of the world. Mr. Wells, the Special Revenue Commissioner, shows how we are being gradually cut off from foreign markets by our own laws. Nothing would be more advantageous to the people of the British Provinces and the United States than a mutual exchange of products. The repeal of the old Reciprocity Treaty was a blunder, and has utterly failed to answer a single desirable end. Its renewal, unfortunately, seems to be a more contingency than is generally suspected.

HURON AND ONTARIO CANAL.

WESTERN VIEW OF THE SUBJECT.

MR. A. P. Macdonald, M.P., has written the following letter to the London *Free Press* on the subject of the Huron and Ontario Ship Canal:—

"Hearing so much about the Georgian Bay Canal, and the land grant of ten millions of acres; also noticing the Hon. M. C. Cameron's answer to the secretary of the committee, appointed by a public meeting in support of the Huron and Ontario Ship Canal, I would say that I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman that his colleagues are acting in a sense of duty to the Province in general. I fully believe it would be to the interest of the people of the Dominion to give the grant of land asked for, with a restriction on the Company that they must spend ten millions of dollars first on the work before they can claim any title to the land. Let ten millions of dollars be spent in that work, and the people of Ontario and the Dominion may rely on the completion of the work. I have never heard of work being abandoned after the

expenditure of two or three millions, let alone ten millions. Some may say that it is not practical. All the difficulty I have heard is that a sufficient supply of water could not be procured, but that could be easily ascertained by a practical engineer before the work is commenced, and if the supply of water is insufficient, we know where there is a sufficient supply and a practical route, which is the Ottawa River; but we would much prefer the Huron and Ontario route. A grant of ten million acres from Ontario would, in our opinion, guarantee the completion of one or the other. Quebec could well afford to give a grant of ten million acres for the Ottawa route. With twenty millions of acres there is not a doubt but sufficient means could be raised to complete the work in a reasonable time, and when completed I have no hesitation in saying it would be the best bit of paying piece of work on this continent, according to its cost. Some say it is too large an undertaking; but it is not any greater an undertaking at the present time than the Welland and Erie Canals were when they were built, and the trade and commerce of the Dominion and that of the United States demand it now to a greater extent than any other improvement made on this continent.

"We understand the Attorney-General of Ontario says, by the Government granting this land it would give confidence abroad, and the work might prove a failure, and would affect our credit; but he need not have any fear. The parties who invest their means in an undertaking of this nature will look well after their own interests and will not hold his Government responsible for any loss they may sustain, nor the people of Ontario will not find fault with him or his Government for the grant of land; to the contrary, we believe that two-thirds of the people of Ontario are in favor of the grant, and that every member who votes for the grant will be sustained by the people at the polls at the next election, and those who vote against will find it difficult to explain their votes. Can it be denied but what it will be a great benefit to Ontario and the Dominion at large. The work will cost, we are told, thirty millions of dollars, and it will take at least six years to complete it, and would furnish employment to at least six thousand laborers per annum, and one thousand mechanics, and would be the cause of bringing thousands of emigrants to our country, who, in a few years, would be able from their earnings on the work, to buy land and become good citizens. Such has been the case, to my certain knowledge, during the building of the Great Western and Grand Trunk railways, and, in fact, of all our public works.

"There are no inducements for the labouring class of people to come to this country unless we have some employment to give them; and that we have not, unless we commence public improvements of this nature. By this means we can be of greater service to our country than any other way we could adopt. Without a small surplus of labour we cannot expect to progress in all branches of industry. Let us look at our American neighbours. What do they do when building railways? They gave the Illinois Central Railroad Company every alternate section of land on each side of the line, amounting to about twelve millions of acres, equal, if not better, than any land we have for sale. They also paid the Pacific Railroad Company a donation of twelve thousand eight hundred acres of land per mile, but the company is entitled to a subsidy in United States bonds on their line as completed and accepted at the average rate of about \$29,000 per mile, according to the difficulties encountered, for which the Government take a second line as security. The company have already received in bonds \$22,155,000. Besides these, the Government of the United States have been very liberal with their land grants for public improvements, which has worked so well with them as to bring foreign capitalists into the country, and an immense tide of emigrants to their shores.

"We find that two-thirds of the land grants made by the United States are in the hands of foreign capitalists, and a large amount of it in the hands of members of the House of Commons in England, and they become emigrant agents for the American people. I am told by good reliable men, that they have spent large sums of money in getting up maps and pamphlets describing the lands, and having agents to distribute the same through England, Ireland and Scotland, and they have paid the passage of numbers of influential families to the United States to settle on these lands, so as to induce their friends and acquaintances to follow them. With this influence working against us in the mother country, we cannot expect to succeed in inducing emigrants to come to our country; but give the Huron and Ontario Ship Canal Company the ten millions of acres of land, and let us have some of the surplus of funds they have in the mother country, and I am sure they would much rather be our emigrant agents than those of the American people. If the inducements were the same, ten millions of acres of land, put in the hands of foreign capitalists, would be of greater service to the Dominion than its value spent among the emigrant agents.

"Land is of no value unless it can be made productive, and we can well afford to give the above grant, and, if need be, double it for so great a national work. Some may say it would be too much of a monopoly to give such large grants of land to a company, but I venture to say that if any person would go to the Crown Land Commissioner with ten millions of dollars to purchase ten millions of acres, he would cheerfully have the deed made out for him; but in this case we are promised the expenditure of thirty millions against us for a national piece of work, and a full guarantee that the company will do all in their power to settle the lands and encourage emigration to our New Dominion, as it will be to their interests. I consider it the bounden duty of the Government to recommend the grant of land, believing as I do that every member who has the interest of Ontario and the Dominion at heart, and will act from a sense of duty to the people who sent them there, will cast their vote in favour of their grant."

PREVENTION OF MILDEW IN COTTON GOODS.

An investigation recently held in England upon the subject of the occurrence of mildew in cotton goods on shipboard, has resulted in the recommendation of the following means of preventing it:—In the first place the size should be perfectly fresh—that is, not made from mouldy flour, nor permitted to become either mouldy or sour before use. This is absolutely necessary to prevent the formation or deposit of the spores or germs of mildew. It should also be free from extraneous mineral matters and especially deliquescent substances, which, however good the size may be in other respects, would attract moisture, and thereby contribute the only requisite (all others being present) for the development of fungi or mildew. In the second place, the compartment of the vessel in which the goods are stored should be well ventilated and heated. Slippers can, it is believed, obtain from the seller a guarantee of the purity of the size. If not, however, they have an easy remedy in their own hands. Any analytical chemist can with facility, in comparison with an equal weight of a standard piece of cloth, determine the purity of another piece. This can be done in a simple and almost mathematically correct manner, and, therefore, reliably for commercial purposes, by thoroughly drying, say 50 grains of the cloth, and noting the loss in weight, that is moisture, then igniting, and weighing the ash. Indeed, for all practical purposes, merely igniting, weighing the ash, and comparing its weight with that of the standard, would be sufficient. The increase over the standard multiplied by two, would give the percentage of mineral adulteration of the size. All the salts liable to be driven off by ignition, are too expensive to be used as adulterations. Inquirers into the extent of the sale of adulterations for size have ascertained the fact that Epsom salts are regularly sold for size admixture. One hundred and fifty tons of this substance are disposed of weekly in Manchester for this purpose alone. This is a ponderous quantity, and its statement will be advantageous to those who are financially interested in the matter. Commercial magnesium sulphate, moreover, contains 51.21 per cent of water, while, owing to its contamination with foreign salts, it is deliquescent, or attracts moisture from the atmosphere, without which fungi or mildew cannot exist. There are mineral substances that can be adopted with safety, and if size adulterations must prevail, they should at once, at least for India goods, be substituted for Epsom salts.

EXPORT DUTY ON TIMBER.

THE Norfolk Reformer brings us a report of a meeting held recently in Simcoe by parties interested in the Timber Trade of the County of Norfolk, to take measures to secure, if possible, the repeal of the export duty on timber. Speeches were made by various parties setting forth the injustice of the tax; and arrangements were made for carrying out the object of the meeting. The meeting adopted a series of resolutions embodying some of the arguments against the tax. It is alleged that the duty affects mainly the County of Norfolk, inasmuch as three-fourths of the duty collected on timber exported heretofore has been collected there. The export duty charged is, in that county, equal to 30 per cent. on the value of the pine, or to a tax of \$10 or \$15 per acre on the pine lands. Such a tax added to the duty charged in the United States, bears very heavily upon the trade, and it is alleged that the effect has been to diminish it by one-half. The lumberers of Norfolk further allege that the timber of their county will not pay for making into square timber, and that it can only be exported with profit in the form of round timber. Even if that were not the case, the right of the people of Norfolk to make the most of their pine, ought not to be interfered with; nor should they be prevented from finding a market for the inferior kinds of timber that may be made into logs or bolts.

We have more than once pointed out the very unjust character of this export duty on timber. It is entirely exceptional—touching but one branch of industry, and bearing chiefly upon one county. Its effect is to depreciate, and in some cases almost to destroy the value of the timber affected by the tax. There is no shadow of excuse for destroying the property of any person in the Dominion in that way. It is nothing to the purpose to say that there are people who want to buy logs at a low price and who have their purpose served by this price of arbitrary legislation. There are many people in the country who are interested in having cheap bread, but no one would think of trying to bring down the price of wheat by an export duty of thirty per cent. Why should we have a different rule for saw-logs? Are not the rights of the owners of saw-logs as sacred as the rights of the owners of wheat?

WOODEN CAR WHEELS.—The Hudson River Railroad Company have recently placed twelve of the Mansell wooden car wheels on their drawing room car. These wheels cost treble the price of the ordinary cast-iron wheels, but this is regarded as of little consequence compared with the advantages gained by their use. They ride smoothly, making conversation, reading, and even writing, not only possible, but an easy task on the cars. They are made of thoroughly seasoned elm or oak, with steel tires; are very durable, only one accident having ever occurred to one of them, that through the carelessness of a workman; and will wear, by reason of their elasticity and durability, over 400,000 miles of railway, while the average use of the ordinary iron wheel is but 50,000 miles, after which it is necessary to break it up.