

honor of having obtained the first victory in the cause of real and sound tariff reform." Mark the words "first victory for real and sound tariff reform." The Liberals have gained many individual victories of late years, but Mr. Laurier admits they were not victories for sound tariff reform. The Winnipeg election is the first one since the party adopted a sound policy. It indicates as surely as the sun rises and sets what the West will do at the first opportunity.

Winnipeg and Manitoba never voted on the tariff question before. The West was blocked from expressing an opinion upon high tariff at the last general election, though the burden was felt heavy enough then, because neither party, as Mr. Laurier admits, had a "sound tariff reform" policy. It was a question "of two evils choose the lesser." Previous to the last general election, the population of Manitoba was trifling, political questions here were in a confused state, and elections always turned upon local issues. The peculiar policy pursued toward the West by the last Liberal government was also fresh in the memories of the early settlers and intelligent native population. Time has done a good deal to efface these memories with the early settlers, while the voting population to-day is made up largely of later arrivals, who are not familiar with the policy of the last Liberal government toward the West. The country has now progressed in population and development to such an extent that political questions will be fairly faced, aside from local issues. When the "cause of real and sound tariff reform," as Mr. Laurier puts it, is at stake, there need be no fear as to the verdict of Manitoba.

### THE HAWAIIAN QUESTION.

The action of the Washington administration in the matter of the Hawaiian question is to be highly commended. It is so much in contrast with the usual procedure of the nations that it is almost too strange to be true. "Thou shalt not covet," is a commandment which has been thoroughly disregarded by the nations. Schemes, intrigues and all sorts of villainous work is being carried out continuously by the great civilized and Christian nations, in order to gain possession of more land. In this instance the government of the United States boldly exposes an intrigue engineered by its own officials, and repudiates their acts. Indications all along pointed strongly to the belief that the United States was really at the bottom of the revolution which overthrew the government of Hawaii, and led subsequently to an appeal to the United States for the annexation of the kingdom. This belief is now beyond dispute. The Washington administration, after careful investigation, has declared that its own officials were at the bottom of the whole affair. The action of these officials has been repudiated, and the administration has declared that the government of Hawaii must be restored. This will be the cause of great chagrin to the schemers, after all their plotting to throw the islands into the arms of the United States. The action of the United States government, however, in refusing to accept dominion over the kingdom of Hawaii in

this dishonorable fashion, is most praiseworthy. It is an honorable example to set to the nations of the world. The better class of United States citizens will feel satisfied with the action of their government, no matter how much they might desire the expansion of the national domain.

The republic is great enough as it is. The United States is a magnificent country, vast in extent, compact in form and wonderful in its resources. There is vast room at home for the expansion of the already large population. The government has a great work in serving the interest of its present consolidated domain, without looking to the acquisition of isolated territory to divide its interests and engage its attention. The chief aim of the government should be to make the United States the home of a contented and prosperous people. The present domain is extensive enough to ensure a vast population and give the people all the greatness they should long for as a nation. There could be no higher aim than to further harmonize and consolidate the nation within its present domain, and advance the condition of citizenship to the highest attainable pinnacle. The acquisition of territory abroad is necessary neither to the greatness of the nation nor to the comfort of the people. On the other hand it would tend to international complications and unpleasantness, and retard the harmonizing of present interests. With its vast extent of compact and fruitful territory, the republic can well afford to be "out of the swim" in the intriguing which is constantly going on among the nations for the acquisition of new domain.

### PURCHASING POWER OF WHEAT.

We hear a great deal about the low value of wheat these days, but people seem to overlook the fact that wheat is really of more value now than it was some years ago. The value of a commodity is its purchasing power, and the purchasing power of a bushel of wheat is greater now than it was ten or twelve years ago. We repeat, that a bushel of wheat at 40 to 50 cents per bushel, is worth more to the Manitoba farmer to-day than it was ten or twelve years ago at 75 cents to \$1 per bushel. The Manitoba farmer should find wheat as profitable a crop to-day at the current low values as he did in the "boom" days of a decade ago. The bushel of wheat will to-day go as far in purchasing his necessities and supplying his needs, as the bushel would some years ago when the price was high, and when the industry of wheat growing was considered very profitable.

At first glance the superficial reader may doubt the assertions above, but proof is easy. Do you ask proof? Binders sold some years ago in Manitoba as high as \$350 each. It would take about 466½ bushels of wheat, at 75c per bushel, to buy a binder in those days, and a mighty poor machine at that was secured. Now an infinitely superior machine can be purchased at about \$130 to \$140 on time, and the ready cash will buy them even lower. At 45 cents per bushel it will take only 311 bushels of wheat to buy the farmer a first class new binder, on credit, making a saving of about 155 bushels. In other words, 311 bushels of wheat at 45 cents per bushel, is

worth as much to the Manitoba farmer to-day as 466½ bushels were some years ago. We could go on and multiply examples by the column, of this nature, but it is not necessary to do so. What is true of binders is true in a greater or lesser extent of about everything the farmer requires. He paid fabulous prices for imported horses a few years ago, a great many of which died before he got much value out of them, because they were not acclimatized, and could not stand the poor stabling and long drives which they were subjected to here. Now the price of horses to the new settler is reasonable. We hardly need to refer to fencing material and building material, and provisions and clothing and everything else, which cost about double or treble present prices. Then farmers went in debt very freely in those "boom" days and paid interest rates on goods bought on credit which would make the very shylocks of to-day look aghast.

Altogether as one scans over the list of values now and a dozen years ago, the conclusion must be that wheat is a very dear commodity at present prices. Either this, or it must have been amazingly cheap when it sold years ago for 75 cents to \$1 per bushel.

Why is it then that there is so much grumbling about present unprecedentedly low prices for wheat, when the grain is really worth more now (that is, will buy more of the necessities of life) than it was ten or twelve years ago. Perhaps the answer is, that the difficulty is in wiping off these old scores and making up for the extravagance of the past. When it comes to paying for rotten binders which cost 450 or more bushels of wheat at 75 cents per bushel, and dead horses which cost 200 bushels of wheat at \$1 per bushel; paying for buildings and fences which cost fabulous quantities of wheat at 50 to 90 cents per bushel—when it comes to paying for these with wheat which will now bring only 49 cents per bushel, it is certainly a hard row to hoe. Millions and millions of bushels of wheat have been poured into rat holes in Manitoba—thrown away for useless or unnecessary farm machinery, for dead horses and for excessively costly commodities of all kinds. This is largely what the country is suffering from to-day, though the relative value of wheat as a medium of exchange is greater now than it was a few years ago.

There is still a waste of wheat on account of high tariff taxation. We will not attempt to estimate the number of bushels of wheat that are being poured every year into the high-tariff rat hole in Manitoba, but a vast pile is going into this unsatiable maw. Let us plug up the high-tariff rat hole, and the value of every bushels of wheat will be further increased, or what is the same thing, the purchasing power of each bushel will be increased.

Low and all as the price of wheat is to-day, Manitoba offers a better field for settlement now than it did in the boom days. New settlers coming in can obtain what they require at moderate prices. At present values all around, they will be able to pay for machinery and other requirements much more quickly than they could when grain prices were double what they now are. While grain prices are likely to