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TARIFFS AND FOODSTUFFS.

The "Montreal Star" is making a frantic effort to prove that the reduction in the tariff on food stuffs entering the United States has not lessened the cost of living in the neighboring Republic. The paper in question sent a special representative to a number of American cities with instructions to interview corner grocers, butchers and disgruntled housewives whom he might happen to locate doing their weekly shop-pings. The result of his findings was chronicled in the "Star," and was to the effect that tariff reductions in foodstuffs had no effect in reducing the cost of living.

It is, however, true in this life that we can find pretty much anything that we seek. If a person seeks diligently to find evidence to uphold some pre-conceived idea he possesses, he is very likely to secure sufficient evidence to bolster up his prejudiced views. Undoubtedly, the special envoy of the "Star" was sent out with instructions to show that the reduced tariff had not decreased the cost of living. It is not difficult for any person to receive complaints from housewives and others in regard to the rising cost of commodities. There is a world-wide increase

in the cost of living, and the United States is affected thereby in spite of the reduction of duties on food-stuffs. This world-wide increase in the cost of living is largely due to a lessened production and to a variety of other causes.

In the United States, there has been a decrease of many millions in the number of cattle in the past few years and, at the same time, an increase of millions in the population. It is significant, however, that on the very day that the tariff reduction went into force, thousands of Canadian cattle crossed the border, with the result that the cost of meat in Canadian cities advanced, while there was a considerable reduction in the price paid by American consumers.

In such an investigation as the "Star" carried on, the work done must of necessity have been local and incomplete and, consequently, unsatisfactory. We would prefer to take the evidence of Bradstreets or that of the Government, whose index number covers the whole country, and not merely the testimony of the "Star" and a few disconsolate housewives. A recent issue of Bradstreets points out that for the second time in two months their index number reflects a fall in commodity prices, the figures working out at \$8.8619 on February 1st 1914. This num-