

THE TRADER.

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THE OUTLOOK.

For some time past it has been patent even to the most superficial observer, that times had not only improved but were better than they have been for many years past. Of course politicians will explain this return of prosperity exactly to correspond with the views of the political party to which they are attached. With one side our prosperity is owing entirely to Providence sending us such bountiful crops, and creating a better demand for our lumber in the American markets; with the other, Providence is but a small factor in the national prosperity which is entirely owing to the political foresight which conceived and put into execution what is commonly known as our National Policy.

While there is probably much truth in both lines of argument, we think the whole truth lies with neither, but rather in combination of both. The fact is, we are now prosperous from a combination of circumstances, and although we may theorize till we are tired about the cause of the change, we are pleased to know that the effect still remains, and that the country is prosperous whether we can account for it satisfactorily or not.

From every quarter the reports are extremely favourable, and it requires no very keen discernment to predict that we have now before us a long era of prosperity.

Our trade and financial returns show a most cheering state of affairs. From the budget speech of the Finance Minister, we learn that from the estimates made last March, the receipts for the current year were estimated to be \$25,-

517,000, but calculating upon the actual receipts of the seven months already passed, Mr. Tilley now reasons on an income of \$27,586,000, the Customs revenues alone promising an increase over the estimate of nearly two millions. He expects at the end of the present fiscal year, to show a surplus of \$2,013,000, which is a striking contrast to our usual budget speeches of the past few years.

Business has been steadily improving during the past year, and the imports of dutiable goods have increased month by month to an extent which justifies the Minister of Finance in calculating that his receipts under this head alone, will show an increase of nearly two million dollars.

The value of our exports was greater during the past year than in any year since 1873-4, the highest that the Dominion of Canada has yet seen. The value of our exports for the first time in our history exceeded our total imports by \$1,421,711, and exceeded our imports for consumption by \$16,129,109. Our aggregate trade was \$159,693,807, as against an aggregate trade of \$151,892,863 or nearly \$8,000,009 of an increase. Our trade with Great Britain exceeds that of last year by \$18,018,498, and our trade with the United States has decreased by \$8,207,868. Our West Indian trade has been increased during the year by \$2,063,749, and our trade with China and Japan also shows an increase of \$425,944.

If these facts prove anything at all, it is that the country is sounder financially than it has been for many years past, and that it only requires that we should continue to display the same energy and self-reliance in the future to secure a great and permanent prosperity.

TICKET SCALPING.

Most of our readers are aware that the attempt of the Grand Trunk Railway Company to get an Act passed by the Dominion Parliament for the prohibition of "ticket scalping," has signally failed. Their petition was met by a counter petition, praying that no change be made in the present arrangements, and that Parliament do not interfere in the matter. The result was that the petition of the Grand Trunk Railway was defeated, and to all intents and purposes the occupation of "ticket scalping" declared a legal one by this parliamentary decision. That the decision was a wise one few will question who are not in some way

interested in the profits of railroading. As we pointed out several months ago in writing about the extortionate passenger and freight rates which were being levied by our through lines to the great disadvantage of the Canadian and the advantage of the Yankee, the business of ticket scalping is only a legitimate outcome of an abuse which should long ago have been remedied by parliamentary interference.

The counter petition of the Scalpers forms a very serious indictment against the Grand Trunk Company, and proves conclusively that in almost every instance the interests of Canadians are subordinated to those of the Americans.

Thus any person purchasing a ticket in any of the company's offices in Canada is compelled to pay twice as much for it as a person buying a ticket in the United States to another point in the same country over the same road. For instance, the price of a second-class ticket from Boston to Chicago, via Montreal and Toronto is \$18.00, while the price of the same ticket purchased at local rates is as follows:

Fare from Boston to Montreal.....	\$8.00
" " Montreal to Toronto.....	6.65
" " Toronto to Detroit.....	4.75
" " Detroit to Chicago.....	6.00

Total..... \$25.40

or a difference in favour of the American Traveller of \$12.40. If this is not an extortion upon the citizens of Canada, we would like to know what is; and further, if it were not for this great discrepancy between the local and through rates as instanced above, the evil of ticket scalping would have no existence.

Take, for instance, the case of a knowing passenger coming from Boston to Toronto via Montreal; the fare between these points is \$14.00, while as before stated, the fare from Boston to Chicago is only \$18.00, thus it is cheaper by \$1 to buy a ticket through to Chicago than it is to Toronto, which is a little more than half the distance to Chicago. Now if this \$1.00 was the only saving to be effected, very few people would hesitate to avail themselves of the advantage, but when to this is added the fact, that when they get to Toronto they can easily dispose of the unused portion of their ticket, viz, from Toronto to Chicago, to the ticket scalper for a few dollars, it will be readily seen that the Railroad Companies themselves provide an incentive for this traffic, such as one but a natural born idiot, or a person regardless of wealth, would fail to take advantage of.