

In times of depression it is the interest of those who have overstocks of goods to sell them to foreigners, and Canada had been for years what was termed the slaughter market for the United States manufacturers. The very fact that the United States has never had a large foreign demand for its manufactures, rendered it more desirable for them to get rid of their surplus in Canada. There is another weak point in the opposition case, which is their persistent demand for the right to make treaties with foreign nations, which can only be accounted for, on the assumption that this power is sought with the view of enabling Canada to enter into bargains for the mutual imposition of discriminating duties, in other words, protection in its very worst form. Mr. Blake has been particularly prominent in advocating this change, and there can be no doubt as to its object. We venture to affirm that those who claim the right cannot offer a single argument in its favor other than that it would enable Canada to discriminate, and probably against Great Britain.

THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

It is satisfactory to find that Mr. Blake was not inclined to prolong the controversy on the subject of the Canadian Pacific railway. He still, like others, complains of the "enormous rapidity" with which the work has been put through, but he has entirely failed to show what evil consequences are to be apprehended therefrom. It really seems as if the circumstances under which the construction of this great public work was undertaken were wholly forgotten, for Senator Alexander is not the only recent writer, who has treated the subject as if the road eastward of the Rocky Mountains was a perfectly legitimate public road, while the extension to British Columbia was of at least doubtful expediency. It must be borne in mind that the overtures for the admission of British Columbia into the Dominion came from that Province, and that the construction of the railroad was the chief condition. There was an alternative proposition to give a longer time for the construction of the railroad, but this was conditional on the making of an ordinary road immediately. It was deemed to be for the interest of the Dominion to save the cost of one of the two roads, and especially as it was not for the interest of the Dominion to postpone the construction of the railroad.

There are doubtless in our mixed population some, who fail to appreciate the importance of securing the amalgamation

of the Pacific Province with the other portions of the Dominion. The Government, which was called on to deal with the question, was impressed with the desirability of securing the entire British territory between the Atlantic and the Pacific for the Canadian Dominion. The United States had, by the purchase of Alaska, manifested its sense of the value of territory in the immediate vicinity, and it would have been dangerous to have refused the overtures of the Government of British Columbia. It has been held by a recent writer that the Government ought to have undertaken the construction of the road as a public work, as it did the Intercolonial railroad, but, however such a policy might have suited engineers and contractors, the members of the Government who had had practical experience of the construction of the Intercolonial were thoroughly convinced that in the interests of the public it was infinitely preferable to entrust the work to a company.

Before entering into arrangements of any kind it was determined to obtain the sanction of Parliament to the subsidies in land and money which it was well known would be required by any parties who would venture to undertake the work. When that sanction had been obtained, the Government was most anxious to find capitalists who would undertake the construction of the road on the conditions which had been sanctioned, but a considerable time elapsed without any proposition from people in Canada. It is well known that overtures were made to the Government on two or three occasions by American citizens, but that they led to no result. Those capitalists subsequently applied to Sir Hugh Allan, with the avowed object of obtaining his co-operation, and, through him, of other Canadians, in what was intended to be an American company. It happened most unfortunately, but quite accidentally, that just at this time a general election was pending, and as the opposition of the day was violently opposed to the whole scheme of the construction of the railway, Sir Hugh Allan was led to take an active interest in the success of the Government candidates. But for the accident of the occurrence of the general election, there never could have been a suspicion of undue influence, as the Government was obliged to conform to the conditions, and was ready and anxious to accept offers from suitable persons. Far from promoting Sir Hugh Allan's views, the Government positively refused to permit the association of American capitalists in the scheme, and this led the disappointed speculators

who were thirsting for revenge to make an effort to damage those whom they blamed for their exclusion from what they imagined would have been a successful scheme. A change of Government followed, but when Sir John Macdonald was restored to power, he adhered to his old policy of subsidizing a company to build the road. Those who have systematically endeavored to injure the company have evinced a want of patriotism that is anything but creditable to them. It is the interest of the Dominion that the Pacific Company should succeed in the enterprise which they have undertaken, and all patriotic Canadians should give them any encouragement in their power.

THE AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL DEPRESSION.

The above is the title of a very interesting article, contributed to the January number of the *London Fortnightly Review*, by Mr. Stephen Williamson, a gentleman connected with the shipping interest, one of the industries which has suffered most severely from recent depression, owing, as the writer admits, to "mistakes and miscalculations, which it is utterly beyond the power of the House of Commons to remedy." The first subject treated in the paper is agriculture, and the question is asked: "Ought we to look at the present depression in many departments of trade and agriculture as an economic fact to be deplored, but temporary in its duration? Or are we bound to look at it as chronic, and as involving political grievances of a serious nature, which an intelligent Legislature should seek by legislative acts of a protectionist character to remedy?" The conclusion of the writer is that the first question must be answered in the affirmative, and the last in the negative, and in support of his opinion he appeals to facts.

He alleges that the *Farmer's Friends* have been founding their outcry on the excessively low price of English wheat, while barley and oats having been selling at normal prices. The price of wheat it is admitted, has been abnormally low, averaging about 32s a quarter. It is said that the world's yield of wheat, exclusive of China, may be taken last season at 225,000,000 of quarters, while the entire European demand beyond their own consumption is about 25,000,000 quarters from the nations which grow wheat for export. The excess beyond the ordinary requirements which has been pressed upon the markets of Great Bri-