

**The Farmers and the Tariff**

*Toronto Globe.*

Discussing the possibilities of improving the trade relations of Canada and the United States, *The Globe* remarked a few days ago:—"The farmers of Canada are said to be in favor of the free interchange of farm products with the United States. If this be so, the various farmers' organizations would do well to say so in some official way before negotiations with the United States are begun." In response to this suggestion a valued correspondent directs attention to the following extract from a memorial sent to the Dominion Government on December 18, 1906, and signed by J. G. Lethbridge, Master Dominion Grange; James McEwing, President Ontario Farmers' Association; D. W. McCnaig, President, and R. McKenzie, Secretary Manitoba Grain Growers' Association:—

"We therefore ask in the coming revision of the tariff that the protective principle be wholly eliminated; that the principle of tariff for revenue only—and that revenue based on an honest and economical expenditure of the public funds—be adopted; and as proof of our sincerity we will, if this position is adopted by the Government, gladly assent to the entire abolition of the whole list of duties on agricultural imports."

The memorial, it will be observed, was presented just before the revision of the tariff in 1907, when there was no question of improving trade relations with the United States. In effect the farmers belonging to the organizations represented said that they were willing, in the event of the adoption of the principle of tariff for revenue only, to open the Canadian market for farm produce to the competition of the United States, even if the market across the line still remained closed to Canadian farm products because of the high duties levied on Canadian exports. Our Government were unable in 1907 to frame a tariff entirely with an eye to revenue requirements, nor is it likely that during the coming revision the protective features will be entirely eliminated. It may be argued that the leaders of the farmers knew very well that a purely revenue tariff was an impossibility in 1907, and that in making their offer to accept the principle of free imports of farm products they were insincere and did not really favor free importation.

The present occasion is a more serious test of the attitude of the farmer toward the agricultural schedules of the tariff. There seems to be a real desire at last on the part of the people of the United States to lessen the tariff. A despatch to *The Globe* from Boston recently says that Mr. Taft believes the entering of the wedge will be made in the agricultural products schedule. If the same rates are imposed on both sides of the line the people of the two countries may be expected to go forward and extend the principle of equal rates—no doubt free interchange is included in the phrase—to other products.

It is this specific proposal of market for market that is likely to be up for consideration during the winter. The standpoint of the farmers four years ago cannot be regarded as a sufficient indication of their attitude today. Some expression of their views will no doubt be given when the joint deputation of eastern and western farmers goes to Ottawa in November to discuss the duties on manufactures, but in the meantime journals specially in touch with the agricultural community would perform a real public service by giving opportunity for an immediate discussion of the question. The political crisis in the United States has forced the Republicans to reverse their traditional high protection policy, and Canada should at least know her own mind when she is asked by the President of the United States to discuss the tariff.

Our present exports of animals and farm products to the United States are so small relatively to our total exports as to be almost a matter of indifference. Last year of cattle the produce of Canada we sent \$9,979,918 worth to Great Britain and \$642,674 to the States. Horses we sent to the value of \$453,186 to the States and \$66,815 to Great Britain. The United States is still our outlet for sheep and lambs, which were exported to the value of \$569,677 to the United States, while Great Britain took but \$11,441 worth. Of our poultry exports, too, because of their contiguity, the United States took practically all, the value being \$111,241. When we come to the great staples of the farm, however, the relative present value of the two markets becomes

apparent. We sent cheese to the value of \$21,481,566 to Great Britain and \$23,995 to the United States; butter, Great Britain, \$587,493; United States, \$199,854; bacon, Great Britain, \$6,422,747; United States, \$7,338; hams, Great Britain, \$413,645; United States, \$340; barley, Great Britain, \$744,470; United States, \$66,608, whereas a generation ago barley exports to the States were our greatest cash producer; wheat, Great Britain, \$49,267,736; United States, \$1,883,647; flour, Great Britain, \$8,872,698; United States, \$571,938; oats, Great Britain, \$508,300; United States, \$534,680; oatmeal, Great Britain, \$1,050,188; United States, \$9,422; prepared cereals, Great Britain, \$1,229,028; United States, \$17,870; hay, Great Britain, \$922,718; United States, \$673,220; flax, Great Britain, \$2,796,502; United States, \$741,349; potatoes, Great Britain, \$259; United States, \$345,903.

There is no need to continue the enumeration. The figures presented indicate that we have been well in Great Britain that the United States market by the Dingley and Payne-Aldrich duties on agricultural products, but that we have done so well in Great Britain that the United States market is no longer of vital or even of great importance. The question is, does it afford a sufficiently profitable outlet for sheep, lambs, hay, potatoes, and the like to warrant the admission of similar products duty free from the United States?

Our imports of agricultural produce from the United States are of very little consequence. We took wheat last year to the value of \$55,139; barley, \$99,810; Indian corn, which we use extensively for feeding, \$4,636,133 duty free, and \$551,119 dutiable for purposes of distillation; oats, \$13,833; cornmeal, \$106,322; cereal foods, \$212,021; flour, \$156,001; hay, \$141,956; hops, \$140,792; horses, \$397,903 dutiable and \$378,153 free for the improvement of stock; sheep, \$131,492; hogs, \$2,140; hams and bacon, \$816,042; lard, \$1,347,887; cheese, \$45,287; butter, \$16,163; pork, \$930,049; mutton and lamb, \$68,606; canned meats, \$44,985; beef (salted), \$75,815; cattle, dutiable, \$25,150; free for improvement of stock, \$32,600. The removal of the duty on most of these items would no doubt increase importation at some points along the border, but the removal of the United States duty would increase exportation at other points in an even greater degree;

What do the farmers think about it? Is market for market worth while either on an absolutely duty-free basis or by the fixing of an equal duty that will be as near as possible to abolition?

**Forest Fires—A National Menace.**

During the past summer forest fires have been devouring the growth of centuries with ruthless rapacity. Northern Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia have suffered most. Pine tracts of merchantable timber worth millions of dollars have been destroyed, square mile upon square mile of young growth coming on to supply the demands of the future has been wiped out of existence. In Northern Ontario, where but a thin layer of vegetable mould covers the rocks, the soft, oozy forest floor, the only hope of vegetation and equable stream flow has been completely destroyed, leaving a cheerless rocky waste for generations to come. Even if no thought be given to the number of lives lost, it must be admitted that the loss occasioned this year by forest fires has been nothing short of appalling.

Can nothing be done, then, to prevent this loss? The answer is that much can be done. The solution of the problem is indicated in two words—public sentiment. The two principal causes of forest fires are campers and railways, and public opinion must be brought to bear upon these. The tourist-camper does not at all realize the extent of the damage which his unextinguished camp fire may do. Laws against leaving camp fires burning are already on the statute books, but it is quite evident that their observance rests mainly with the tourist himself. He must be impressed with the very serious nature of his offence. If a man sets fire to a building, he is convicted of arson and sent to prison as a felon, but if his unextinguished camp fire burns down millions of dollars worth of timber and perhaps destroys human life as well, he is, at best, made to pay a small fine. When public opinion views this carelessness of the camper as a criminal act and frowns upon him accordingly, considerable progress will have been made in lessening the number of forest fires from this cause.

But it is the railways that spread the most destruction. Traversing, as they do, the great lone stretches of un-

inhabited timber areas, the sparks from their locomotives start numerous fires that gain great headway before being detected. Too often the right-of-way, piled thick with inflammable rubbish, furnishes a tinder-box for these conflagrations. The owner of destroyed property along the line has found it almost impossible under the present laws to get damages from the railway company, so difficult is it to fix the responsibility, and so expensive is the process of litigation. In order to lessen the number of fires due to this cause, the Committee on Forests of the Commission of Conservation has proposed to make the railways pecuniarily responsible. It has recommended that there be added to the Railway Act a clause making them liable to a fine of \$1,000, recoverable by summary prosecution before a stipendiary magistrate or two justices of the peace, for every fire started by sparks from their locomotives. It makes no difference whether the fire begins outside the right-of-way or spreads therefrom to adjoining land. The railways are exempt from the fine if they can show that they have the best modern appliances on their locomotives to prevent the emission of sparks, that their employees have not shown negligence in conducting to the starting of the fire, and that they have maintained an efficient and properly equipped staff of fire-rangers. In other words, the Committee proposes to lessen the number of fires caused by sparks from locomotives by having the railways fined for the damage they do, unless they take every possible precaution to prevent such damage. This is obviously a fair recommendation as regards both the railways and the public, and the effort to have it made law is worthy of public support. Every Canadian is deeply interested in the protection of our forests; for each forest fire means that he and his children will have to pay higher prices for every foot of lumber they use. Such a measure, for the preservation of our forests, as that recommended by the Committee on Forests of the Commission of Conservation should, therefore, commend itself to every public-spirited citizen and newspaper in Canada.

**Is the Average Man of To-day Lacking in Thrift and Foresight?**

*Bonds and Mortgages.*

Some time ago a careful examination was made of the records in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Rhode Island covering estates of nearly 50,000 deceased persons. The result of this examination showed that less than 2,000 of the dead ones left individual estates, the value of which exceeds \$5,000. The great majority were like butterflies that live brief lives, during which they flit from flower to flower, and in a moment they passed away and were forgotten. The most of these persons lived careless lives, though there were some of them who were counted as successful. Certain of them were in business and had large transactions, but when their affairs were finally settled they had remaining less than \$5,000. The average man is, it again appears, sadly lacking in thrift and foresight.

It would be humorous if the tragic element could be eliminated, but when the question obtrudes itself, "What becomes of the families?" there is nothing funny about the 40,000 improvident ones. Think of it! Only five men in every hundred conducted their affairs successfully enough or kept the money they had saved or made safely or had protected their families through the medium of insurance so their dependents had at the last even so small an income as \$5 per week or \$250 per annum. If it be true that 90 per cent. of a percentage that approximates 90 per cent. of all business men fail in their enterprises, it is easy to understand the difficulty of building up a successful business. Only the few do it. Even when a man makes money it is uncommonly hard to keep it after making it.

The September number of "THE ATHLETIC WORLD" magazine has just reached this office. In up-to-date sport affairs and illustrations it is strikingly stronger than the August issue, which created such a favorable impression as a Canadian athletic and outdoor periodical, covering all branches of sport in Canada, with a liberal number of sport happenings over the world generally. We predict a full measure of success for "THE ATHLETIC WORLD" in its able efforts to espouse the cause of good sport in this Dominion.