

"As to closer trade relations, the Liberals have always been in favor of free trade with the United States, and I am prepared to make an arrangement with your country for the free exchange of such natural products and such manufactured articles as may be mutually agreed upon. This question, together with those of deep waterways and fisheries and the coasting trade of the lakes, should, it appears to me, be all taken up together and dealt with in a broad, serious and comprehensive spirit, on one anvil. I observe that the bonding privilege has recently been discussed in the United States Congress. Let that question be taken up along with the rest. The alien labor law of the United States, which has created a good deal of unpleasantness, should be included. In short let us have a thorough understanding and better relations all round.

There is nothing new in this statement regarding trade relations. It simply affirms the willingness of the administration to enter into a reciprocal treaty with the United States on certain specified articles. Every administration which has existed in Canada since confederation, has been willing to do the same thing, and several unsuccessful attempts have been made to secure a reciprocity treaty with the United States. The opposition has always come from the other side, and unless the situation in the United States has changed considerably, Mr. Laurier is no more likely to succeed than has been the case with past efforts in this direction.

The most important part of Mr. Laurier's remarks refer to the canal question, at least so far as central western Canada is concerned. In this connection Mr. Laurier expressed himself as hopeful that a feasible scheme would be found, which would enable the two countries to unite to open a deep water-way from the head of the lakes through to tide water. His exact words were as follows:

Commissioners have been appointed by the Governments of the two countries to consider the question of a deep water-way system, and I am in hopes that a perfectly feasible scheme will shortly be reported—a scheme that will enable the United States to participate in the work and exercise a joint control without in any way compromising the sovereignty of Canada over its own territory. It should be a purely business arrangement, with nothing political about it.

While Mr. Laurier hopes that a scheme may be evolved upon which the two countries can unite, it is really very doubtful if the canals will ever be dealt with in this way. The most feasible route for a deep water-way is through Canadian territory, and there would appear to be little reason to believe that the United States would bear any share of the cost of opening a deep water system through foreign territory.

As to the immense advantage which the proposed deep water-way would be to the people of both countries, there is no reason for doubt. It would certainly be the greatest thing which could be accomplished in the interest of the western farmers on both sides of the boundary. It would give them less freight rates both outward and inward, and remove the disadvantage under which the western farmers now labor, through being situated so far in the interior of the continent. It is greatly to be desired that this great water-way should be opened out,

but Canada could hardly be expected to carry out the work and throw it open to the United States on the same terms as to citizens of our own country. At the same time it seems questionable if the United States will enter into a plan for the construction of the deep water-way jointly by the two countries.

THE MANITOBA CROP.

The August crop bulletin of the Manitoba department of agriculture has been issued and will be found on another page of this issue. It bears out what has already been reported regarding wheat sown on stubble land without plowing, namely, that it is a failure in most cases. After throwing out 50 per cent. of the area sown on stubble as worthless, the average yield of wheat for the province is placed at 18.57 bushels per acre, making a total of 18,565,198 bushels. The August estimate last year was 25.5 bushels per acre, and a total of 29,139,815 bushels.

The deduction of 50 per cent. of the wheat sown on stubble from the total area, makes the wheat area for 1896 less than in any of the three previous years, but greater than in 1892. The wheat area in 1892 was in round figures 876,000 acres, 1,000,000 acres in 1893 and 1891, and 1,140,276 in 1895. The area for 1896, after the deduction noted, is 999,598. The total aggregate yield of wheat is greater than in any previous year except two, these being 1891 and 1895, when the final estimate was 23,191,000 bushels and 31,775,000 bushels respectively. Considering the reduced area on account of the late spring, and the unusual loss of hail storms this year, the returns are by no means unsatisfactory.

The total yield of oats, placed at 16,633,000 bushels, is greater than in any previous year, except 1895, when it was 22,555,000 bushels. In 1891, the next heaviest year, it was 14,762,000.

The total crop of barley, estimated at 3,696,460 bushels, is greater than in any previous year, except 1895, when it was 5,645,000 bushels. In 1891, the next heaviest year, it was 3,200,000 bushels.

Flax shows the greatest falling off, owing to the reduced area. The yield is placed at 11.2 bushels per acre, making a total of 288,615 bushels, as compared with about 1,250,000 bushels last year.

One of the most gratifying features of the report is the large area of land prepared for wheat next year. New breaking and summer fallow total up 111,320 acres, compared with 307,025 acres last year. This area of 441,320 represents land already prepared for wheat next spring, indicating that the crop area next year will be the largest in the history of Manitoba.

The damage done by hail is shown in the low average yield of crops in the south central district, where most of the hail damage was done.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

We hope our friend of the Winnipeg Free Press will not consider The Commercial guilty of plagiarism, owing to the similarity of views presented in an article in this issue of The Commercial, to an article which appeared in the Free Press a few days ago. We refer to the article

dealing with Mr. Laurier's remarks to a Chicago newspaper man. The Commercial article was in type before the Free Press article was published. It is simply a case of two gigantic intellects, etc.

THE financial statement of the Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition association is very gratifying. The statement shows receipts of about \$23,000 and disbursements of about \$21,000. The association will have a nice little balance to the good, after allowing for no liabilities to mature during the balance of the year, and providing for sinking fund and interest on the \$30,000 loan received from the city.

MR. NOSSEZ, Japanese consul at Vancouver, contemplated arranging a plan to send a number of Japanese farm laborers to Manitoba, to work in the harvest, but he abandoned the idea owing to the agitation in British Columbia against the admission of Chinese and Japanese immigrants. The consul says there are about 1,000 Japanese in British Columbia. In Japan laborers are content with 25 cents a day.

It is reported in an Ottawa telegram that the government will place a sum in the estimates to cover the outstanding liabilities of the exhibition held at Regina over a year ago. It is to be hoped that this report is true, and that these liabilities will be speedily liquidated. The Regina exhibition was to all intents and purposes a government affair, and the government is morally, if not legally bound to pay the legitimate claims against the exhibition management.

THE new minister of marine and fisheries—Hon. L. H. Davies—is already in trouble with the British Columbia salmon canners. Owing to the late date at which the salmon run started this year, the minister extended the season for taking salmon five days. The run of salmon was very large and the canners put up a large pack notwithstanding the lateness of the run. They did not want the season extended, as they feared it would have the effect of depreciating prices, in view of the heavy pack made. The minister, no doubt, thought he was giving the packers a benefit in putting off the close season for five days. This shows the great care with which matters concerning trade have to be handled. Undoubtedly in this case the minister has done an injury rather than a good turn to the interest he no doubt desired to serve. In matters affecting business interests, it would often be better to consult with those most directly interested before making a change.

The September number of The Delineator is the handsomest and most striking issue of that publication yet issued, containing nine beautifully colored plates, illustrating dress modes and millinery. Of value to young ladies having vocal aspirations is Clementine de Vere Sapio's article on Singing as a Profession. Mrs. Maty Cadwalader-Jones puts much sprightly good sense into a discussion of the Abuse of Reading. A short story by Clinton Ross, called "The Lady of the Portrait" has a clever finale. A paper on Interior Decoration by France Leeds, etc. The Delineator Publishing Co., Toronto, Ont.