

HARMONY OF INTERESTS.

HOW PROTECTION AFFECTS THE FARMER.

Among the large exporters of food are Ireland, Canada, Russia, and the United States.

The first exports both food and population. The bulk of her trade is altogether outward, and the food has to bear all the voyage out and home. The yield to the producer is therefore small, and tends rapidly to diminish; the consequences of which are, famine, pestilence, and depopulation.

The second exports food and lumber, and imports some population for home consumption, and much that is exported to the United States. The excess of export is, however, sufficiently great to throw nearly the whole weight of the voyage out and home upon the producer.

Neither of these countries has any protection against the colonial system. The food they export comes back to them in the form of cloth and iron, duty free, and almost freight free, because the bulk of the traffic is in the outward direction.

Russia exports food, but she protects manufactures, and thus makes a market for much of it at home. Her capacity to supply grain is, by one authority, stated to be equal to 17,000,000, and by another 5,000,000 of quarters, (153 and 252 millions of bushels of 60 pounds weight), and we are told that—

“In the years when there is no foreign demand for this surplus, a portion of it is employed, with little regard to economy, in fattening cattle for the butchers, and for the sake of the tallow. Much is absolutely wasted, and the remainder, left unthreshed, becomes the prey of birds and mice.” Also, that “if a foreign market could be found for it, Russia could easily export annually 50,000,000 of quarters of grain, (equal to 450,000,000 of bushels of sixty pounds weight.)”

The system of that country is adverse to the growth of wealth and intelligence. Large armies and hosts of officials are maintained out of her heavy taxes, paid from the earnings of the producing classes, while the existence of serfdom, and the necessity for giving so large a portion of the lives of the healthiest and best formed of the population to the business of carrying sabres and muskets, tends to prevent the existence of any hope of improvement; and without hope there can be little disposition for exertion. Nevertheless, as we see, the Russian has food to waste, while Irishmen perish, by tens of thousands, of starvation.

In this country the system of protection exists. It is now limited to thirty per cent.; and for the last twenty years it has but once, and for a very brief period, been at a lower point. By its aid there has been produced a diversification of pursuits, that enables men to economize much time and many things that would otherwise be wasted, while women and children find employment at such wages as enables them to be large consumers of both food and clothing. Wages are high, and hence it is that there is so large an import of the most valuable of commodities—man.

We imported last year about 300,000 persons. Estimating their consumption of food at twenty cents per day for each, there was thus made a market on the land for the products of the land to the extent of twenty millions of dollars. Their transportation required the constant employment of 250,000 tons of shipping, and ships carried freight to Europe at very low rates, because certain of obtaining valuable return cargoes. The farmer thus obtained a large home market, and the power of exporting cheaply to the foreign one; and so the conjoined operation of these two causes is due the fact, that wheat and flour have continued so high in price.

We may now, I think, understand many curious facts now passing before our eyes. Food is so abundant in Russia that it is wasted, and yet among the large exporters of food to Great Britain is this country, in which it sells at a price almost as high as in Liverpool, and now even higher. The produce of Russia has to bear all the charges out and home; and the consequence is, that the producer remains poor and makes no roads; and thus the cost of transportation, internal and external, continues and must continue great. The farmer of the United States sends his produce to market cheap, because the return cargo, being chiefly man, is valuable, and the space it occupies is great. He therefore grows rich, and makes roads, and canals, and builds steamboats; and thus is the cost of transportation, internal and external, so far diminished that the difference in the price of a barrel of flour in Pittsburgh and in Liverpool is, when we look at the distance, almost inconceivably small.

The bulk of the trade of Canada is outwards; and the consequence is, that outward freights are high, while our imports of men and other valua-