

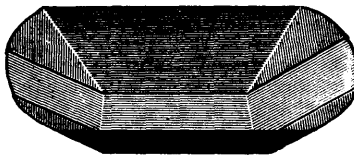
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### Size of Fruit Packages.

The sizes of most packages for fruits and vegetables vary in locations, says the *Rural New Yorker*. For example, the Cape Cod cranberry crate holds thirty-two quarts, while the New Jersey crate holds thirty quarts. Cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuce and sometimes egg plants come in barrel crates. Beets, green peas, string beans, tomatoes, onions and some other similar articles are in crates holding about a bushel. The smallest bushel crates come from Bermuda and the largest from Norfolk. Charleston sends large quantities of octagonal crates. Tomatoes from Key West come in crates holding about a peck apiece, each tomatoe being wrapped in paper. When potatoes in bulk are sold by the barrel, 180 pounds are counted a barrel. The barrels have a capacity of about 165 pounds of packed tubers. English and Scotch potatoes come in 163-pound sacks. All the coarser vegetables, as well as apples, etc., come in ordinary barrels, holding about two and a quarter bushels. A keg of pears means about a bushel. Some barrels, evidently made on a fence machine, with the pickets close together, are used for cheap and light vegetables from the south. A barrel made from splints, something like a basket, is sometimes seen. A dozen of celery usually means a dozen roots, though it happens sometimes, when the roots are small, two or more roots are counted as one.

### The Coming Bi-Metallic Conference.

There has been no end of opinions published in the press of this country and of England, during the month, on the coming bi-metallic conference of the great commercial powers of Europe with the United States, and no end of the diversity of those opinions as to the outcome of the same. The majority, however, favors the belief that no immediate result will be reached at this meeting; that the silver or bi-metallic countries will not consent to materially lower the existing standard of value for silver compared with gold, and that the single standard countries will refuse to accept a ratio fixing the price of silver, much if any, above its present bullion value. This is regarded as the stumbling block in the way of immediate practical results from the conference. On the other hand, the increasing interest taken by the manufacturing, industrial and commercial classes of Great Britain, in favor of the adoption of silver as a part of the circulating medium of that country, as shown by the increasing number, and influential character of the deputations that have waited upon the British officials in charge of this conference, shows a rapidly growing sentiment in favor of the double standard in that hitherto strongest hold of the single standard theory; and, it is not expecting too much, that the commissioners appointed by that government will be empowered to make concessions that would hitherto have been impossible, on the part of any administration,

either Liberal or Tory. As the question is undoubtedly one that will be finally settled by the action of Great Britain and the United States, it certainly seems as if everything was favoring the final adoption of the double standard by the great commercial nations of Europe. Such action, even though delayed by radical differences of opinion and interests at first, will no doubt eventually dispose of the vexed silver problem that has threatened the finances, as well as the commercial interests of this country. With the removal of this silver millstone from the neck of trade, the outlook for both financial and commercial interests in this country, would decidedly improve, by establishing a future basis of value that is not likely to be interfered with by new legislation at Washington when ever there is a change in the party controlling congress or the administration of our government. Could the other great stumbling block to our industries and their permanent prosperity, also be removed, in the shape of constantly changing tariff legislation, and some settled and permanent policy fixed upon, that should not be upset with every change in the administration of our government, the chief causes in the present depression in all branches of trade and industry would be permanently removed, and this country would enter upon a period of general prosperity, such as has never been experienced. Happily, both these problems seem to be approaching a solution that shall be just to all interests, and one which will take them out of party politics, as has been done in England years ago and removed from the political arena, where business interests are subject to party necessities.—H. A. Pierce in *The Bankers' Magazine*.

### Taxation of Personal Property.

The annual report of the State Assessors of New York for 1892 says that the laws for the assessment of personal property have failed to do their work, and that the failure becomes more complete and more unjust with each succeeding year. They propose to raise all taxation for State purposes from personal property alone, and to this end they advocate the enactment of laws relieving real estate from taxation for State purposes, and also other stringent measures that would reach all forms of local personal property for local taxation, and that would compel all property to pay its just share of local expenses. They advise the abolition of the right to deduct just debts from the value of personal property, as a remedy for a great part of the errors of our tax system. This opinion is quite contrary to the opinion of those who profess to know most about the correct methods of taxation, but it must be admitted that it fits into the more popular opinions prevailing on that subject. The old-fashioned argument against the taxation of personal property is, that in many cases it is successfully evaded, and the only residuum left is a large amount of deception and lying and general deterioration of character. These con-

siderations have been quite sufficient with many economists to lead them to conclude that the best kind of property to tax was that which could be seen and handled, and concerning which lies and false returns were of no avail. The persistence of the movement to tax personal property no doubt springs from the fact that the profits derived from the land are diminishing, while those from the various forms of personal property, so-called, are much greater. The item of taxation, therefore, has become a much more important one than it was formerly, in view of the diminished income from capital, and especially from investments in real estate. It is certain, therefore, that the agitation is likely to continue until either the expenditures for governing are lessened, and in that way the burden of the taxpayer is somewhat relieved, or else experiments will continue in the way of imposing a larger tax on personal property. Clearly the popular sentiment, whatever the economists may think, is strongly in favor of imposing a larger burden in some way on those who have the most wealth, and who, therefore, are the best able to bear it.—*Banker's Magazine*.

### Coal Oil.

In the House of Commons Dr. McDonald (Huron) moved the other day a return showing the quantity of coal oil imported into Canada from July 1891 to May 1892. Hugh J. MacDonald (Winnipeg) introduced a motion to permit the importation of petroleum in bulk. That motion has since been withdrawn. A deputation recently waited on members of the Government in support of the object aimed at in that motion, and a counter deputation, asked that importations continue to be restricted to packages, was received on Tuesday. All this shows that there is a good deal of interest centering on this question at the moment, and that whether importation in bulk is desirable or not is a matter of some controversy, opinions differing according to the hinge interests swing on. The domestic producers and refiners of crude naturally are opposed to anything that facilitates competition from outsiders, and therefore will do what they can to prevent importation in bulk. The proposal to import in bulk has not been accompanied by any request for a reduction in duty, but the concession of that mode of bringing in oil would free the importer from paying a material part of the petroleum duty, that is now got from the packages. The duty on the barrels is 40c. This would be evaded if importation in the tank cars were permitted. The expense of barreling and the cost of the barrels themselves would also be eliminated from the price of oil, and it is calculated that the total reduction in cost here would be equivalent to 1½c per gallon. The construction of tank cars would hardly be chargeable upon this saving, as the prices of the United States already support them. All the proposed alteration in the mode of shipping really asks is