

## HONEST GRAIN INSPECTION.

CHICAGO, July 24th, 1899.

EDITOR THE CONSERVATIVE,  
Nebraska City, Neb.

DEAR SIR: Could you kindly make known to the constituency reached by your paper of honest ideas the open letter I herewith send you from Charles J. Procter, President of the Corn Trade Association of Liverpool. In it he represents the position of English importers of American grain with reference to our "quite unreliable" systems of inspection. Mr. Procter but recently visited the United States and conferred with some of the prominent leaders of our grain trade at Chicago and elsewhere and with the Secretary of Agriculture at Washington with reference to this subject. I believe the only valuable point he was able to take back to England was the suggestion that English importers protect themselves, in the way our home dealers have found themselves forced to do, by employing private inspectors to go over grain officially inspected. It seems likely, however, that our English customers, rather than resort to the trouble and expense of finding supplements or substitutes for American official honesty, would prefer to buy our grain only on the f. a. q., fair average quality, system, just as they buy Russian, Indian and Argentine grain, the importer and not the exporter, thereby practically determining both the grade and the price that goes with it.

As the contract system of grain trading on our exchanges is based on the grades or standards established by the official state inspections it can be imagined that much confusion might result to our methods when our standards became no longer recognized or valid in the markets of the ultimate purchasers of our surplus grains.

That the grain-producing interests of the United States, as well as American commercial credit generally, are being seriously jeopardized abroad by the decreasing reliability of our inspection certificates became very evident to me during a recent trip abroad. When visiting such distributive centres as Liverpool, London and Paris, I found it freely intimated that, owing to the increasing risk of importation of American grain, it is now considered rather better to give preferential buying orders to those countries which send in their grain according to the more complicated but safer f. a. q. method.

At Buda Pest, where some importers had just made the experiment of buying some Kansas No. 2 wheat to mix with Hungarian grades, the result was so unsatisfactory that the experiment will, it was said, not be tried again—and the reason for the discomfiture of those whose experiment ought to have greatly enlarged the market for the grain product of the state of Kansas was simply

the disgraceful fact that the wheat, on its arrival at the port of Fiume, was found to be of a quality far inferior to that of the grade which had been officially certified to and paid for.

Most of the complaints of foreign importers relate to the specially faulty inspections of grain in the southwest, where it seems likely that Populistic inspectors, in their enthusiasm for cheap standards of value generally, have applied to bushels the same principle of low measure of quality that Bryan would apply to dollars.

Regarding other American shipping points, the trouble with grain from Baltimore appears to be that that city sometimes passes through with its own certificates grain arriving from Kansas City, while the only difficulty with No. 2 Chicago and No. 1 Northern Duluth is that after the official inspection, grain somehow often gets "watered" — in some cases, perhaps, by deliberate or careless mixture with the dishonestly inspected grades of grain from the Kansas-Nebraska country.

I believe you will agree that this unsatisfactory condition which involves such shameful discredit and perhaps serious future loss to this country, should be corrected, even if the business and legislative talent of the land is forced to evolve so radical a scheme as national and uniform inspections of grain as a substitute for the present varying systems of state inspection.

Yours truly,  
HENRY D. BAKER,

LIVERPOOL, July 5, 1899.

EDITOR CONSERVATIVE:

For some years considerable trouble and loss have arisen in our importing centres through the arrival from time to time of wheat and maize of inferior quality to the description required by the certificate of inspection relating to the shipment. There has also been a general tendency towards deterioration from several quarters, a tendency, we fear, encouraged by the laxity of inspectors on your side. These evils have found expression in protests signed by the Chamber of Commerce and official committees of the principal grain receiving ports of Europe.

These protests have been forwarded direct to all the leading American grain centers, and it is hoped that this action will draw immediate attention to an evil that is harmful to all engaged in the trade and, though profitable as a temporary expedient, is working havoc with the good name of American shippers and reducing the price to the producer.

For many years the basis of warranty of quality on an American contract was fair average quality of the season's shipments at time and place of shipment, and this is still the basis adopted by all countries shipping to Europe where an actual sample is not guaranteed.

In the case of America it was urged that as responsible certificates were

given at the various trade centers such might be relied on and thus save the possibility of vexatious reclamations.

The European trade gradually acceded to the suggestion, and for some years the grain business has been done on the basis of certificate final.

Many causes have been at work to undermine the integrity of these documents. There has been an unworthy competition, resulting in occasional shipments of inferior wheats much below what the standard called for, and these irregularities have largely discredited the value of the certificates. Should the same tendency continue, importers would have again to insist on guarantee of sample or a fair average quality basis.

It is to be hoped that the various centers in America will face actively the difficulty of the situation and introduce such internal reforms as may secure the confidence of European buyers in a matter of vital importance to all concerned.

CHARLES J. PROCTER.

COMMENDED FROM PITTSBURG.

PITTSBURG, Pa., July 29, 1899.

EDITOR CONSERVATIVE:

I cannot refrain from expressing to you the pleasure derived from reading the editorial notes and comments on the first three pages of this last issue. I lay aside the paper and take up my pen to commend you for the incisive way and manner in which you puncture popular shams. But I fear with the great mass of American people "it is casting pearls before swine." The people love to be humbugged. P. T. Barnum accumulated in an unprecedentedly short time two immense fortunes humbugging the American people. The race of people never was created that can withstand the corrupting influence of our public schools and public press, inculcating as they do the man-degenerating sentiment of state and national government paternalism. Your editorial, "Revenues From Vice," portrays the fruitages in the fewest possible words. Bryanarchy and populism are the only logical means of promoting this type of paternalism. Just as the present war, a crime against the Christian civilization of the world and a disgrace to the American people, is the logical result of McKinleyism; and all these diabolisms emanate from our sham republicanism and travesty upon democracy.

Yours respectfully,  
J. B. COREY.

PAGE FENCE. The continuous-ly growing popularity of the Page wire fence in Nebraska is as marvelous as the growth of corn in this state. Capt. Enyart is now using it in Colorado where he has one line of fence fifty miles in length, and Joy Morton has recently put a good many rods of Page fence about his estate a half a mile north of Arbor Lodge.