

Exports are increasing rapidly and were 50 per cent greater than ever before during the last six months of 1899. The total exports of wire for the first eleven months of 1899 were 241,922,967 pounds; of wire nails 62,996,401 pounds.

These tremendous exports and the prices at which they are made indicate that there is no need of protection and subsidies at home—except for the officers of the trust who are trying to capture "90 per cent of the world's trade."

Will the farmers who are building rail fences because barb wire is too expensive feel like voting to continue a tariff system which compels them to pay 88 per cent more for fencing wire than foreigners have to pay for the same wire? Large quantities of barb wire were exported from New York in December, 1899, at \$2.20 per hundred although the home price was raised at the end of the month from \$2.88 to \$4.13.

Canadians Not Most Favored Foreigners.

Apparently all foreigners are not treated alike. To be most favored and to reap the full blessings of protection you must not only be a foreigner but you must reside at least 3,000 miles away from the land of McKinley and Dingley. Thus our neighbors, the Canadians, must pay for the privilege of living so near to us. However, the trust treats them better than it treats Americans. On December 2, 1899, Canadian Hardware, a Montreal publication, said:

"Retail dealers in the United States pay \$3.70 f. o. b. Cleveland for carlots for barbed wire and \$3.80 for less than carlots, while the figures quoted to the retail trade in Canada is \$3.25 f. o. b. Cleveland for carlots and \$3.35 for less quantities.

"Plain wire is quoted to the Canadian dealers \$11 per ton lower than to the home dealer.

"The explanation of these differences in prices is that, in the home market on account of high customs tariff, the United States manufacturer has a monopoly, while, in catering for the Canadian trade, he has to bring his prices down to a point that will keep out the product of British and German manufacturers."

How to Exalt Our Farmers.

As the duties on barb wire and on wire nails are less than the difference between home and foreign prices and as our trusts, especially our tariff-nurtured ones, always display a decided preference for foreigners, it might be that the abolition of these duties would not put us on a par with Europeans in the matter of prices. It would, however, be certain to elevate us to the level of Canadians. It would be some satisfaction to our farmers to feel that they were as good as Canadians; and perhaps the reduction in price of only one cent

per pound on wire and nails would again start the building of wire fences and of houses and barns. We suggest that our statesmen at Washington try the experiment.

Wages and Labor.

It somehow happens that every time this trust raises wages in one of its departments the increase is heralded as one of the beneficent effects of great combinations. Recently many ponderous articles in great republican papers have been based upon the assumed fact that the supposed 36,000 employees of this trust are getting 40 per cent higher wages than before the trust was formed. Such misleading statements undoubtedly have a common source.

The facts appear to be that the new trust did on March 1, 1899, raise the wages of its employees who were getting less than \$2.50 per day from 5 to 10 per cent. In June, 1899, a few of the steel and wire workers probably shared in the general 25 per cent advance obtained by the amalgamated association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers. On January 1, 1900, the trust advanced wages of tonnage workers, workers by the hour and day laborers $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. As usual it was announced in the papers that this "advance was unsolicited and unexpected." Possibly! But the Iron Age of January 4, 1900, contains a telegram from Pittsburg which says that "the National Association of Rod Mill Workers has presented a scale of wages to the American Steel and Wire Company calling for an increase in present rates of from 3 to $21\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The men have asked for the restoration of the wages in force prior to 1893 and a uniform scale. The company are given until January 15th to answer and it is not expected there will be any trouble in arranging a satisfactory settlement with the rod mill men."

Going back to the steel and wire trust of 1898 we find that in July, 1898, it reduced wages from 10 to 45 per cent in nearly all departments of all of its mills. In Newcastle, Pa., the reduction was 10 per cent; in Cleveland, O., $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent for fine wire drawers; in Anderson, Ind., 10 per cent for the rod men, 45 per cent for the wire drawers, and nail men required to run twelve instead of seven machines. At Anderson, Ind., Findlay, O., Cleveland, O., Salem, O., and Beaver Falls, Pa., the mills were closed because the workmen would not stand the heavy reductions in wages. At Cleveland the men were still on strike in October, 1898, and the trust, according to reports, was refusing to arbitrate.

It is probable that the totals of all the pay rolls of all of the mills and works in the trust were less in 1899 than they were in any previous year since 1890, although the Iron Age of January 4, 1900, says that "the tonnage in wire and wire nails of 1899 was very much the largest in the history of the trade."

Mr. Gates admitted that five plants had been closed and dismantled. It is probable that many others are closed much of the time. Thus the New York Times of January 5, 1900, when announcing the $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent increase of wages, stated that only two of the trust's fence-wire plants were in operation.

But the wage workers will more fully appreciate the benefits of this trust when demand for its product falls off greatly and when it attempts, by closing mills and restricting production, to maintain high prices and pay dividends on its highly diluted stock. Such a time will surely come.

JOHN DEWITT WARNER.

New York, January 9, 1900.

ARBOR DAY.

OMAHA, Jan. 8, 1900.

EDITOR CONSERVATIVE:

Enclosed please find a slip from the Montana Journal, published in Butte by my nephew, Hermann Rosenzweig, who learned the printer's trade in the office of the Nebraska Staatszeitung in the early seventies. The article, translated into English, reads as follows:

"The secretary of public instruction for the Kingdom of Italy, Bacceli, conceived early in 1899 the idea of introducing the American "Arbor Day" in Italy, for the double purpose of inculcating thereby on the youthful minds a proper esteem and reverence of the works of nature in general and of promoting tree-planting more especially.

After the sympathetic holiday had been celebrated in hundreds of communities with the greatest success, it has recently been observed in Rome for the first time.

The selection of the grounds for the solemn and yet exhilarating performance could not have been more magnificent, four kilometer (about three miles) beyond St. John's gate on the historic Appia Road, where the old Latin graves are situated.

All the scholars in Rome in the higher grades of study had joined in the march and after singing in front of the queen's pavilion a "Hymn to the Forest" they planted thousands of small trees, the festal excursion being favored by most delightful weather."

P. S.—It is fair to presume that the founder of Arbor Day is mentioned frequently and due credit given him at every recurrent celebration in Italy and other countries, and upon this subject I would like to hear particularly from Church Howe, our consul in Palermo.

Very truly yours,

DR. F. RENNER.

PRAYERS.

Colonel Bryan now closes his speeches with prayer. He asks God "that the democratic party may go down to death when its principles are gone." The colonel may have a baggage check for alleged principles but never takes them with him onto the rostrum.