

RECIPROCITY A HUMBUG.

Exchange of commodities, or other services, spring from natural economic impulse and conditions. Legalized interference with this natural impulse to exchange services—that is with free trade—called protective tariffs, inevitably develops into a system of international reprisal, differing little from piracy. Intensive protective tariffs have produced a state of commercial war between the several countries of continental Europe and in which the United States is also involved. Each of these countries has issued letters of marque and reprisal in the shape of increasingly restrictive tariffs in the commerce of the other. This condition and temper of commercial warfare is similar to the condition and temper of warfare in what we call barbarous times, when no quarter was given to combatants, or when prisoners were held for ransom. A more enlightened public opinion and spirit brought about a material amelioration of the barbarities of common warfare. A like spirit of rebellion against the barbarities of protectionist commercial warfare is now fondly looking for amelioration in reciprocity. But unlike the rule for the speedy exchange of prisoners, and the suppression of other excesses and irregularities of ordinary warfare, which are humane and equable, affecting all the belligerent parties alike, reciprocity is simply a discriminating agreement in favor of a single industrial interest or a limited number of industrial interests, in each of two countries at the expense of all the rest; and so, like the false and burdensome system of protection, whose intolerable injuries it is put forth to relieve, it is a humbug. It is easy to illustrate the delusion of reciprocity by reference to the amounts of our products which various countries bought during the year ending with last June:

Great Britain.....	\$631,266,263
Germany.....	191,072,252
Canada.....	107,789,233
Netherlands.....	84,352,470
France.....	78,923,914
Belgium.....	49,390,259

Great Britain takes, free of duty, more than half the products we export, and about three-quarters of all our agricultural exports. Without her free patronage we should feel very much like shutting up shop in our agricultural districts, at least. Supposing, furthermore, that under the humbug of reciprocity we undertake to buy a free market in the ports of some comparatively petty customer, like France, or even Germany, which places a very high tariff on the same important products we are allowed to sell in England free? In the very nature of business this complication

would arise and England would find a way to retaliate against our inequity and injustice. In short, to put in practice the humbug of reciprocity is to set about, with malice aforethought, to kill the goose that lays our golden egg. A few years ago free traders were told that they could not point to England as an example of superior commercial and manufacturing growth under free trade, because England was an independent capitalistic country, while we were dependent borrowers. Now we boast of our superior riches and of our manufacturing ascendancy. In the present intense industrial struggle it is easy to see that free-trade England is better off than her competitors, France and Germany, who are harassed in the vain attempt to equalize tariffs and to make the delusive promise of the humbug reciprocity come true. The United States is now a world power in commerce and manufactures. Does the commercial policy of England or that of Germany and France seem the most promising for us?

Again, Canada is the third largest buyer from the United States, and of the grand total of her imports from us 73 per cent are let in free of duty. Her tariff duties are only half as high as ours. Canada buys three times as much from us as we buy from her, leaving out of account the precious metals. The agricultural west particularly needs her lumber, coal and fish. Her main imports from us are manufactures of iron and steel. We are now so strong, as manufacturers and agricultural producers, that Canada could not possibly injure either of these interests under free trade, while free trade would tend to greatly increase her purchases from us. It will be practically impossible for us to favor certain importations from France and Germany under reciprocity, without offending our great Canadian customer and driving her to retaliation. Reciprocity is an attempt to patch up a truce with a dozen warring nations, while the underlying cause of war, the protective system, remains in force. This is why it is a humbug.

MUZZLE NOT THE OX.

The editor of The Conservative has been quite severely criticised, in certain quarters, because he has advertised for men to cut cordwood, at Arbor Lodge. By the same rule of reasoning, it will be seen that the man who feeds the cow intelligently, for the purpose of increasing her flow of milk, is then barred from consuming any of the lacteal bounty which his wisdom and care caused to flow in abundance; likewise it is perfectly plain that he who plants and tends the golden grain, should be the last person to expect profit from the harvest.

MODEST.

Ex-Senator Allen, in the Madison, (Nebr.) Mail, has shattered an idol, by declaring that Thomas Jefferson assumed credit for the work of others; that he was really a very common-place individual, and did not write the Declaration of Independence. Very well; what populist did then? The Fremont (Nebr.) Tribune opines that it was either Jerry Simpson or Anna Diggs, but The Conservative is of the opinion that it surely must have been a certain rotund statesmanette who once spoke fourteen hours and some odd minutes, in a successful attempt to break the world's gabbing record, but whose innate modesty prevents his claiming Jefferson's halo, until after he shall have planted his own burly frame on the soft, yielding cushions of the presidential chair.

THE WRONG SYSTEM.

Of late several cases of alleged brutality on the part of school teachers have been aired in the courts, and in each the jury has allowed mercy to temper, if not to defeat, justice; one teacher being released upon the ground that bruised portions of a boy's anatomy do not turn black within less than twelve hours after an injury is inflicted. As a matter of fact, any man, who as a boy felt the full force of some sturdy youngster's fist, during the recess, well remembers that the point of contact was as black as a state treasurer's record when he faced his mother across the evening board. This was a mere subterfuge.

Inflicting deserved punishment is one thing; venting your spite by committing mayhem, another; which reminds us that there once was an old-fashioned pedagogue who with his hickory rod and stern-faced command to "take off that jacket" is gratefully remembered as a much safer person in whose hands to place the custody of a child's moral and physical being, than is the modern feminine peppercot who seems prone to punish for revenge rather than for the good of the pupil.

Any young rascal who cannot be reduced to a state of subjection without being maimed or disfigured should be promptly expelled from the school, as his attendance is of no benefit to himself and is a menace to the morals of his school-fellows. On the other hand, a preceptress who cannot curb young America without vivisectioning him, may as well lay aside the raw-hide, and seek employment in some abattoir, where the desire to mangle may be more satisfactorily and remuneratively gratified.

In cases where punishment is deserved, it should be administered, and no sensible parent will object; but there is a place for everything, and bruises and welts on a boy's face are decidedly out of place.