

TRADE WITH CANADA.

The Senate having under consideration the bill to admit certain articles of the growth or production of Canada into the United States free of duty, upon the condition that the like articles of the growth or production of the United States are admitted into Canada free of duty; the question pending being upon an amendment heretofore submitted by Mr. PHILIPS:

Mr. DIX said: Mr. President, since this bill was taken up for discussion, I have been unable, from indisposition and other causes, to bestow upon it the reflection which is due to the importance of the subject. But I will proceed, nevertheless, with such preparation as I have been able to make, to explain the objects of the measure and its probable effects; and I will endeavor, at the same time, to answer some of the leading objections which have been made to it.

If I entertained the belief that the operation of the bill would be prejudicial to the interest of any portion of the Union, I should not be its advocate. The first object of all public legislation is to advance the general welfare of the country; but this object ought certainly not to be sought for at the expense of any particular section, or indeed of any single interest. I believe this bill is entirely free from objection in this respect; that it will be eminently advantageous both to the United States and Canada, and do no wrong or injury in any quarter.

Before I proceed to examine the practical operation of the measure upon the commercial interests of the two countries, I wish to notice a preliminary objection which has been raised.

It is supposed that the privileges conferred by this bill upon Canada will be extended, by virtue of certain reciprocity treaties into which we have entered, to the foreign States with which those engagements have been contracted. I take a totally different view of the subject. I believe Senators have put an erroneous construction upon the obligations of the compacts to which they refer.

We have reciprocity treaties with Russia, Denmark, Hanover, Prussia, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the Hanseatic Republics, and several other foreign

countries. They are treaties with sovereign States, and, by every fair rule of construction, their stipulations, so far as they guaranty reciprocity, must be deemed to relate to engagements with other Powers equally independent. The commercial arrangement proposed by this bill is with a European colony adjoining us—one of those dependencies which the States of the Eastern hemisphere are accustomed to except in their compacts with us for reciprocity of commerce and navigation. If any of the States with which we have treaties stipulating for the same privileges which we confer on others, had dependencies situated like Canada in respect to us, those States might perhaps acquire in respect to such dependencies the same privileges we shall confer on Canada if the bill passes; but I do not admit that they would acquire those privileges for their metropolitan possessions, and for the reason that colonies have always been made practical exceptions to the general rule of international intercourse. Possibly a special reservation may be necessary in every compact, from the provisions of which it is designed to exclude them; but I do not, as I shall show, consider it a matter of any consequence in this case. This we know in respect to Canada, that it is not only expressly excluded from the terms of our commercial intercourse with Great Britain, but it is the subject of distinct stipulations; and yet the British Legation, in accordance with the wishes of the Canadians, has urged this measure upon us under instructions from home, without the least idea that they would gain for Great Britain under our reciprocity treaty with her the privileges they desire us to confer on Canada.

The honorable Senator from Maryland [Mr. PEARCE] said that we had "given a construction to these reciprocal provisions worthy of notice," and he alluded to our treaty with Portugal in 1840, by which it was expressly agreed that the stipulation in our treaty with France in 1831, in regard to French wines, should not be interfered with. This