

to trade over a large area. If Canada be joined with us we shall have a trade area of 6,000,000 square miles." Reciprocity, or unreasonable trade concessions to the United States, would make the first serious chapter in the history which would one day chronicle complete annexation.

Sir William Priestley, an English member of parliament, has just visited the Dominion. Although a strong free trader in his own country, he stands firm as a protectionist in Canada. The natural tendency of youth, be it national or otherwise, is for adequate protection. As a country grows, population increases, resources are developed, and manufacturing interests take a hand in the world's market, this desire for protection becomes more feeble. By granting reciprocity to the United States, or concessions meaning the same thing, a nation of less than 8,000,000 of people would be pitted against a nation of more than 80,000,000 in a battle of commerce and manufacturing. That such should be the case, would be all the more pitiful, because every country exercising its national instinct to trade, is desirous of buying from and selling to Canada.

Without any fostering, many agents are at work making holes through the tariff barriers erected around the international boundary line. Through these are running our trains and thefts. The railroad steel knows no country. It caters to freight of all nationalities. All kinds of money help to pay dividends. A disposition there is to divert our freight traffic through American ports, a matter which may become a serious drawback to the general development of the Dominion. Mr. Whitney says that if the United States were to admit Canadian grain free of tariff charges, much of it would stay with them for home consumption and a portion of it would go through their ports to foreign lands. That is exactly what we do not want, for then comes the possibility, as suggested by Sir George W. Ross, that Manitoba wheat might easily lose its identity by passing through elevators at St. Paul or Chicago and thence by boat via the Erie Canal to American ports for the British market. If it lost its identity, the price would necessarily fall to the level of the American grades of inferior quality, which do not command the highest price. As Sir George Ross says: "The safety of the Western Canadian farmer is to send his wheat through Canadian channels with its identity unquestioned rather than through American channels, where it would lose its distinctive character, or perhaps be used to bolster up the quality of an inferior article, to the loss of Canada but to the profit of the American speculator in grain."

The importance of the question of ports is recognized in the adjoining republic. The Montreal harbor commissioners perhaps have done much in Canada for port improvement, and the same will be accomplished for St. John, Halifax, Quebec. Mr. Whitney, of Boston, says that New York, Boston and Portland are the natural outlets for the foreign trade of Eastern Canada, and he thinks that the Canadian Atlantic ports are not to be mentioned in competition with the American Atlantic ports for passenger business. Here we fear his enthusiasm has run away with discretion. It may be that New York, Boston and Portland are the natural outlets for Eastern Canada exports, but they are not our national outlets, which is a far more important point. Mr. Whitney may live long enough to witness the rapid development of Canada's ports and harbors. The elevators for storing and handling Canadian grain he thinks should be located his side of the line and our steamers should at least winter in New York, Boston or Portland.

We are told by powerful New York interests that the commercial annexation of Canada is long overdue. This expresses the neighboring national feeling. During the past five years, more than 400,000 Americans have come to dwell among us for the same reason which now impels their country to sweep away tariff barriers. The reason is that Canada is a country of almost virgin opportunity. These 400,000 and the hundreds of thousands

who came before them were probably responsible for much of the free trade wail which arose in the Canadian West during Sir Wilfrid Laurier's recent tour.

Western Canada admits its dependency, for manufacturing supplies and capital requirements, upon its Eastern brother. That its desire for free trade relations with the United States is seen in the latest trade statistics. The provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan paid last year duty amounting to \$6,019,269, and received in customs duties \$7,315,356. The hankering of the former American citizen for goods, at a low price, which he used to buy in his home town, is quite natural. The desire to make lower tariff duties help to counterbalance personal extravagance is also natural. To appeal for cheaper goods from a foreign country at the expense of the Canadian manufacturer, whose faith and capital is invested in the Dominion, is selfish. In addition to the American sentiment, so strongly marked in Western Canada, there is another factor to be considered, one which would result from a weakening of the tariff wall. That is the influence of the American trust or combine, which in certain lines of business, dictates prices and legislation. Their influence is already felt in this country as in the case of the packing house and the oil trade. The big American trusts could soon work havoc among Canadian industries. There is every reason for the Ottawa government at the coming conference to preserve Canada's national individuality in a commercial sense. The Dominion is not sufficiently experienced or strong to give trade concessions to our neighbors, concessions which will irreparably damage our future.

#### TELEPHONE RATES.

The Railway Commission, through its chairman, Judge Mabee, has made plain that its official probings are not to be regarded as superficial. In other words, the commission's investigations must be looked upon as real investigations. Two important hearings have yet to take place, those respecting telephone and telegraph rates. The Bell Telephone Company has already notified its intention of increasing the rates in Toronto, one argument being that those in the city should pay higher rates in order to give those in the newly-annexed districts a lower rate. In this connection it is interesting to learn of the powers of the Public Service Commission of New York State, which has recently acquired jurisdiction over the telephone and telegraph companies operating there. One of its first acts has been to make an order requiring the New York Telephone Company to file a schedule showing the number of pay stations operated within the city of New York, together with the gross earnings received therefrom.

The commission has also required every telephone corporation under its jurisdiction to file with the commission schedules which will show by each exchange separately those of its patrons or subscribers who are receiving telephone service of any character at rates or charges which vary or differ in any respect from the standard rates adopted and now in force for contracting new business.

The commission has also ordered that all telephone companies under its jurisdiction file a schedule showing all rates, rentals and charges for services of each and every kind by or over its line or lines between points in this State, and between each point, upon its lines and all points upon every line leased or operated by it, and all points upon the line of any other telephone corporation whenever a through service or joint rate shall have been established between any two points.

Such schedules are required to show also all charges and all privileges or facilities granted or allowed and any rules or regulations or forms of contract which may in any wise change, affect, or determine any of the aggregate of the rates, rentals or charges for the service rendered. This is indeed a judicial probe.