

# The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 20, 1890.

## DUTIES ON IMPORTS FROM BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES.

In an article headed "Canada and the United States," *Bradstreet's* journal, of New York, usually a very reliable authority, makes a very serious blunder. That journal in speaking of the new tariff says: "The Canadian tariff is directed against us," that is the United States. This is a very erroneous impression, though one which prevails to a considerable extent in the United States. *Bradstreet's* has not analyzed the Canadian tariff, or it would come to quite a different conclusion. *THE COMMERCIAL* several months ago pointed out that the Canadian tariff discriminated very severely against the United Kingdom as compared with the United States.

It could be claimed with a great deal more show of reason, that the McKinley tariff was arranged to discriminate against Canada, though *THE COMMERCIAL* does not take this view of the case. The Canadian tariff was framed first as a matter of political expediency, and secondly, wisely or not, as a means of encouraging home industries. As a matter of political expediency, it afforded a party out of power a means of gaining office, and by this means the party has continued to hold office for years. With a view to encouraging home industries the tariff has been amended from year to year, just the same as has been the case in the United States. In order to prevail with the strongest type of British sentiment in Canada, which would favor the admission of British goods on more favorable terms than imports from other countries, as well as to conciliate the feeling against the tariff in Great Britain as much as possible, it was proclaimed at the outset that the tariff was intended to discriminate against the United States, on account of the duties imposed by that country on exports from Canada.

The statements that the tariff would discriminate against the United States was made for political purposes, but the impression made by these statements, though false, has remained to the present day.

As soon as the party which originated the high tariff policy came into power, a tariff was framed which practical experience has shown, discriminates against the United Kingdom, and in favor of the United States. That this is the case is due to conditions existing in the trade relationship of the countries, and not to any intentional discrimination in any direction. The Canadian tariff, it has just been stated, was intended to encourage home industries. As our imports from the United Kingdom are more in the line of manufactured goods, while imports from the United States represent large quantities of raw material, products, etc., it follows that the tariff will fall more heavily upon imports from the former country.

Our customs returns show plainly that the tariff discriminates against the United King-

dom. For the fiscal year 1888, Canada imported goods from Great Britain to the value of \$30,433,817, upon which duties to the amount of \$8,972,740 were collected. In the same year imports from the United States was \$15,513,790 upon which duties to the amount of \$7,100,231 were collected. This shows customs collections to have been nearly \$2,000,000 greater on imports from Great Britain than on imports from the Republic, though the total value of imports from the Republic was about \$16,000,000 greater than imports from Great Britain. In other words, 40 per cent. of the total duties collected by Canada in 1888 were on imports from Great Britain, while on a much larger amount of imports from the United States, only 32 per cent of our total duties were collected.

The figures for 1889 tell the same tale. On imports from Great Britain to the value of \$42,249,555, duties were collected to the amount of \$9,450,243, or 40 per cent. of the total duties collected in Canada for that year. On imports from the United States to the value of \$50,368,990, duties were collected to the amount of \$7,371,148, or 32 per cent. of the total duties collected for the year on imports from all countries. This shows the average rate of duty on imports from Great Britain to be about one-third higher than on imports from the Republic.

These figures should be sufficient to counteract the absurd idea prevalent in the United States that the Canadian tariff is especially directed against that country. If the Canadian tariff were entitled "an act to destroy trade with the mother country and extend it with the United States," it would be more in keeping with the facts of the case, than is the idea that the tariff discriminates in any way against the Republic.

## BUTTER.

Storekeepers at some points in Manitoba are paying higher prices for butter than the same commodity is worth in eastern markets. Manitoba appears to be making progress backward in the butter line, judging from the falling off in receipts. No doubt the lower prices this year discouraged some from making much butter earlier in the season. However, unless the butter trade is more satisfactory than it has been in the past, it will not be much loss if the quantity made in the country does drop off considerably. The only way to have the butter trade put on a good footing is to make only choice quality, and those who cannot or will not make good butter might just as well stop at once. Butter is too plentiful a commodity and there are too many competitors in the field, to allow of palming off poor stuff. Unless we make a good quality of butter, there is little use in endeavoring to work up a shipping trade, beyond local requirements.

One result of the expected short make of dairy butter this summer will be to encourage cheese factories and creameries, and this will be a decided improvement. Wherever the factory can be introduced to supplant the home mode of making butter the better it will be. Still in a thinly populated country like Manitoba, factories cannot be made to pay in many sections, and if butter is made at all in the more sparsely settled parts, it will have to be made by individual settlers. There is noth-

ing to hinder such settlers, if they will take the trouble, from making a quality of butter that will be readily marketable at a remunerative price. Farmers could readily put on ice during the winter for use the following summer, which would be a great assistance to them in making good butter. There has been some improvement of late years in the average quality of dairy-made butter, but there is still much need of further progress in the same direction.

## POTATOES.

Vegetables of all kinds have produced an enormous yield in Manitoba this year, the potato crop being especially very large. Potatoes are not an important crop in Manitoba in point of the area devoted to the crop. The large yield this year has made the supply considerably in excess of home requirements. The principal potato section is in that portion of the province adjacent to the Red river, especially in the vicinity of Winnipeg. Settlers close to the city have a ready market for a considerable quantity of garden stuff, and consequently more attention is devoted to vegetables in the Winnipeg districts than in any other parts of the province.

This year there was a great rush just before the new tariff came into force in the United States, to ship potatoes into that country so as to get them over the boundary before the date fixed for the higher tariff to come into force. Within the two or three weeks previous to the enforcement of the higher duties, over 100 cars of potatoes were shipped from Manitoba to the States, the bulk of these going from Winnipeg and other points in the vicinity of the city. The very unfavorable weather which delayed harvesting so long this year, operated to hinder the shipment of potatoes, as farmers had not time to gather their crops. Had the weather been favorable, the quantity of potatoes shipped before the higher duties came into force would have been very much larger. The duty has now been increased from 15 to 25 cents per bushel, and this has had the effect of about stopping shipments for the present. It is not likely that any considerable quantity, in addition to what has been already exported, will now be shipped before winter sets in. In the spring, with higher prices likely to rule, there may be further shipments of potatoes to the States, notwithstanding the high duties.

The average yield of potatoes in Manitoba this year is estimated at between 300 and 400 bushels per acre, and the quality good. The price realized by growers at Winnipeg, was from 25 to 35 cents per bushel, the bulk having been purchased at about 30 cents per bushel. This would make the crop very profitable to the growers, the value per acre being between \$90 and \$100 as compared with an average value of wheat of probably not greater than \$15 per acre. The cost of growing potatoes is probably not any greater if as great as wheat, so that the profit would be vastly in favor of the potatoes. Nevertheless nine out of ten Manitoba farmers would probably prefer to grow wheat alone, rather than "bother" with any other crops. A crop of potatoes is an excellent change for land, and the wonder is that they have not been