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### RECIPROCITY IN MANUFACTURES.

Referring to some remarks by the *New York Sewing Machine Journal*, relative to the establishment by the Singer Company of a branch manufactory in Canada, we invited our contemporary to say whether it approved of the old unfairness of free trade on one side of the border along with protection on the other. On which point the *Journal* thus replies:—

"It does not require any special boldness or bravery on the part of the *Journal* to say that it does not believe in any one-sided system. It is well understood, at least by those whose capital is invested in manufacturing enterprises, that such enterprises must be protected in a young and growing country, else they never would be entered upon, or if begun would have to struggle against fearful odds, and perhaps perish ere they gained maturity. Most manufacturers on this continent come within this category, those of Canada as well as those of the United States. Therefore, protection of home manufacture is and always has been a cardinal principle in our politics. The manufacturers of Canada being governed by the same circumstances, must of necessity follow the same course for self-protection, and no right minded person should take exception to it. If our sewing machine manufacturers do not care to pay a duty that they—through the government officers—compel Canadian manufacturers to pay under similar circumstances, they are not the kind of men we take them to be. Fair play is all they ask. To repeat what was said in the *Journal* last October when speaking on this same subject: "What is sauce for the Canadian goose ought to make the American gander palatable." and vice versa. Free trade in Canada and protection in the United States would be a little too one-sided for any sensible man to ask. But what does our esteemed Canadian contemporaries think of reciprocity between two such neighbors as Canada and the United States, whose interests are, and always must be, nearly identical?"

This means, of course, reciprocity in manufactures. As for reciprocity in farm and other natural products, similar to what we had under the old treaty, a standing offer of it has been on the Canadian statute book for now nearly four years. No long and intricate negotiations are required to bring it into operation: a brief official communication from Washington, stating that a law to correspond had been passed by Congress, would cause reciprocity in natural products to take effect at an early date thereafter. Section 6. of the Canadian National Policy Act, passed in the session of 1879, authorizes the Governor in Council to make free by proclamation all the natural products named (as in the old treaty) immediately the same articles are made free by the United States. By this plan there would be no treaty, but merely reciprocal legislation, which either party

could repeal at discretion at any future time, and without any necessity of giving notice. So much for reciprocity in natural products only. But what the *Journal* has in view is reciprocity in manufactures, sewing machines included, and we are asked what we think of that.

We have to reply that it would not do for Canada at all, for the reason that it would work ruin to our manufacturers generally. In most branches Canada is but a young manufacturing country, compared with the United States. Over the border the number is legion of individuals and of companies, far longer established and working on a far larger scale than anything we have to show on this side. In some branches we might probably hold our own—in woollen fabrics and in boots and shoes, for instance, and possibly in sewing machines to some extent. But in cottons, and in most kinds of iron and other metal work, the great companies of the States nearest to us would soon flood our markets and close up our factories, if there were open ports on both sides. American manufacturers would make big sales on our side, from Halifax to Winnipeg, but if Canadian manufacturers attempted to make sales in the Western States, they would find themselves "left" pretty badly. In manufactures generally the Americans are older, and greater, and stronger than we are, and we may as well admit that under straight reciprocity we would be beaten out of the field. We may safely enough offer reciprocity in natural products; but not in manufactured articles, at our peril.

During the war, and for years afterwards, say up to 1873, values were so enormously inflated in the United States that many manufactured articles could be and were turned out cheaper here than there. But that time and its peculiar circumstances have passed away, probably never more to return. Even supposing the actual cost of production were the same on both sides, our American competitors, with their far larger capital and far larger turn-out annually, would be able to seize and hold this market by selling at or under cost until Canadian competition was crushed out. We cannot afford to run the risk, either with the United States or with England. Those who think we should try it are cordially invited to state their reasons why. During the war, and for a number of years after it had closed, there were Canadian manufacturers who thought that with open ports on both sides they could compete with the Americans. We doubt whether there be any among them who remain of the same opinion still; but if there are, we should be glad to hear their reasons why, after times have so greatly changed.