

from four to five bushels to 14 to 15 bushels. Of American wheat the total in 1900 was 1 bushels exported from Montreal in 1900 was 10,000 bushels, and in 1911 that had increased to 10,000,000 bushels. So there is no doubt on this point, that the Canadian wheat has the preference. Now, the Canadian line is the best and the best at that. But, Sir, the question now has to be examined from the point of view of the United States with a view to our competition in that country. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden, Halifax), when he spoke upon this subject, stated that our policy ought to be to favour a freer trade. In this, Sir, everybody agrees. We all favour international trade in preference to trade with other nations, and I am prepared to admit with my hon. friend that the home market is the best for all kinds of products. But I have to observe to my hon. friend that this while import of our natural products and my hon. friend will not contend that the Canadian people can consume the whole production of our natural products. My hon. friend from Brandon (Mr. Sifton) the other day stated that the home market would require about 50 per cent of our production. It is difficult to secure reliable statistics upon this point, so as to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion how much of meat, of eggs, and of fruit is consumed by a population. This depends much on the income and wealth of population, but it is possible to obtain not only satisfactory, but conclusive evidence and statistics as to the amount of wheat which is consumed by a population, and it is far less than 50 per cent of our production. Thirty years ago, or thereabouts, the opinion was held that the consumption of wheat was about five bushels per head, and to-day I am satisfied it is much larger. I discussed the matter some few weeks ago with a prominent miller, and his opinion is that at the present time the consumption of wheat is between 6 bushels and 7 bushels per head. If that be the case, the Canadian consumption of wheat, assuming a population of 8,000,000, would be about 50,000,000 bushels. If that be the proportion of the consumption to the production of Canada, then Canada consumes only 50 per cent of her production of wheat. Where is the balance to go? My hon. friend who told me we have the English market, & we have, the English market quite ample enough to take the surplus production of wheat in this country for many years to come, although we are sure the production will increase tenfold by and by.

But, Sir, there are other products than wheat, which the British market cannot absorb, or cannot absorb with the same convenience as the American market can. The hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton)

speaks of hay in Quebec, and rather stated, although he did not say so, that the sending abroad of hay is bad business for the farmer. I can tell my hon. friend from Brandon (Mr. Sifton) that his hay will be exported from the hillside of the next townships of the province of Quebec, but as the Minister of Agriculture told my hon. friend from Brandon, we have in the province of Quebec natural meadows, which require no tillage and upon which the best of timothy has been grown not for 50 years, but for 100 years. Along the two shores of Lake St. Peter there are natural meadows a few inches only above the level of the water, which are yearly mowed, and which, to the knowledge of every one in the province, have been for a hundred years or more growing hay and nothing else. The counties of Perth, Montmagny and St. Maurice, on the north shore, and the counties of Sherbrooke, Yamaska and Richelieu on the south, are so situated that they have a population of, perhaps, 1,000, who are growers of hay and for whom this trade, if it becomes law, will be the most profitable. To-day they cannot sell any hay in the United States because there is a duty of \$4 a ton. Let the duty be removed and immediately there will be an immense trade in that section of the community, as there was some 30 years ago. This same thing applies in the case of eggs, poultry and mining products. For this reason it is to our advantage that we should have not only the British market, but the American market also. The hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) made the argument that if you were to adopt this arrangement our present facilities for transportation to Great Britain would become useless. I differ from him altogether. The trade will go on just the same, but we will raise more of those commodities than we raised before.

Then there is the cattle trade. Years ago we had a cattle trade with Great Britain. We have some yet, but it is not as large as it ought to be, because everybody knows that it has been constantly retarded by the embargo put on it some years ago or so, and, therefore, if we are not able to sell all the cattle we can raise in Great Britain there is a ready market in the United States.

Now, I come to a very important point. It has been stated in this discussion, and repeated in the press; indeed, this statement has been alluded to in Great Britain, that by this arrangement we were putting an end to every possibility of mutual preferential trade with Great Britain. My hon. friend from Brandon made that argument, and I have heard it from the other side of the House. I take positive issue with that statement; and I say more; that statement does not bear criticism; it has only to be analyzed for its falseness to be shown. Sir, on this side of the House have never taken part, we have refused to