

WOULD BRITISH INTERESTS BE INJURED?

In the discussion of the question of Commercial Union between the United States and Canada, there has been urged as an objection that in the consummation of this proposal British interests would be sacrificed; and the question now before a large number of the best people of Canada was, whether the perfect development of Canada was inconsistent with British interests? It was clear that Commercial Union with the United States would solve a great many problems, and by bringing all the resources of the northern half of the continent within easy access of the energy, the capital and the enterprise of the American people, a development might be expected similar to that which had occurred within the United States themselves. The opening of a market such as the United States afforded, would, it was believed, stimulate the growth of every article which Canada could with advantage produce; the productive forces, therefore, of her agricultural community might be enormously increased; while her manufactures, with the abundant opportunity of natural raw material, cheap labor, and a wide market, would in a very short time become of great importance, so that, not only in natural resources, but in agricultural products and in manufacturing activity, there was the promise of a great and most beneficial change, should Commercial Union be consummated. In order, however, that the bargain between the United States and Canada for the freest intercourse could be brought about, it was necessary that the natural products, merchandise and manufactures of both countries should be freely interchanged, without duty. This was but a natural condition precedent to Commercial Union. Its operation would, therefore, result in a discrimination against the manufactures and merchandise of Great Britain. Not that duties exacted upon goods imported from England would be much higher for any length of time than they now are; or that the barriers that now shut out from this country the products of the Empire of which we form a part would be permanently higher than they are now. But the difference would be that, while products of the United States now pay a similar duty to that of England, under Commercial Union no duty would be exacted. The question is, whether for the vast advantage which Canada can secure by the freest commercial intercourse with her great neighbor on the south, she is prepared to admit the products of that land