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# RECIPROCITY OR PREFERENTIAL TRADE—WHICH?

In our last issue, in discussing the merits of reciprocity between Canada and the United States, it was shown that the conditions of the two countries with respect to transportation to Europe, and the production and surplus of wheat, have undergone such changes as to preclude the idea that a renewal of the old treaty of reciprocity could possibly

result in similar benefit to Canada as was experienced during the years 1855 to 1866. While formerly the route via United States channels to the Maritime Provinces and to Europe was so superior to that via the St. Lawrence, that the great bulk of the export and import trade of Upper Canada was conducted over the former, now, the advantage of the St. Lawrence route over that through the United States is so marked, that a much greater volume of United States produce passes over the Canadian route than there ever was transported of Canadian produce over the United States route. It was also shown that the export trade of the United States, in wheat and flour, even up to 1866, was so insignificant that in that year its imports of Canadian wheat and flour largely exceeded the entire exports of these articles from the United States to all the countries of Europe. Now, the surplus of wheat available for annual export from that country averages 150,000,000 bushels. Hence, whether as to transportation or wheat trade, there is no analogy between existing conditions and those of thirty years ago. While the United States, during the old reciprocity treaty, was a large buyer of Canadian wheat and flour, the reverse has been the case since 1879, and during the seventeen past years. Canada has purchased for home consumption, from that country, ten times as much of these articles as it has sold to that country for its own consumption. As these imports from the United States have been subject to pretty stiff customs duties, they have contributed a very respectable amount to the revenue of Canada, and the duties levied have maintained prices here, to the great benefit of Canadian farmers. This is so clear that it is surprising that any intelligent politician should be rash enough to dispute it. Considerable argument is at present being based on the fact that since last harvest, the quotations for winter wheat in Toledo and Detroit have been higher than in Toronto; and on this fact, attempts are made to depreciate the value of protective duties on wheat and flour. It would only be fair on the part of those who use this argument that they should admit that the present season's quotations are exceptional, and that the relatively high prices of winter wheat in some of the States are due to the very poor yield and quality of that crop in these sections. In some of them which usually have a large surplus for export, the supply this season is so deficient that millers cannot secure sufficient wheat for grinding for the home trade. Owing to the unusual demand for Australia, Asia and South Africa, especially from the Pacific coast markets of the United States, the supply of winter wheats, as compared with spring wheat, is so deficient as to have caused an unusual difference in the prices of the two varieties. This state of things is sometimes experienced in all countries. At this very time, Manitoba hard wheat is quoted at ninety-six cents, g.i.t. in Ontario, when No. 1 hard Duluth, of like quality, is quoted at only ninety-six and three-eighth cents affort in New York, and about eighty-one cents in Duluth. If it had not been for the small crop of this season in Manitoba. no such price would be offered for Manitoba wheat, neither would such a price be now offered, if Duluth No. i hard could be imported into Canada, next April, free of duty.

The next crop, in extent and value, in which Canadian