

1874. MARCH. 1874.

Bryce McMurrich & Co.

WHOLESALE

DRY GOODS MERCHANTS.

LARGE

Additional Shipments

Received, and

STOCK IN ALL DEPARTMENTS

VERY COMPLETE.

Agents for sale of DUNDAS COTTON MILLS
MANUFACTURES.

WAREHOUSE—34 Yonge Street, TORONTO.

THE MONETARY TIMES,
AND TRADE REVIEW.

TORONTO, CAN. FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1874

CANADA AS A PURCHASER OF TRADING PRIVILEGES.

While the impolicy of indulging in much discussion on the subject of reciprocal trade with the United States at this moment, is undeniable—for reasons that need not be explained—we doubt whether the issues now at stake have received that attention which their immense importance demands. What was the origin of the present negotiations? It is well understood that a Commission under the terms of the Treaty of Washington was about to adjudge upon the comparative value of the Canadian and American fisheries, or rather upon the value of the right conceded to American fishermen of using our fisheries in common with our own fishermen. Only one result was anticipated from the labours of this Commission, viz: The assessment of a money compensation upon the United States as payable to Canada. It is a natural and we trust not an improper question to ask: Why was the moment of Canada's opportunity to have one item of her account liquidated—an item which went to her credit in the general settlement effected by the Treaty of Washington—seized upon to approach the Government of the United States with proposals for more liberal trade relations? And why, on the other hand, were these approaches, which had been spurned before on more than one occasion, encouraged just now by the authorities of the United States? The answer to the latter question is not

difficult. The certain prospect of paying cash was immediately in view; this issue must be avoided by a Government already in financial extremities, if escape were possible. A way of escape has, in our opinion, loomed up before the shrewd American mind in the shape of negotiations for reciprocal trade!

But reverting to the first question above we find it less easy to answer. Why was the present movement seized upon by our Government to open the question of reciprocity? The only solution we can arrive at is that the Dominion Government intend to cast in with the trade advantages we have to offer, the right to compensation for our fisheries also. We hold it as a certainty that this claim is bound to go by the board if the negotiations for reciprocity are successful.

What then is the objection to this course? It is this: *We are buying from the United States Government with money the privilege of trading with them.* It is this principle to which we object and against which we utter our decided protest. We do not forget that it may be claimed that a precedent for this suicidal policy was made in the arrangements of the Washington Treaty. There a large amount of cash (£15,500,000) as the event proved, was involved, and one of the items placed to our debit in the reckoning by which the settlement was reached, was the right conceded to the Maritime Provinces to sell their fish in the United States free of duty. This right, therefore, it may be contended was paid for in money or its equivalent. But even so, the precedent ought only to be cited in order to be condemned. It is utterly impossible of justification.

It has been asserted and reasserted on the platform, in the Press and on the floor of Parliament that we are not serious losers, in the aggregate, by the rescinding of the old Reciprocity Treaty. If this is the true state of the case why should we purchase a new treaty? Then it is contended for as a principle of free trade that protective—and much more so prohibitive—duties injure chiefly the country imposing them; and that our low tariff and consequent cheap living give us immense advantages as against our unduly protected neighbour. On this hypothesis what have we to expect in the way of trade advantages which is worth paying a round sum in cash for? The true doctrine and the right practice, acting from that point of view, would be embodied in some such terms as these: "The Americans are protecting themselves to death with their high tariff; we are growing rich under a more liberal tariff; we have therefore nothing

to seek for and are content to let well enough alone." Besides, failing all these considerations where is this policy to end? Once admit that we are willing to buy trading privileges; or in other words, to hire American legislators to liberalize their laws in so far as they concern us and it will soon be seen that we have undertaken a heavy contract!

But it may be denied that we are right in assuming that the fishery Commission would make an award in our favour. It cannot be denied that there is an element of uncertainty about the result. About our rights in the case we do not believe there can be much difference of opinion; and we are equally certain that the weight of probability as to the nature of the award is heavily in our favour. To abandon this vantage ground and permit our claim to be used merely as a lever to secure reciprocity is the step for which we fail to find an explanation that will be satisfactory to this country. Would it not be much better, to keep the settlement effected by the Washington Treaty intact? That arrangement should be worked out by itself, and should stand on its own merits. So the question of a reciprocity treaty should be suffered to rest also. When it is considered to be to the mutual advantage of both countries to renew their former liberal trade relations, the work of arranging for their renewal ought to be entered upon; but no sooner. Any attempt to reopen the settlement effected by the Washington Treaty is not only objectionable on the grounds stated, but is almost certain to result to our disadvantage. The expected compensation for the use of our fisheries must infallibly share the fate of the Fenian claims which have been consigned to the limbo of the official waste-basket there to remain forever.

IMMIGRATION.

The Report of the Minister of Agriculture has been laid before Parliament, and we are indebted to a correspondent at Ottawa for some statistics on immigration gleaned from it. The total number of immigrants who entered Canada during the calendar year 1873 was 99,109, against 89,186 in 1872, and 65,722 in 1871. A part of these, however, were not emigrants, in the proper sense of the word, to Canada; but passengers for the Western States who had selected the line of the St. Lawrence and the Suspension Bridge as the shortest and cheapest route to their destinations. The numbers of these immigrant passengers who have passed through Canada for the