

TRADE WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

The last number of the *Canadian Gazette* contains a comparative report of the trade between Canada and Great Britain for the years 1885 and 1886. From the statistics presented it is shown that Canadian exports to the United Kingdom for the first eleven months of 1886 have fallen off slightly, as compared with the returns for the same period of 1885. The returns of exports were not complete for December, and it is quite possible that this month may more than make up the shortage in last year's exports. The figures as far as completed show total exports to Great Britain of \$7,634,944 for 1885, against \$7,603,349 for 1886. The shortage is therefore \$31,595 for last year, as compared with the previous year. It is notable that the exports for the month of November showed an increase over the same month of the previous year of \$145-185. At the same rate of increase for December, our exports for the year would show a slight gain over 1885. Exports of animals show a decrease in value for the eleven months of \$60,793, as compared with the same portion of 1885, the falling off being in cattle. Exports of sheep were more than double those of 1885. Hogs to the value of \$210 were exported, against nothing for 1885. Exports of wheat and flour show a gratifying increase. The figures are, for wheat \$1,182,728 against \$716,829 for 1885; for flour \$421,741, against \$164,864 for 1885. This indicates a steady growth in the exports of the leading cereal, and an expansion of our milling industry. Exports of breadstuffs now stand third on the list, the first place being taken by the products of the forest, and the second by animals. Exports of cheese were slightly lower, though the amount is still large. The total is placed at \$1,116,178, or about \$100,000 less than last year. The total exports of butter were \$119,970, against \$146,166 for 1885. Ores and fish show a slight gain. The heaviest falling off is shown in hewn wood, the figures being \$695,384, against \$1,103,829 for 1885. Sawn wood also shows a falling off, though not nearly so large as in hewn timber. The total exports of the latter were \$2,272,408, against \$2,437,629 for 1885.

Turning to the imports of British goods into Canada, it is found that the year has been favorable to the British manufacturers, though the balance of trade is still largely in favor of Canada. Statistics of imports are complete to the end of the

year, and show a total of \$5,165,234, against \$4,684,880 for 1885, or an increase of \$540,354 for last year. The table of imports presents nothing remarkable, in comparison with the previous year, the comparative figures in the respective classes nearly all showing a slight increase for 1886, and only in a few instances a slight decline. There has been no remarkable expansions in the figures of imports in any particular class, nor yet have there been any considerable shrinkages in imports of other classes of goods. The table on the whole shows a steady and gradual increase in imports from Great Britain. Figures of exports, when complete, will not likely show any falling off in the totals, though the decline in some classes of goods and the increase in others, is much more marked than is the case with the imports.

C.P.R. DISCRIMINATION.

Mr. A. G. McBean, grain merchant, of Montreal, has been giving evidence before the Railway Commission, during its session in that city. Mr. McBean is doubtless one of those persons who believe that the average corporations have no souls, or at least if they have, they are of such insignificant proportion as to seldom be seen. Mr. McBean is largely interested in the rates charged by the C.P.R. Co. from points in Manitoba to Montreal and the East. His firm handles a large amount of Northwestern grain and produce, and he was therefore in a position to give valuable testimony as to the dealings of the company in relation to Northwestern traffic. Mr. McBean stated that he thought that the rates in some sections of the Dominion were excessive, and to show that this was the case, he compared the rates from Manitoba points to Port Arthur, with the rates from the same points to Montreal. It was shown that whilst the rate on wheat to Port Arthur averaged thirty cents per 100 pounds from Manitoba points west of Winnipeg, the rate to Montreal or any point on the C.P.R. in Ontario was fifty-two cents per 100 lbs. In other words the C.P.R. Co. charges thirty cents to haul freight to Port Arthur, a distance of say 500 miles, whilst they will haul the same freight from 700 to 1000 miles farther for an additional charge of twenty-two cents. Mr. McBean declared his belief that this discrimination was owing to the fact that the C.P.R. Co. has a monopoly between Manitoba and Port Arthur, and therefore

had it within its power to charge exorbitant rates. He further pointed out that if the company could carry grain from Port Arthur to all points on its line in Ontario, a distance of from 1,000 to 1,500 miles for twenty cents per 100 pounds, it must make an enormous profit on grain carried to Port Arthur, a distance of 500 miles, at the rate of thirty cents per 100 lbs. What do the people of Manitoba, bound by monopoly, think of this? If the doubtful competition of the St. Paul and Manitoba road will cause the C.P.R. Co. to make such a distinction between through all-rail rates to Ontario points, in comparison with the monopoly rates to Lake Superior ports, what would be the effect of active competition with other roads to the south? Would it not be the means of putting thousands of dollars annually into the hands of the farmers of Manitoba through the enhanced value of their produce?

There is no probability that a reasonable rate on grain shipped from Manitoba to Port Arthur will ever be given by the monopoly company, until there is active competition to force a reduction in freight charges. Until some means of reaching Lake Superior ports by an alternate route is provided, all exports from Manitoba will be taxed to the last cent which the produce will bear. If the great inland, fresh water seas are to be made of much value to the Northwest, as a natural and cheap highway for commerce between the east and west, some other means of reaching this highway must be provided. Competitive connection with Lake Superior, and that only, will bring about the desired result. For such an outlet the producers and shippers of Manitoba must look for railway connection to the south, and thence to Duluth. Thirty cents per 100 pounds for a 500 mile haul does seem exorbitant, when compared with the charge of twenty cents per 100 pounds for an additional haul of from 1,000 to 1,500 miles. At the same ratio of freight charges between Manitoba and Port Arthur, as between Port Arthur and Western Ontario points, the tariff on wheat to Lake Superior would only amount to from seven to ten cents. Producers in Manitoba of course would not expect the C.P.R. Co. to give the same proportionate rate for the shorter haul; but there is good reason to complain that the distinction is far too great. Double the proportionate rate per mile for the through haul, instead of four or five times the amount, would seem to be a heavy enough discrimination against the haul to Port Arthur, and with competition it is not unlikely that it would be found very profitable to carry wheat to Lake Superior at least one-third less than the present charge.