

to the farmer. United States makers, who had enjoyed long experience in catering for their own prairie country, similar in its requirements to our own, were then turning out a superior class of implements, but the high tariff prevented our farmers from obtaining these implements at prices which would then have been considered reasonable. Canadian manufacturers have since then made great advancement in the class of goods they turn out, and they are now offering splendid farm machinery, suitable for prairie farming, at a very low price as compared with the extravagant cost of such goods a few years ago. The prejudice in favor of United States farm machinery, which was encouraged by the inferior quality of the home goods some years ago, still exists to a limited extent, though THE COMMERCIAL believes there is no real cause for such prejudice to exist at the present day. In most lines we believe the home goods are quite equal to the best United States makes. But it may be added that the home manufacturers have perfected their goods at the cost of the farmer, who purchased their wares while they were experimenting in the production of machinery suited for prairie farming.

In the discussion now going on, the claim is sometimes put forward by those who are opposed to the implement duty, that prices are higher here than in the states to the south. THE COMMERCIAL has investigated this feature to some extent, by making enquiries as to the selling price of principal implements in Minnesota and Dakota, during a recent visit of a representative of the paper to those states. We find that there is some misrepresentation in this matter of prices, by some who claim that prices are higher here than in the States. This misrepresentation comes in by quoting cash or catch prices in Dakota or Minnesota, against regular credit prices here. Times have been hard in the States this year, and farmers who had the cash have in some instances been able to obtain machines for spot cash at cut prices. The same thing has happened in Manitoba, in some cases machines having been sold away below regular list prices for spot cash. It is misleading, however, to quote a cut cash price in Dakota against regular list prices here. In binders, for instance, THE COMMERCIAL representative learned of actual sales in Minnesota and Dakota at from \$115 to \$130, according to make of machine. One farmer was met with who stated that he had purchased a new McCormick binder, large size, of this season's make, at \$126. These prices, however, were cut spot cash figures, and they could be duplicated in Manitoba in the same way. Altogether the Manitoba farmer has not as much ground for complaint in a comparison of prices here with adjoining states south of the boundary as some would try to make out, while we believe our standard machines are as good as those used on the other side of the boundary.

There is one point in this tariff agitation in the matter of farm machinery, which may be briefly referred to. Our manufacturers put forth the argument that it would be unreasonable to subject them to open competition from the United States while they are shut

out of that market. Our home market is limited, and if we throw off the protection and gave United States makers a free hand here, the business would be badly cut up for our home manufacturers, while they would be unable to compete in the United States with the makers of that country, who would be taking their home trade. This theory of reciprocity of tariffs is very enticing, but what about the home farmer? How much does it benefit him to have his implements made at home? How much more does the Manitoba farmer receive for his wheat and oats and barley because the implement manufacturer is protected? THE COMMERCIAL would not like to undertake to prove that prices for these commodities are enhanced a fraction as a result of such duties. On the other hand, if our farmers can procure as good a machine for approximately the same price as that charged under similar conditions in the United States, then they are not suffering so much from the implement tariff as some would try to make them believe.

THE WINNIPEG VACANCY.

Winnipeg is without a representative to Parliament, through the resignation of Mr. Hugh J. Macdonald, and an election contest will no doubt soon be in order. Mr. Macdonald's resignation will be received with regret by his constituents here. He was elected by a very large majority at the last general election, and his course in and out of Parliament since then has been such as to increase his popularity. During his brief term as a member of our chief legislative body, Mr. Macdonald gave promise of proving a very useful member to his party and the country at large, and his early decision to retire to private life, for reasons best known to himself, is a matter for regret beyond the confines of his own constituency.

By-elections as a rule do not attract great interest, but owing to the political situation in Manitoba at the present time, the contest to fill the vacancy in Winnipeg is likely to be one of unusual interest. The tariff will, of course be the great question which will enter into the contest. At the last election the fiasco policy of the Opposition was unrestricted reciprocity or commercial union with the United States. Winnipeg electors, including many staunch Liberals, took no stock in the fad, and accordingly an immense majority was rolled up for Mr. Macdonald, notwithstanding the great personal popularity of his opponent. The fact was, that many intelligent men included in both political parties, considered the Liberal platform simply a fraud upon the electorate—a device to catch the votes of the masses who do not think public questions out to practical conclusions. The mass of electors of Winnipeg particularly, and Canada in general, however, were not of the superficial class, as the result proved.

Some Liberals seem still to cast a glance back to the question of unrestricted reciprocity, but it can hardly enter into the coming contest in Winnipeg to any extent. It is a dead issue—as dead as the proverbial door nail. The grand old trade policy of the great Democratic party, now in power in the United

States, is opposed to reciprocity. It is directly antagonistic to the old and solid economic policy of the Democratic party—a policy which for a time appears to have been somewhat lost sight of by many adherents of the party, but which is again being asserted vigorously by the great leaders of the democracy. Indeed, instead of entering into new reciprocity treaties, it is almost certain that the Blaine reciprocity arrangements affected with a number of countries, will be abrogated by the present administration, as a portion of its work of tariff reform.

With this situation in the United States, we can hardly look for a Liberal campaign here carried out on a reciprocity policy. If such is attempted, it will simply be a sham policy to mislead the electorate. The only square way to face the issue would be for the Liberals to declare straight for tariff reform on a practical and sound economic basis.

What the Conservative party will be willing to offer the electorate in the direction of tariff reform, is the interesting question. Tariff reform is in the air, and unless the government can offer some enticing assurances in that direction, it is likely to go hard with their candidate. The date of the election to fill the Winnipeg vacancy may be postponed for some time, but with candidates at all evenly matched, the election is sure to be a more than usually interesting one.

A GREAT DISCOVERY.

A press telegram from Ottawa on Friday reports what is given as a great discovery. It relates that government officials who have been engaged for some time upon an analysis of the customs tariff for the information of the ministers, have discovered that the average rate of duty upon goods imported from Great Britain is higher than the average duty upon goods from the United States. The average rate of duty upon British goods brought into Canada during 1892 is given as 22½ per cent, while the average duty on imports from the United States is placed at 14.45 per cent. In other words Canada collected \$9,074,200 in duty upon \$41,348,435 worth of goods imported from Great Britain, while upon \$53,138,572 worth of goods brought from the United States, the duty collected was \$9,841,666. This showing is said to have caused surprise and consternation among the ultra loyal friends of the dominant party, who supposed that our protective policy was chiefly designed to protect our manufacturers against the tariff-bolstered manufacturers of the United States, who hold their own market to themselves and make a slaughter market of Canada.

What a wonderful discovery all this is. THE COMMERCIAL has pointed out year after year that we are taxing British goods much higher than imports from the United States. It seems to have taken the government a decade or two, however, to have discovered the real state of affairs. The fact shows the fraudulent nature of the claims put forward in favor of protection. The policy, we are told, was adopted because we could not have fair trade with the United States. If they would not give us reciprocity in trade, we were to give them reciprocity of tariff, and accordingly the