

knowledge, of the form, size, and geological structure of the globe; of its physical features; of the topographical distribution of its mineral and vegetable products, and of the varied forms of animal life, including man, that it sustains; of the influence of geographical environment on man and the lower animals; and of the climatic conditions of the various regions of the earth—is absolutely essential to a successful solution of the many problems before us. If England is to maintain her commanding position in the world of commerce, she must approach these problems in the spirit of Henry the Navigator, and by high scientific training fit her sons to play their part like men in the coming struggle for commercial supremacy. The struggle will be keen, and victory will rest with those who have most fully realized the truth of the maxim that "knowledge is power."

His lucid method of treating the questions of commercial geography will be seen from his interesting remarks on the Suez Canal, which are the more interesting, as they suggest a comparison to the effects of a canal through the American Isthmus.

"The opening of the Suez Canal, by diverting trade from the Cape route to the Mediterranean, has produced, and is still producing, changes in the intercourse between the East and the West which affect this country more nearly, perhaps, than any other European state. The changes have been in three directions:

"First. An increasing proportion of the raw material and products of the East is carried direct to Mediterranean ports, by ships passing through the canal, instead of coming, as they once did, to England for distribution. Thus Odessa, Trieste, Venice and Marseilles, are becoming centres of distribution for Southern and Central Europe, as Antwerp and Hamburg

are for the North; and our merchants are thus losing the profits they derived from transmitting and forwarding Eastern goods to Europe. It is true that the carrying trade is still, to a very great extent, in English hands; but should this country be involved in a European war, the carrying trade, unless we can efficiently protect it, will pass to others, and it will not readily return. Continental manufacturers have always been heavily handicapped by the position England has held since the commencement of the century, and the distributing trade would doubtless have passed from us in process of time. The opening of the canal has accelerated the change, to the detriment of English manufacturers, and consequently of the national wealth; and it must tend to make England less and less each year the emporium of the world. We are experiencing the results of a natural law that a redistribution of the centres of trade must follow a re-arrangement of the channels of commerce.

"Second. The diversion of traffic from the Cape route has led to the construction of steamers for special trade to India and the East through the canal. On this line coaling stations are frequent, and the seas, excepting in the Bay of Biscay, are more tranquil than on most long voyages. The result is, that an inferior type of vessel, both as regards coal-stowage, speed, endurance and seaworthiness, has been built. These 'canal wallahs,' as they are sometimes called, are quite unfitted for the voyage round the Cape, and, should the canal be blocked by war or accident, they would be practically useless in carrying on our Eastern trade. Since the canal has deepened, they have improved, for it has been found cheaper to have more coal-stowage, but they are still far from being available for the long voyage round the Cape. Had the Canal not been made, a