

ORGANIZATION OF THE EXPORT BUSINESS

The successful development of our export trade will be dependent primarily upon the following factors: Enterprise in seeking the market, efficient organization, uniform and high quality of the product, volume of supply, together with adequate transportation facilities at reasonable rates. Other factors will, no doubt, contribute materially to the success of the undertaking, but achievement to the extent of our opportunity is definitely dependent upon these considerations. It must be recognized at once that unless Canada goes after this market in a thorough-going, business-like way, she may expect to fall very far behind in the race.

This is no place to discuss or to outline the measures which may be needed to promote the development of this trade. A few observations, however, respecting features in which improvement should be effected, may serve to bring about a better understanding of the situation.

TRANSPORTATION

During the period of the war, transportation will constitute one of the most difficult problems connected with our export business. Not only is there an insufficient supply of ships, but present rates are excessive, and in some instances almost prohibitive. The commandeering of such a considerable number of boats for naval use, the changing of the routes of ships, together with the losses which have occurred in the mercantile marine, will make it very difficult to secure normal service to this or to other countries either during or after the war. Adequate transportation facilities, it may be taken at once for granted, furnish one of the most effective weapons in competing for and establishing an export trade. With this understanding of the situation, the need for a co-ordination of interest between the shippers and the transportation and shipping companies, is easily apparent. To allow such an important matter as this undoubtedly is, to adjust itself under present circumstances as accident or caprice may dictate, is but to invite disappointment and defeat in the realization of our ambition to secure recognition and a national reputation in the development of a comprehensive commercial policy, in association with Great Britain, her Allies, and our Sister Colonies. Neutral nations are taking up this problem and it is essential that we, at the very beginning, endeavour to secure for ourselves, the advantages in this direction which the exercise of foresight, careful judgment and aggressive action may so easily obtain. The problem involves a consideration of the volume of our supply, the extent of our market and the permanence of our trade. Producers, produce merchants and shipping companies have each wide interests at stake in the sale of our goods through an export channel, and it is necessary that the interests of all be co-ordinated into a policy which shall permanently safeguard the future of our export market.