

1st. Are we doing all the trade with these West India Islands which we can do, and which we ought to do ?

2nd. If not, is it possible for us to increase it ?

Before attempting to answer these questions I may say that throughout the entire islands I met with nothing but a spirit of great kindness, kindness from every class; from merchants, planters, bankers, in short from every class of the community—with strongly expressed desires for closer business relations with Canada, with assurances that everything else being equal they would give to Canada the preference; and here let me say, as Canadians that we have no right to expect anything more, and if we cannot beat other competitors on equal terms we have no right to look for trade upon the ground of sentiment. Value, is the real test of superiority, the only true test by which superiority can be gauged; it is only by this standard that trade can be secured, and it is only by this standard that trade is to be retained.

One important thing in business is the existence of a friendly feeling on the part of those who desire to open up trade relations with each other, and I am here to-day to assure this Board that on behalf of our fellow-subjects in the West Indian Colonies such friendly feeling exists on their part to the largest possible extent.

In looking at the relative amount of trade which the West Indies do with other countries, I will only enter into a comparison with that done in our own country, with that done in the United States, restricting the comparison to them, and doing this,

1st. Because of their contiguity to us as compared, for example, with France, India, or other countries similarly situated.

2nd. From the similarity existing between the commodities supplied by themselves and us, and

3rd. From the fact that like ourselves they are members of the great Anglo-Saxon family, and consequently possess no advantages either by inheritance or acquisition which are not in a measure equally great enjoyed by ourselves.

Do we then, as compared with the United States, get our fair share of the West Indian trade? I think not!

In Barbadoes, for example, they do four dollars for our one.

In Trinidad about seven dollars to our one.

In British Guiana three dollars and thirty-seven cents, to our one.

These figures furnish us with one gratifying fact, and that is, that distance has nothing to do with the disparity, for we find that in the most remote colony, that of British Guiana, our trade as compared with the United States, bears a 50% greater proportion than does our trade with Trinidad, although that colony to us is much nearer. It is of moment therefore to know that it is not distance that places us at a disadvantage.

This would appear to be a fitting place to refer to the particular class of commodities which the United States supply to the Colonies in excess of ourselves, and at the same time to refer to the instances where our sales are in excess of theirs. These tables are very suggestive. Let me