

Sheppard's report was not very encouraging to our hope of doing much trade in South America, except possibly in the Argentine Republic. There, he thinks, there is some opening, and the Government will have an agent who will endeavour to do some work there. Certain lines of our manufactures might be introduced into the Argentine Republic, such as agricultural implements. On the whole, I think it was well to reconnoitre the region. There does not appear at the present moment to be any great apparent opening for extending the sale of our manufactures in South America—not as much, in fact, as we had hoped. That is, no doubt, partly due to the fact that political complications have very much disorganized the Brazilian market, in which at one time we carried on some trade. On the western coast we are very much handicapped in the matter of cheap rates. German ships that sail from Hamburg lay down goods there at rates which are almost ridiculously low. We might do something in Mexico; there is possibly a chance there; but, as the hon. gentleman is aware, on the east coast, the Americans have a great advantage over us by reason of the much greater nearness of their ports and their superior facilities in the matter of railway communication. Two or three great lines of railroad coming from various parts of the United States centre in Mexico. There might be something done in Mexico on the ground that the Mexicans would be glad to trade with Great Britain or with Canada, rather than from our inherent natural advantages. We are making inquiry to see what can be done. Still, I am bound to say that the results of Mr. Sheppard's investigations, except in the Argentine Republic, are not very encouraging.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Will the hon. Minister tell us what the reconnoitering cost in the way of salaries and expenses?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It cost a good deal. Mr. Sheppard was paid—I am speaking from recollection—something like \$2,800 and his expenses for the time he spent. Travelling in that region is, of course, pretty expensive, and his expenses amounted to from \$300 to \$500 a month, according to circumstances.

Mr. FOSTER. How many months was he away?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Seven or eight months, I should think, and a month to compile the report.

Mr. FOSTER. What was the total cost?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The total cost, I suppose, would amount to \$7,000.

Mr. MONTAGUE. That is a good deal more than the trade will be in the next quarter of a century.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Not altogether; but I am bound to say that it would make a reasonable percentage of the profits of the trade we are now carrying on in those countries. But it was probably worth while incurring the expenditure for the purpose of ascertaining what was possible to be done, and I am bound to say that Mr. Sheppard took great pains to satisfy himself and the commercial public on that point. In course of time some results may flow from his labours; but the immediate results were not very encouraging.

Mr. FOSTER. While I can congratulate Mr. Sheppard on a pleasant and agreeable voyage, with certain financial results to himself, I am certain I cannot congratulate my hon. friend on the expenditure of \$7,000 or \$8,000 on that wild-goose chase.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I think there were some trips of my hon. friend to the West Indies and elsewhere that had no more apparent results.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend might have got from records in current histories, and from the trade returns of other countries, just about as much information as Mr. Sheppard brought, and that \$7,000 might have been used in a much more advantageous way. How much per day, might I ask, did Mr. Sheppard get?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. \$10 or \$12 per day, I think, and expenses.

Mr. FOSTER. A very nice trip. I suppose in the meantime the Government got rid of any little trouble they might have had if the trip had not been taken.

| | |
|--|----------|
| To provide for the Administration of the Chinese Immigration Act, including remuneration to Trade and Commerce and Customs officers..... | \$ 3,500 |
| To meet Canada's proportion of expenditure in connection with the International Customs Bureau..... | 600 |
| Commercial Agencies, including expenses in connection with negotiations of treaties or in extension of commercial relations | 20,000 |

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend evidently contemplates excursions in some other far-distant region. What is the increase of \$5,000 in the last item for?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Various expenses have been charged to this vote at various times—for instance, expenses connected with trade negotiations with the United States or elsewhere; and at present I have a considerable number of new applications. For example, there appears to be some reason-