

it, he would find the revenues from the farms would be very much greater and the boys would not be so ready to leave the farm.

I desire to say a word with reference to the treaty with the West Indies. My hon. friend who has just resumed his seat is rather pessimistic as to the benefits that will follow that treaty. It is true the islands are not of great extent and their productions are not so very large, but yet it is all helping to develop this country. The products of those islands are entirely dissimilar from our own. They are tropical mostly; we want them and they want our products. I think it is a good thing to arrange that treaty, and I believe that the government deserve every credit for negotiating that treaty as they have done. It will tend to increase our trade, and my hope and expectation is that when this treaty is in force, and a free or partially free interchange of products takes place between those islands and Canada, that our trade will grow largely, and I hope that it will stimulate the production of those tropical fruits in the island to a greater extent than heretofore, but I want to say that one means that we must adopt in order to take advantage of that treaty is better communication. It is to-day a lamentable thing that we have between the West Indies and Halifax and St. John an old line of boats, slow and irregular in their trips, while from New York they have steamers sailing probably every three or four days. From St. John and Halifax we have an obsolete line of steamers, and we know for a fact that goods shipped from Toronto to the West Indies have sometimes been placed on the boats four months after they had left Toronto. That state of affairs is simply intolerable. We cannot expect our trade to grow unless we follow it up with a first class, up to date, line of steamers, which will sail often and regularly. By that course we might build up a trade. This summer the steamers were simply submerged with the freight that was offered. The merchants in the islands expect the goods to come by the next boat. If they do not come by the next boat or by the second boat, these merchants become discouraged. Goods sent from New York reach there in three or four days.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL.

The government must supplement this trade and see that better communication between the West Indies and Canada is provided. I believe if they had proper means of communication that not only a profitable trade to Canada, but also a profitable trade to the West Indies would result. It is only the stepping stone, and I would like to see the trade expand with other countries as well as the West Indies. But this is a step in the right direction, and meets with my approval.

Another important matter is the legislation with regard to bank charters. The seconder of the address referred to this matter, and I am heartily in sympathy with the views he enunciated, that our banks will be able to lend money to the farmer on his grain in the granary, or his stock in the field. Why should he not do it? If I have a thousand bushels of wheat in the warehouse five hundred miles away I can take the warehouse receipt to the bank and they will advance me money on it. If I have a thousand bushels of wheat in my granary, it is just as good security as can be offered, and yet the banks cannot lend a dollar on it. I was glad to read the views expressed in the other Chamber in regard to this matter, and I think the Finance Minister will give the matter his favourable consideration. When we renew these bank charters, I think it is most important that there should be better regulations and better inspection of our banks. To-day there is no inspection at all of the head office of the banks. Another matter which is somewhat alarming to me—and I have no doubt it is also alarming to the people of this country—is the gradual extinction of our banks. One by one they are being merged, so that to-day I think we have only twenty-one or twenty-two banks in the Dominion of Canada, controlled practically by twenty-one or twenty-two men. The financial affairs of the Dominion are placed in too few hands to render it a safe business, and I think we may all view with alarm the gradual extinction of our banks.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL—Some means must be taken in regard to that. What those means are I am not prepared to say, but if