

TRADE EXPANSION.

We have received a letter on the above subject, written by Mr. George H. Dobson, of Sydney, Cape Breton. He looks abroad over Europe, Africa, Asia and sees what enterprises, plots, and threats are doing for the opening of new markets. He concludes that markets are the great essentials for industrial expansion, and therefore nations are looking for territorial enlargement. We quote from his letter:

"It must be apparent to the ordinary observer that growth lies along the trend of productive industry in the direction of manufacturers, and owing to the farm ceasing to attract the labor which it once did, it is absolutely necessary to turn our attention to providing mechanical employment in order that the large exodus from Canada to the United States for industrial pursuits may be averted. To do this successfully we must have markets as outlets for our manufactories. The almost universally hostile tariffs, which are being extended to "spheres of influence" and absorbed territories, and also our slow growth owing to emigration, makes the outlook indeed unpromising for Canadian industry.

"The West Indian Situation.—The extension of the American tariff and coasting laws around Cuba and Porto Rico will cause dissatisfaction in the British West India possessions, and will be a considerable loss to Canadian commerce and shipping, particularly that of the Maritime Provinces; and if reciprocity between the British West Indies and the United States is consummated, our present important trade with them may soon become a thing of the past. The situation in the West Indies never was so embarrassing as it is at present, and considering nationality and community of interest with our sister colonies, we cannot afford to be disinterested spectators. England has always been the chief market for their cane sugar, but the increasing bounties since 1890, on beet sugar, amounting to from £4 14s. to £2 5s. 6d. from France and Russia, from 30s. to 40s. from Belgium, Germany, Austria, and Holland, per ton, have comparatively driven the West Indian product from the English market.

"The royal commission on the West India commercial troubles states: In 1896, Germany doubled her bounties and the effect of this policy upon the West Indies was that from prosperity the islands sank into misery. "The West Indies is threatened with such a reduction of industry in the immediate future as may not in some colonies differ very greatly from extinction and in a sense affect them all. The consequences are likely to be of a very serious character. The immediate result would be a great want of employment, causing the people to be without means of purchasing immediate articles of food or of paying taxes, the planters would be ruined, the laboring-classes would suffer privations and probably become discontented and restless, and the revenue would be so crippled as to render it impossible to carry on the government."

"Find Relief in Canada.—When the chairman, Sir Henry Norman, could write thus, the situation in the West Indies may be imagined. The very cause that brought on the crisis in Cuba, the fall in prices of sugar, amounting to 4s. per cwt., from 1893 to 1895, accounts for the present trouble. Where can they get relief? The mother country is not liable to change her long-established trade policy to offset the many bounty-fed industries springing up in different countries. The free admission of Cuba and Porto Rico, Sandwich and Philippine Island sugars and fruits into the United States, will likely so glut the American markets as to put reciprocal assistance

from that quarter out of the question. Would not federation with Canada solve this trouble? Commercially and industrially these two countries fit perfectly together, the products of the two being very dissimilar, affording a splendid opportunity for exchange of commodities. Never before in Canada's history have such excellent possibilities opened up to her on trade lines. The extent of commercial activity, expansion, and development that would take place in the West Indies, Newfoundland and Canada by confederation of all the North American colonies, can scarcely be estimated.

"We have all the advantages of position, all the advantages of the good-will and support of the mother country. Confederation, with suitable representative local self-government, would make for greater contentment in these islands, and with parliamentary representation of all British America at Ottawa, would come a very considerable measure of relief to Downing street. It is only when considered in the broad light of its ultimate effect upon the welfare and conservation of these colonies, and the facilitating of preferential trade and the commerce of the empire, and the grouping and consolidating of imperial interests throughout the world, and thus lessening the complexity of the Imperial Government in London, that the vital importance of such a federation can be fairly appreciated and grasped."

GEORGE H. DOBSON.

North Sydney, May 6th, 1899.

A CURSE TO POSTERITY.

The policy of granting public lands for railway bonuses is not liked by the Winnipeg Commercial, any more than by this journal. We quote:

"The Winnipeg Board of Trade has been asked to endorse the request for aid to carry out proposed extensions of the Dauphin railway. The aid asked for, it is understood, includes the 'usual land grant.' It is to be hoped the Board will not lend itself to such a proposal as that of recommending any further alienation of the public domain. The manner in which our western lands have been disposed of will form one of the black pages in Canadian history. The policy followed by the governing power in dealing with this great public heritage has been such as will bring upon us—the people of this generation—the curse of posterity. Those in control of public affairs have altogether failed to grasp the wonderful far-reaching possibilities of the future within reach of the people who inherited this vast and rich public domain. Already a vast area of territory has been dissipated. A halt cannot be called a moment too soon to the wasteful and destructive policy which one Government after another in Canada has followed in dealing with the public domain."

FACTS ABOUT AMERICAN COMPETITION.

It has become the habit—the dangerous and destructive habit—of sneering at suggestions that Great Britain is being beaten by competitors in the trade markets of the world, so says the Birmingham Trade Journal. Scornful remarks are very frequently made regarding those who insist on the necessity of the question being faced as one of real moment to the nation's welfare, and those are regarded as bores who continue, as journalists must who do their duty, to force, as far as they can, attention to the subject. What is always brought out against the statement of those who say that we are not doing what we should in the commercial race is the declaration that, pessimistic views notwithstanding, our trade increases.

That is true. It does continue to grow; but what is so often lost sight of is the fact that the trade of competing nations increases at a more rapid pace than ours, and that the foreigners' share of the new business in new territories, as well as at home, is proportionately larger than our own.

We cannot consent to the proposition that all the lost contracts, all the complaints against the impossibility of giving definite time for deliveries, and all the complaints regarding high British prices, are to be explained away by the British difficulties arising out of labor troubles. Absolutely convinced that, on equal terms, the British manufacturer can beat his Continental and American rivals, we unfortunately have to come to the conclusion that they are not, on the whole, doing anything like so well as they should. If they were, we should not have to record that important enterprises are being carried out here by American firms with Americans supervising the works; we should not have to record that English railways are forced to give their engine contracts outside the country; we should not have to report that important machinery contracts, which British manufacturers ought to secure, are given outside the country. Those who regard these matters as of no importance, must surely have been brought up on a diet akin to what Captain Marryat dubbed "flapdoodle."

Here the journal quotes Cecil Rhodes' warning words the other day to British manufacturers and dealers, as to the need of intelligent effort to retain foreign trade. We quote further from the article:

"These remarks cannot well be ignored, as similar statements and arguments based upon them by men of lesser degree have been. Mr. Rhodes commands the respect and admiration of all Englishmen. Now he has spoken, we most sincerely hope that some British capitalists and manufacturers will take the words to heart for their own and the country's good. And as to the sons following in their commercial fathers' footsteps, we believe Mr. Rhodes has struck the right note. It is too often the case here that the sons, who start life with their fortunes made for them, instead of, as their fathers did, with the necessity of making it for themselves, find Piccadilly and Monte Carlo more attractive than the workshop. If they realize that the gold is made in the workshop they will perhaps devote their attention to manufacture in preference to a commission or an idle, dissolute and purposeless life. And if they go into the workshops and learn how the money is made, they will not only discover how to make more, but will, with the level-headedness that business experience gives, acquire the desire and the capacity to spend it wisely and well.

—A difficult tow has been undertaken by the tug "M. E. Luckenbach," from New York to Cartagena, United States of Columbia, a distance of 3,000 miles. The tow will be made up of the dredge "Margaret," and the small steamer "Nellie Gazzam," recently completed at Hillman's shipyard, Philadelphia, for the American Gold Dredging Co. The dredge is 90 feet in length, while the "Gazzam" has a length of 65 feet.

—The actual area of Greater New York is stated by the Board of Improvement to be as follows: Manhattan borough, or Manhattan island, 13,487 acres; borough of the Bronx, or annexed district, 26,270 acres; borough of Richmond, or Staten Island, 36,001 acres; borough of Brooklyn, 42,095 acres; borough of Queens, 79,347 acres. The official total area of Greater New York is 306 square miles, with an estimated population of 3,200,000.