

taken into account in the consideration of the question. Dependence upon other countries for supplies of either food for the people, or raw material for the manufacturer and the artisan, is necessarily attended with much uncertainty. The possibility of war, and the existence of hostile foreign tariffs and hostile foreign sentiment, can not be entirely ignored. I, therefore, regard a judicious movement towards securing materials and markets within the empire, as a wise and prudent policy, even if it does involve a slight additional outlay. The feeling of security, and the assurance of constant employment, will afford satisfactory compensation for a small additional expenditure. It is further a question to be solved whether the immense resources of the empire will not within a reasonable period, on account of greater freedom and facilities, exchange products between its several parts with even greater economy than with foreign nations.

INTERCOLONIAL CONFERENCE.

I take special pleasure in referring to the intercolonial conference at Ottawa, as an evidence of a desire throughout the empire for a closer alliance. It was the good fortune of the Board to entertain the delegates in this magnificent rotunda. The sentiments expressed by these distinguished gentlemen from almost every quarter of the globe left no room for doubt as to the absolute necessity for maintaining intact a united British Empire as the dominant force in the civilization and enlightenment of the world. It was equally apparent, from their opinions, that the material advantages and well-being of the British people will be best served by a closer union among the colonies and with the mother country. It is gratifying to observe that these opinions have been endorsed by the Earl of Jersey, the British Representative, in his report to the Colonial Secretary.

FAST ATLANTIC SERVICE.

It is to be regretted that the Annual Message should again reach you without more definite information relative to a British-Canadian fast Atlantic steamship service. With great natural advantages, trade between the two countries rapidly increasing, and a desire on both sides of the ocean to patronize the route, as well as additional travel in view via Canada, between Britain and Australasia, China and Japan, the enterprise should meet with a reasonable measure of success. That we should have to seek a foreign route with all these advantages in our favor, in order to obtain a voyage with speed and comfort, is depressing to our national spirit. It is to be hoped that the action of the Ottawa Conference in support of this project may have a beneficial effect, and that a satisfactory service will be established without further unnecessary delay.

PACIFIC CABLE.

Quicker communication with Australia, a subject warmly supported by the views of the Board, has made satisfactory progress during the year, and the promoters of the enterprise are about to see their