

A background of experience in this respect was to be found in the very far-flung Trade Commissioner Service, set up "between 1912 and 1920" by Sir George Foster.<sup>(1)</sup> Candidates were required to pass Civil Service Commission examinations, and these included commercial languages such as French, German, or Spanish, and possibly others.<sup>(2)</sup> Reference was made in a 1931 debate to the new Trade Commissioner's Office opened in Cairo, to which Mr. Lamontagne had been appointed. After serving in Brussels, he was loaned for nearly four years by the government of Canada to the government of Egypt as an expert adviser in the drawing up of the customs regulations. When his engagement with the Egyptian government expired, he was appointed Canadian Trade Commissioner at Cairo. His territory was to cover the Sudan, Palestine, Cyprus, Iraq, Syria and Persia. Mr. Jacobs said he had suggested to the Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce that "a person more conversant with oriental languages, such as Hebrew, Assyrian, and so on should be appointed, because, after all, we are dealing not with French trade but with oriental trade." Mr. Stevens, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, replied: "Mr. Lamontagne speaks not only English and French most fluently, but also Egyptian and Arabic. That is a fairly well rounded out linguistic qualification for the position." Mr. Jacobs said: "I am particularly interested in knowing whether he speaks Hebrew"; to which Mr. Stevens replied: "I am quite satisfied all the Hebrews will understand him."<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) H. of C. Debates, May 14, 1931, p.1607.

(2) Ibid. p. 1606.

(3) Ibid. p. 1608.