

CANADA.

SIR H. THORNTON'S TASK.

A Practical Colonization Movement. French Trade Agreement.

(From our Special Canadian Correspondent.)

The appointment of Major-General Sir Henry Thornton as President and General Manager of the Canadian National Railway System has been acclaimed both by the Press and the public. Sir Henry's work in England in connection with the Great Eastern Railway, and his splendid war record, are well known. He comes to Canada with a wide knowledge of railway conditions upon this continent, supplemented by his experience in the Mother Country. The task ahead of him is not a light one. A Canadian statistician has figured that it has been costing the Canadian National Railways \$1.20 to earn \$1.00. The deficit last year was \$71,000,000. If Sir Henry can, in the near future, get rid of the annual deficits, he will have worked a miracle. To a newspaper correspondent Sir Henry has set forth seven fundamentals of successful railway management under public ownership. These essentials may be summarised as follows: 1. Unification of the various systems. 2. Extension of these where necessary. 3. Elimination of deficits. 4. Encouragement of immigration. 5. Efficient service to the public. 6. Sufficient wages for the employees. 7. Freedom from political meddling.

Sir Henry declares that the prosperity of Canada and the prosperity of its railways are interdependent; that great things have already been achieved by these railways and still greater are in sight. He recognises the duty of the State as a model employer of labour, and he believes that adequate wages return to the State in the form of loyalty and good service. The new President emphatically declares that there will have to be no political interference with his management—he only accepted the position on the assurance that there would be none—Sir Henry's administration will be closely watched. The Canadian National Railways have a mileage of about 22,000 running to all parts of Canada, and comprise the largest government-owned system of railways in the world. The Government Merchant Marine fleet of ocean steamers plying to all parts of the world is under the same management.

A Great Colonization Movement.

A splendid working capital, amounting to \$1,200,000, has been raised by private subscription by the Western Canada Colonization Association. Sir John Willison, president of the Association, is out to secure the settlement in a few years of millions of people on lands in Western Canada. At the present time there are 20,000,000 acres of land in all parts of Canada situated within five to twelve miles of a railway, owned but not occupied, which means that they are not being cultivated. The idea of the Association is to make a careful inventory of these lands and to direct the immigrant to a suitable location. Payments to the vendor of the property would cover a period of ten years, or less if circumstances permitted. The post inception expenses will be made by charging owners of the purchased land a commission of two dollars an acre on

all lands bought. Settlers who may be brought to Canada and located according to the plans of the Association will only be called upon to make a small deposit, payments for the properties acquired being spread over a period of thirty-two years. The settlers will be required to make such improvements on the properties as will enable mortgages to be taken at the end of ten years, to be held by the Association as trustees. It is announced that the Dominion Government has promised an annual grant to the Association of one hundred thousand dollars, while the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia have unstintingly assured them co-operation. The assistance of the railways has been sought and secured, and what is now needed is the support of every individual in Canada who places national prosperity before everything else. The affairs of the Association are to be controlled by an operating committee of seven, with headquarters at Winnipeg. The best wishes of all lovers of Canadian progress will go out for the success of the new organization.

Trade with France.

Canadians are naturally interested in the report from Paris that Mr. Fielding, Minister of Finance, has resumed negotiations with the French Government for the conclusion of a comprehensive trade agreement between the two countries. Mr. Fielding, in 1907, negotiated the first trade agreement with France. This treaty became operative in 1910. It applied the French minimum tariff to a list of some one hundred and fifty products of Canada in return for which the Canadian intermediate tariff was made applicable to about one hundred French commodities. A much smaller list of French exports obtained the advantage of special rates below the intermediate scale. These mutual concessions were effective only in respect to direct shipments between French and Canadian ports. Unfortunately for Canada, the concessions granted to France had automatically to be extended to other countries under most-favoured-nation treaties. The result was that Japan, Switzerland and other countries exporting silks, embroideries, etc., gained the same advantages in Canadian markets as France did. This had a serious effect from a revenue standpoint, and led to another but temporary arrangement being made with France and her dependencies last year, the other countries being eliminated. One of the difficulties which Mr. Fielding has to meet arises from the fact that prohibition is effective now in seven out of nine provinces of Canada, and as the treaty with France made quite a substantial concession in the rates of duty upon French wines, the action of the Provinces has, to a large extent, deprived France of this market, and cut the ground from under Mr. Fielding's feet.