

"I have to thank you for the readiness with which you gave me every assistance and for your uniform kindness and courtesy.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN T. WYLDE,

"*Commercial Agent of the Government of Canada to the West Indies.*

"Hon. E. N. WALKER,
"Colonial Secretary,
"Kingston, Jamaica,

30. One or two of the large receivers of cargoes at Jamaica from Nova Scotia are adverse to steam communication. The trade with Canada being chiefly with that Province, the statement is made that as the market was frequently, as then, greatly over-stocked with fish the business needed no development. Other considerations, I apprehend, must enter into the subject of trade development than merely the supply of fish. In conversing with the dealers I found general objection existing as regards irregularity of supply.

31. Jamaica is a most beautiful island. Small-pox was very prevalent in Kingston owing to want of sanitary precautions; but the Island is most healthy, and in the country parts, particularly where the inhabitants enjoy higher altitudes, the most perfect climate may be found. The Island contains about 600,000 inhabitants. In 1881 the classification was as follows: White, 14,432; colored, 109,946; black, 444,186. The black and colored populations are increasing much faster than the white, giving room for much conjecture as to the resident races in the future.

32. On a careful consideration of the desirability of having steam communication with the West Indies, and of the routes to be chosen, I am led to observe that, while the scheme may meet with hostile opinions, where a long-settled business by sailing craft has been established, I find a general expression, in the business circles I have visited, in favor of these great facilities, that opportunity may be afforded for a more general export of Canadian products.

33. As regards the routes offering the greater commercial advantages I beg to recommend the following:—

A line of two steamers between Halifax and Kingston, Jamaica, calling at Havana on outward voyage and at Santiago de Cuba and Cienfuegos alternately, on returning to Halifax; voyages to be made every three weeks. Also a line of two steamers from Halifax to St. Thomas, thence to Ponce, Mayaguez, and San Juan in Porto Rico, and back to Halifax, calling at Bermuda each way. Voyages to be made every three weeks.

34. I have ventured to recommend making Halifax the terminal point, in view of the large volume of trade already established between Nova Scotia and the West Indies.

35. In the official returns for the year ended June, 1885, I find that the value of the direct exports of Canada to the West Indies amounted to \$2,745,251; of this sum Nova Scotia contributed \$2,488,131, leaving but \$257,120 as the contribution of all the other Provinces. The conviction therefore forces itself upon the judgment that any undertaking to perform a steam service will be influenced by the attractions of assured traffic, as regards an estimate of the amount of assistance required by subsidy.

36. Besides assisting in the prosecution of a trade already established, it might be deemed desirable to afford opportunity for the development of an export trade in products incidental to other parts of the Dominion.