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## The Journal of Commerce

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### Special Articles

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- Canada's Foreign Trade After the War.  
By H. M. P. Eckardt.
- Immigration After the War.  
By Frederick C. Howe.
- Tom Osborne Returns.  
By J. W. MacMillan.
- Canada's Heavy Balances in New York.  
By H. M. P. Eckardt.

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## Trade After The War

THE question of the trade relations of the British Empire after the war—the relations between the various parts of the Empire, between the Empire and the Allies, between the Empire and the neutral nations, and between the Empire and the nations now at war with us—is a very large one, a very complicated one, and a very difficult one. It is so full of difficulties that all who have the responsibility of dealing with it will probably discover that they will be wise if they do not attempt to settle it fully at this time. On that part of the subject which touches the relations between the Allies and the enemy countries, the Economic Conference at Paris made what some people supposed was a successful effort to frame a policy; but a little examination shows that while the Conference resolved that a common effort should be made by the Allies to extend the trade relations between them, and to discourage trade with the enemy countries, the methods by which these things should be accomplished were not defined. The resolutions were so framed as to secure the approval of delegates holding widely different views on fiscal questions, and to obtain subsequent confirmation of the declarations from governments composed of men entertaining equally diverse opinions. It seems that they were intentionally drawn in very general terms, designed to set forth the object in view, while leaving each country free to adopt its own method of reaching the desired end.

In Great Britain it is certain that when the moment arrives at which details of fiscal policy become necessary there will still be a wide difference of opinion. The war is modifying some of the views strenuously held in the past. But it is much too soon to assume that there will easily be an agreement among those who have in the past found themselves so much at variance. An admission by strong free traders that there may have to be a new policy to meet the new conditions should not hastily be accepted as evidence that the doctrine of tariff protection is now to be adopted.

Much has been said in recent cablegrams concerning the attitude of Sir Alfred Mond, hitherto a strong free trader, who, it is claimed, is now to be counted among the advocates of tariff protection. It may be that later events will justify this interpretation of Sir Alfred's position, but it does not appear that he has yet so enrolled himself. He has indicated that there are some industries which may have to be dealt with in a different way from that of the past, but it does not follow that he regards tariff protection as the proper remedy. In a statement made by him some days in advance of the recent cabled reports, and which

may have been the basis of those reports, Sir Alfred said:

"The free exchange of goods presupposes that trade is carried on between individuals, without other object than the greatest economic advantage. As soon as there enters on the field a nation whose trade is carried on, not by individuals but by a government, not for trade but largely for political purposes, with a view to obtaining dominion over free and independent nations, it is surely clear that the whole basis of trade relations becomes altered.

"The war has shown us that a number of materials and industries of great importance for our national defence, and for the maintenance of great industries such as textiles, had practically become German monopolies. It would surely be driving theory to the extreme limit of pedantry to lay down as a principle that such industries, many of which we have created with much toil and expense during the present war, should be allowed to slip back into the hands of those whom we shall certainly have to regard for a long time to come as potential enemies."

In all this there is not a word about tariff protection. It shows clearly enough that the war will call for new methods of dealing with some of the commercial problems, and that there may have to be a revision of the views of some of those who have in the past taken a prominent part in the discussion of such questions. Signs of division are to be found on both sides of the tariff question in England. Sir Alfred Mond's remarks give us one view. On the tariff reform side it is hinted that the question is likely to take a new shape. The tariff reform movement has hitherto contemplated very modest duties. Some of the leaders of the movement are inclined to see in the present situation an opportunity to put forward a protective policy of a more positive character. Whether this will draw more supporters to the movement or detach some of those who have sustained it in the past remains to be seen.

It is more than probable that many of those who in the past have been wedded to the old free trade policy will feel as Sir Alfred Mond does that the new situation will call for new methods. But it is not certain that tariff protection will appeal to them as the only or the best way of meeting the new condition. Indeed it is quite probable that many of them will regard that as an undesirable way and will hold that if for National or Imperial reasons it is essential that certain industries shall be carried on within the Empire, regardless of the questions of profit or loss which usually govern business transactions, the proper policy