

I have brought under the notice of this Chamber, however imperfectly it has been presented, is one of the most important which can engage the attention of Parliament. Many questions underlie its consideration. Are we to be content with our present markets, or are we to look for new ones? Are our farmers to feel that with the present outlets open to them they are to be satisfied? Are our manufacturers to feel that the bounds of their operations are to be the limits of their own country, or are they to feel that wider fields invite their skill with fair prospects of profitable returns? Are we ourselves to be satisfied with the present export trade of our country, or are we not rather to seize the opportunities which offer of extending our trade and of making our country better known?

It may be well to consider that striking results are not to be immediately expected, at least from the West Indian trade. Too long by us has that trade been neglected; too long have our American neighbors enjoyed its advantages to be immediately supplanted; too deep are the channels which the commerce of these islands have coursed out to be immediately diverted; too intricate are the commercial relations which have sprung up between the West Indian and the American merchants, relations I have no doubt which are pleasant and satisfactory; too long have these existed to be rudely severed, but we can greatly change the character of the volume of trade which exists with these islands as between the United States and ourselves to-day, and in time, by persistency, will doubtless attain a position which will fully establish the value of these markets to us. Can this great change be brought about?

How is it to be accomplished? In the precise way in which a merchant increases the volume of his trade. What does he do? He has before him the operations of preceding years, the sales, payments, profits and losses of each. He has before him the operations of each day, and week, and month and season of the previous years. He has an object to accomplish, and he intends to succeed; hence, results are expected from each day. Is he beaten in the open market? He faces the condition of things which circumstances forces upon him. He cannot afford to

have any fancied excellence of his own commodities stand in the way of their sale. He must impress his customer with the fact that it is to his advantage to buy from him. If there is a serious falling off in his trade in any locality, or with any customer, it is discovered and remedied. If wrong has been done, unconsciously, it is corrected, and if circumstances call for an apology it is made, not waiting until one is demanded. If incompetent workers are preventing results, or failing to achieve them, they are removed. If the field of operations is circumscribed it is enlarged, and the result is that the year closes with the accomplishment of the purpose which the merchant placed before him at its beginning. He has made the addition to his sales that he contemplated, and it was secured by increasing vigilance. It will require the same watchful oversight to secure the needed increase to the export trade of our country. That our export trade has not had that oversight is, I think, abundantly evident from the results, and equally clear is it that no change is to be expected unless such a plan as has been indicated is adopted.

Who is to do this? Carlyle says that "He who would act faithfully must believe firmly." One in many respects as great a man as Carlyle—I mean the late Bishop Fraser, of Manchester, has said "That if a man is wholly out of gear with his time he cannot influence." Never, in my humble judgment, has there been in the history of our country such an opportunity as the one which now exists for a Government to distinguish itself in initiating measures broad, generous and far-reaching for the development of our trade with other nations; never such an opportunity for a Minister, however wisely and however well he may have done his work in the past, to secure for his country that which it needs, and to add to his own reputation for wise statesmanship. Such opportunities come rarely, either in the history of nations or individuals. All the more important that they should be seized and turned to account. But it must be a man who, while he would act faithfully, believe firmly. It must be a man who has faith in the possibilities of his country, faith in its resources; faith in the intelligence, in the industry and skill of its people; faith to believe that whatever can be done by