

tle bearing upon the extension of our markets for agricultural products.

FOODSTUFFS

In anticipating an expansion of trade with the West Indies it must be borne in mind that the population there is largely negro with but limited purchasing powers and tastes very dissimilar to those people of European extraction. There is, however, room for expansion and in most lines there has been a gratifying growth in the last few years. The exports of breadstuffs from Canada in 1902 totalled \$297,641, last year \$305,015; provisions, including butter and cheese and salted and smoked meats in 1902, \$100,784, last year \$195,086. Living animals were valued in 1902 at \$31,579, in 1906 at \$19,097. Besides the lumber and fish already mentioned, potatoes, vegetables and various manufactured goods made up the balance of the trade.

The above are the figures for the British West Indies, beside which there is Cuba which took Canadian products last year to the value of \$1,221,766 against \$649,115 in 1902. The main items making up last year's trade with Cuba were potatoes, \$377,140; fish, \$405,705; lumber \$270,727. Other products were breadstuffs, \$27,304; hay, \$31,548. Practically no dairy products went to Cuba and the balance of the exports were made up of coal and various manufactures. There are also the Danish, the Dutch and the French Islands but their imports from Canada are decreasing rapidly and almost to the vanishing point. The reasons for this might well be considered by our Department of Trade and Commerce and if possible some remedial action taken.

British Guiana from its proximity and general similarity to the West Indies may also be considered in this connection. In 1906 this country took from us products to the value of \$487,659, of which the principal items were fish \$240,093, lumber \$35,148, potatoes \$35,040, cheese and butter \$16,032.

Canada's imports from nearly all these countries are greatly in excess of our exports to them, the preferential tariff having given the sugar trade from the British Islands and Guiana great encouragement. A tabulated statement of comparative figures best shows how we stand.

Exports	
British West Indies.....	\$2,758,416
Cuba	1,221,766
British Guiana	487,659
Danish West Indies	16,709
Dutch West Indies	18,649
French West Indies	18,649
Total	\$4,503,967
Imports	
British West Indies	\$5,453,994
Cuba	445,100
British Guiana	2,067,366
French West Indies	350
Total	\$7,966,800

These figures show an adverse balance of trade against us of nearly \$3,500,000, but it might be explained that this is largely accounted for by the increase of the sugar trade since our preferential tariff went in force. In 1903, our sugar imports from B. W. Indies were only \$1,444,122, while last year they were \$4,980,720. In 1902, British Guiana only sent us sugar to the value of \$154,317, in 1906 it was \$2,059,944.

This adverse balance should stimulate us to try and increase our exports, and in this connection there seems to be two main points to be considered: To give these markets what they demand, and to forward the goods in such quantities, with such despatch and put up in such form as will enable the dealers to handle them with the greatest margin of profit.

In regard to the first it must be borne in mind as previously stated, that the white population is small and that the black people have but limited purchasing power.

DAIRY PRODUCTS

The demand for really first class and high priced goods is therefore



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restricted. Apply this condition to dairy products, for instance, and we find there is but a small trade in good butter and cheese. The blacks buy butter, usually by the penny worth at a time, but it must be a cheap butter and consequently this demand is largely filled by oleo margarine or some butter compound. A butter compound that is very popular is one put up in France containing about 72 per cent. butter fat and which costs in France about 17c per lb. in casks. United States oleomargarine is also growing in popularity.

Under our present laws Canada cannot compete in this trade and it is very questionable if we are not unwise in preventing our packers from competing in outside markets with the oleomargarine makers of other countries. Could we get a good sale, such as the tropical markets afford for this product it would be a great stimulus to our packing house enterprises.

In high class butter the blue nose brand put up in tins by Smith & Proctor, of Halifax, competes very favorably with Danish butter and weep up that Halifax firm able to keep up their supply the year round they could much more rapidly extend their trade. As conditions have been for the past few years, it has been practically impossible to buy creamery butter for export during the winter season.

In cheese Canada has the market in some islands but special sizes and quality are required. A small, firm, slow curing cheese is the best and a skim or partially filled cheese best meets the requirements of the market so far as the black population is concerned. An American cheese called Unadilla which is evidently not a full cream cheese is in high favor and meeting with increasing sales. Gouda cheese in 10 lb. sizes, flat is also much esteemed by the better classes.

As an example of the demand for this cheap U.S. cheese, the figures for the Island of Trinidad last year give an idea of the relative demands for U.S. and Canadian cheese—Great Britain sent in 37,000 lbs., United States, 225,000 lbs., Canada 18,000 lbs.

In Barbadoes Canadian cheese is preferred while in Dominica the United States article has the market; these are 8 lb. cheese put up four in a box.

FRESH MEATS

The consumption of fresh meats is very small, live animals for slaughter are imported to some extent from South America and some fresh meat is got through New York; Canada has been sending a few horses, cattle and sheep, but mostly for working or breeding purposes. There is a small demand for pure bred stock which has hitherto been supplied by Nova Scotia breeders through Government channels.

Salted and smoked meats are used considerably but Canada only sent about \$7,000 worth of these last year; the preference seeming to be for the cheaper and latter United States product.

BREADSTUFFS

Canadian flour is popular wherever it has obtained a foothold and the trade has grown to the extent of about \$30,000 per year for the last five years until last year the value of Canadian breadstuffs used totalled \$565,018. If our exporters had studied the conditions and peculiarities of the demands our trade might be much larger than it is to-day.

QUICK DESPATCH NECESSARY

In regard to the size and despatch of shipments it is well to note that with the exception of fish and lumber, the Canadian goods to meet essential requirements.

The West Indian dealer from the nature of his climate and his trade wants goods quickly when he orders them. The steamer which brings the mails carrying his order