

languages and of what may be properly termed the economics of foreign trade.

Just a word about modern languages. My hon. friend the member for Vancouver spoke of the possibilities of better trade conditions with Russia, that great country which is now an ally of Great Britain and France. May I tell my hon. friend—and this is a plea for bi-lingualism—that if an Anglo-Canadian not conversant with the Russian languages or dialects—because there are many Russias in the Greater Russia—is to represent us in order to establish better trade relations over there, he will meet with difficulties, because the only foreign language spoken freely in all the large centres of Russia is the French language. I say this *en passant*, so that my friends in the House may understand how important it is for us, Canadians to be conversant with more than one language.

In connection with the very able report of the Ontario commission, which came to the conclusion that in order to provide employment for the unemployed and to meet the conditions arising after this war we should develop our trade with foreign countries, I may say that in Great Britain also, this question has of late been very prominent. Not later than in the month of January last a motion was made in the British House of Commons by Mr. Hewins, and the very question which was presented to the House this afternoon by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, was also discussed in the British House. Mr. Hewins moved:

That with a view to increasing the power of the Allies in the prosecution of the war, His Majesty's Government should enter into immediate consultation with the Governments of the Dominions in order with their aid to bring the whole economic strength of the Empire into co-operation with our Allies in a policy directed against the enemy.

I would commend this debate to those of my fellow-members who take a special interest in the trade question, because in these speeches, especially in those delivered by Mr. Hewins, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Fell and Runciman, you will find most interesting data and facts.

For the moment I wish, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words about the trade possibilities between Canada and France, one of the great Allies. My reasons for confining my remarks to Franco-Canadian trade are obvious. First of all, as I have stated, France is the great ally of Britain. A hurricane of glory has swept over France. She has fought the enemy since the beginning of the war in a way which, by her

[Mr. Lemieux.]

heroism and by her undaunted courage, has elicited universal admiration. Besides, we should bear in mind that one-third of the population of this Dominion is of French descent. We have had two treaties with France, one which was negotiated some years ago by the late lamented Sir Charles Tupper, and another which was negotiated only a few years ago by Mr. Fielding when he was Minister of Finance. We have an oceanic service with that country which, I believe, could be improved. I hope that when the war is over and when new steamers are built my hon. friend will exact from the Allan Company a better and more modern service between Montreal, Quebec, Halifax and St. John and Havre. Sir, France is anxious to trade with us; she is willing to buy from us. If you look at the latest figures published by the Department of Trade and Commerce, you will realize how wonderfully our trade with that country has increased.

In 1896, the total trade, imports and exports, between France and Canada, amounted to \$3,364,313; and for 1915, the total imports and exports were \$22,847,315. This is a wonderful advance, and shows how France is anxious to trade with us. I know that people will say that these conditions arise from the war, that France is buying from Canada war munitions. But, Sir, I am informed on the highest authority that we can maintain our trade at least that figure between Canada and France after the war is over, because France is grateful to Canada, grateful not only for the noble part Canada has taken in the war, for the blood which has been freely given by her sons on the plains of Flanders yesterday and to-day, but grateful also for the gifts that have been made from every city, from every town, from every hamlet of Canada, to the suffering peasantry of France. Yes, France is and will be grateful. It so happens that the Republic is represented to-day in Canada by one of the ablest consuls-general this country has ever had in the diplomatic service. I refer to Mr. Bonin of Montreal who was conseiller d'ambassade, and who is a far-seeing statesman. He is an arduous worker who knows exactly the economic conditions of both France and Canada, and he has been doing his best to foster those conditions since the war began. Consider the importance of that Franco-Canadian trade. 20 years ago it was about \$3,500,000 a year, total imports and exports, and last year it was nearly \$25,000,000. It is the imperative duty of Canada to maintain that trade,