

CANADIAN TRADE WITH WEST INDIES

Facts about the Land of Bananas and Pine-Apples, where many Canadians Spend their Winters

CANADIAN trade with the West Indies is a very old question. It is as old as the tourist traffic between the two countries.

For a quarter of a century now prominent Canadians have been wintering in Jamaica — though the total number of such tourists compared to those from the United States is so small as not to be noticed by the average Jamaican. Those Canadians who have gone, however, have brought back glowing stories of the trade possibilities with Canada. The luxuriance of the growth stimulates the imagination. Things grow so easily in the Indies. The price of labour is at a minimum and the climate favours exuberance. Hence the initial cost of things produced on those islands is very low. The trouble lies in the freight—and of course this depends upon a number of things.

Sugar, cocoanuts, fruits, salt, cocoa beans and molasses are the principal commodities which Canada buys from the British West Indies. Of this, sugar is almost ten to one of all the rest. In the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1908, Canada bought nearly ninety per cent. of all the sugar exported from British Guiana, besides buying from other islands. At the same time about the same percentage of the fruit grown in Jamaica finds a market in the United States. The United Fruit Co. of New York have a daily fruit-boat service to and from Jamaica. Very little of Jamaican fruit comes to Canada. For the year ending March 31st, 1908, the total amount of fruit imported into Canada from all the British West Indies was less than \$70,000; while molasses ran nearly a million. Of course the great trouble with fruit is the long, slow voyage by Canadian boats and the infrequent service. The Pickford and Black Co. have three boats, each of which takes five days from Kingston to Halifax with only a fortnightly service. Compared to the daily fast service of the United Fruit Co. this is remarkably inadequate. Jamaicans living in Canada invariably say that we seldom or never see the really good Jamaican fruit in this country. The pineapples we get they consider "culls." The oranges are smaller and inferior. So with the limes and the grape-fruits — while in bananas we import very slightly from Jamaica.

However, it is now twenty years since the late Senator Macdonald, after wintering in the British West Indies, read a paper before the Toronto Board of Trade on the trade relations between those Islands and Canada. Even in those days the United States disregarded the old adage that "trade follows the flag"; for they were doing the bulk of the trade with those British possessions which are supposed to lie contiguous to Canada. For instance, in sugar alone the United States bought eight hundred and thirty pounds to Canada's one. Such a discrepancy even on the buying end naturally attracted the attention of the Senator, who was a keen business man of the modern school of Canadian Scotchmen. The fact that in both buying and selling with the West Indies the United States were ousting Canada caused him to institute a comparison which holds as true to-day as then—between the claims of the United States and those of Canada on West Indian trade. Senator Macdonald put forward the claims of Canada as on a parity with the United States—"because of their contiguity to us as compared with France, India or other countries; from the similarity of commodities supplied by them and by us; from the fact they like ourselves are members of the Anglo-Saxon family and consequently possess no inherent advantages." Yet in spite of this he found that in Barbados the United States did four dollars to Canada's one; in Trinidad seven dollars; in British Guiana three dollars and thirty-seven cents.

This applied to both exports and imports. On the ground of exports alone the United States has always beaten Canada in that market even with many of those things in which Canada was supposed to have a preeminence. In cheese, butter, flour, cornmeal and oatmeal, lard, and meat—always the disparity in favour of the United States. In shingles, however, Canada held the advantage — though not in staves; also in lumber, oats, potatoes and fish—a big discrepancy in favour of Canada.

Some of the reasons for the adverse balance against Canada were found to be the need of a rapid and regular steam communication; a direct and inexpensive cable service; regular and prompt postal service; an efficient lighthouse service; a new departure bringing our merchants, millers, lumber dealers and manufacturers into direct contact with the great leaders in trade in those islands."

In twenty years some of this has been accomplished. But much of it still remains to be done. Postal and cable facilities have improved; also lighthouse services; but the direct contact is wanting very badly in the British West Indies. The fact is Canada has been so busy expanding her own internal markets in the west that she has begun to neglect some of the outside markets; especially those lying remote from the regular run of east and west trade. The north and south trade has been neglected. Tariffs have been tinkered up with France and Germany and they are still being retinkered. Tariffs with the British West Indies have been readjusted very little. There is complication with the West Indies tariff, owing to the dissimilarity of products in various of the islands. Jamaica, for instance, is almost wholly devoted to fruit-growing. A preference given to Canadian-made goods in Jamaica over those from the United States would of course hit hard at the biggest market Jamaica has for her fruit, while we should not be able to make up the deficiency.

Steamship service also has been neglected. We have fast freight and passenger service between Canadian Atlantic and European ports; a slow and almost mediaeval service to the British West Indies. To Europe we have cold storage; to the British West Indies—none.

However, Tehautepec is in a fair way to change much of this. If Canadian wheat can use the trans-Mexican route as freely and favourably as United States produce, there is no real reason why Canadian manufactures should not do the same

both via that route to Pacific ports and direct with Mexico and the British West Indies as ports of call. The Alberta farmer's wheat may swing down the Pacific and across the isthmus and away over the Atlantic. The eastern manufacturer's goods may swing down the Atlantic to Puerto and to the British West Indies *en route*; coming back with raw material from the Pacific and with products from the tropical islands.

Already New Brunswick is moving with energy towards a revival of trade between that province and the West Indies. Tariff legislation by the United States has accelerated action. The United States duty on potatoes hits New Brunswick on one end; that on Cuban bananas hits Cuba on the other. There is a desire in both Cuba and New Brunswick to swap bananas and potatoes—as a mere starter; and this is part of a desire in the Maritime Provinces to establish better trade facilities between the whole of the mid-Atlantic group of islands and the eastern part of Canada.

What affects the eastern provinces has a bearing on the interior of Canada. The manufacturers of Ontario are closer to the West Indies by water than they are to Western Canada by land—on a basis of freight charges. The sugar and the rum and the cocoa beans and the coffee of the West Indies are just as close. The only distinction is in case of the fruit, for some of which more rapid shipment facilities would need to be provided. But so far as bananas and pineapples are concerned, Canada might as well get them from the West Indies as from Florida and Cuba.

UNAPPRECIATED GREAT MEN

The 'Teddy Bear' is a Household Symbol, but the Literary Works of Lord Morley are known to only a few.

By W. KENT POWER

IN the midst of all our discussions as to the best methods of drawing closer the ties of Empire and stimulating Imperial sentiment, it is remarkable what little effort is made to interest Canadians young and old in the personalities and achievements of the men whom we find at the head of governments in Great Britain. The incidents in the daily life of Theodore Roosevelt, and all the varying phases of his temperament, his impetuous manner of address, his tennis-playing, bear-hunting and wrestling, his views on all subjects from marriage to the navy, are known to us all. For this widespread and detailed knowledge his unusual personality may be said to be the explanation, but we find that Canadians were as well informed regarding men of more commonplace mould; photographs and cheaply printed biographies of the late President McKinley were even before his tragic and universally lamented death to be found in thousands of our homes. The only difference is that the more versatile man because of his natural gifts arouses the interests of more people and of all the people at more points than his predecessor.

What detailed knowledge, however, have Canadians of Mr. Asquith or of the brilliant men by whom he is surrounded and opposed? How many of us know that he is the first lawyer to have become Premier of Great Britain; or, turning to a field of more general interest, how many young Canadians remember that Sir Edward Grey was an amateur champion in tennis, or that Mr. Lyttleton achieved fame in cricket, or that Lord Alverstone was one of his university's best runners?

The versatility and breadth of achievement distinguishing her public men is one of the most notable features of public life in Great Britain. The members of the American cabinet are usually politicians and lawyers, or business men, but nothing else. On the other hand the delightful sanity and humour of Augustine Birrell in his *Obiter Dicta* and *Men, Women and Books*; the illuminating criticisms of history and literature in the essays of the now Viscount Morley, editor of the famous *Men of Letters* series of biographies; the philosophical works of Mr. Haldane and Mr. Balfour; and the writings of Winston Churchill have made their names familiar to thousands of people who frequently forget that the men, whose works they read with such pleasure, are engaged in directing

the destinies of the world's greatest Empire. Then there are the more widely known works of Mr. Bryce, the less well known translations from the French by Mr. Wyndham, and the *Life of Pitt* and *Napoleon, the Last Phase*, by Lord Rosebery.

In the face of a galaxy of brilliancy such as this what has the United States to offer of interest to us? With the exception of Roosevelt, John Hay and Senator Lodge, how many of their prominent men will be remembered for anything outside the line of their official duties?

Is it therefore not surprising that our newspapers do not contain more news of the personal, or non-political side, at least, of the Englishmen referred to? They fill their pages with presidential addresses, but how many of them reprinted the admirable and brilliant rectorial address of Mr. Asquith at Glasgow two years ago, or the address, of equal worth but widely different in subject matter and style, delivered by Mr. Haldane at Edinburgh about the same time? How many of them informed their readers of the victory of Mr. Wyndham over Dr. Osler for the lord rectorship of Edinburgh in the election just past?

We can afford to dispense with news of the golf score of Mr. Taft, able and honourable man as he is, if we are made better acquainted with a man like John Morley, who, to an executive capacity equal to that of the president-elect, adds a breadth of view and independence of thought gained from an intimate knowledge of the literature, history and thought of modern Europe during the last three centuries, and who expresses his ideas in a style of most unusual perspicuity and charm. Are not the opinions and actions of men such as these worthy of more attention than they at present receive from the Canadian press and people?

The interesting "great men" competition promoted by the *Courier* evidenced, it must be admitted, a certain lack of appreciation of the relative values of human achievements; and some aspects of the result would be amusing, were they not humiliating as well. If Canadian railway and bank presidents, whose like might be duplicated at least a score of times in the neighbouring republic, are entitled to be called great, our friends to the south would have to build an immense Hall of Fame, indeed; and could rightfully consider their country the birthplace of unnumbered geniuses.