COMMERCE and TRANSPORTATION

CANADA'S TRADE WITH FOUR COUNTRIES.

French Business Has Increased—Imports from Great Britain and United States Show Large Gains.

Canada's trade with France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States, has increased over eighty-six million dollars during the last four years. The total trade with these four countries for the fiscal year ended March 31st, 1909, was more than five hundred and eight millions, or an increase of approximately twenty per cent. over the figures of 1905. This is the story told by the statistical blue book recently issued by the Department of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa. From its pages, facts throwing considerable light on the economic situation in Canada are gleaned. Among the more important features of the report the effects of the German surtax, the British preference and the United States tariff are traced.

Of the German Figures.

Of the four countries, Germany gets the smallest share of our trade. France comes next, but French trade is increasing while German trade is decreasing. Great Britain is slightly below the United States figures but both are increasing steadily. The following table states the German situation in detail.

	1905.	1909.	Changes.
Total imports	$6,642,139	$6,001,454 —	$640,685
Total exports	1,146,654	1,476,552 +	329,898
Total trade	7,788,793	7,478,006 —	310,787

The big factor in the German trade is the surtax referred to in the editorial pages. That the German surtax is effective, is shown by the decrease of over three hundred thousand dollars during the four years. In every overseas empire, British trade shows an overwhelmingly larger increase than German trade, during the last twelve years. An average is struck between the first and the last four years of the period (1895-1906) and from this it is seen that Canada's increase in imports from Great Britain is nearly ten times her increase from Germany. This year's figures show that there has been a decrease of over six hundred thousand dollars in Canadian imports from Germany in the last four years.

British and French Trade

The following table is a summary of Canada's French trade:

	1905.	1909.	Increase
Total imports	$7,201,679	$ 8,028,806	$ 827,127
Total exports	1,511,298	3,176,096	1,664,798
Total trade	8,712,977	11,204,902	2,491,925

Our trade with Great Britain has increased nearly forty-two millions since 1905, and there is every likelihood of further increase. Canada's trade must increase in proportion to the growing population, the investment of foreign capital, the development of resources, and the hundred other increasing factors in a country in the making.

Below is a summary of British trade:

	1905.	1909.	Increase
Imports from....	$ 60,538,811	$ 70,556,738	$10,017,927
Exports to.......	101,958,771	133,745,375	31,786,604
Total trade......	**162,497,582**	**204,302,113**	**41,804,531**

That the United States should get the largest part of our trade is due largely to the fact that many of the biggest items of exchange are on the free list. Among these we see unmanufactured tobacco, ores of metals, &c. With the passing of the Payne Bill, conditions may change. The effects of the bill will be noted with interest, but prophecy is impossible. At a recent convention the National grain dealers declared for rescinding the duty on wheat from Canada. Is this typical of the attitude of many United States dealers in Canadian goods and produce?

As to United States Relations

New conditions make it possible for us to affect United States trade not a little. Our total trade with that country last year amounted to over two hundred and eighty-five millions. With our growth new fields are open for commercial activity. We are not as dependent on the United States as formerly. For instance the Canada-West Indies Trade Commission has shown that California cannot control the Canadian fruit market. The figures of the banana trade are significant. In 1902 we imported $714,000 worth of the fruit from the United States, in 1908, $1,467,000. Bananas compose no less than 55% of the exports of the Indies. Sugar is even more striking. In 1902 our total import was $7,905,000. Of this $880,000 came from the British West Indies and British Guinea, and $4,950,000 from France and Germany. In 1908 our import amounted to $10,905,000, and of this $7,894,000 came from the West Indies and Guinea. Canada's increasing commercial strength is a good omen for a continuance of increasing trade with Great Britain and the United States. The advance in the United States figures of the last four years is given below:

	1905.	1909.	Increase
Total imports	$166,040,890	$192,661,360	$26,620,470
" exports	77,404,071	92,604,357	15,200,286
" trade	243,444,961	285,265,717	41,820,756

From the foregoing it is seen that, while Canada's foreign trade is rapidly increasing, her position among trading nations is becoming assured. Germany is seeking. France is anxious to cultivate our trade. A healthy increase is noted in British-Canadian commerce and, finally, we have now a say in Canada-United States trade matters.—W. A. D.

ORIENTAL LABOR ON THE RAILROADS.

There is a difference of opinion, even among the head officials of railways. Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, president of the Grand Trunk, when on the Pacific Coast recently and later, on his way to England, expressed himself in favor of using cheap labor from across the Pacific, saying he saw no objection as long as the line was built. He suggested that any alien labor of this kind might be watched and deported after the work was completed. Generally speaking, his suggestions did not meet with favor on the Pacific Coast, where the people, irrespective of party, stand together against cheap Oriental labor.

On the other hand, Mr. D. D. Mann, vice-president of the Canadian Northern, who is on the coast conferring with the Government of British Columbia in respect to the progress of his railway across that province, is just as strongly inclined the other way. He remarked that in thirty years of railway building he had never employed an Oriental, and did not expect that he would have to do so. He would not consider it a hardship if there were an anti-Oriental clause in the agreement under which the Canadian Northern is to be constructed in British Columbia.

Westerners are strongly opposed to Oriental labor. They affirm that it will eventually lead to a race problem. Whether this is so or whether Western workmen object to the competition involved, is somewheat hard to determine. It is interesting to note that the prominent Japanese visitors to Canada stated at Montreal this week that the labor migration from Japan to Canada had ceased.

VANCOUVER ISLAND PROGRESS.

Vancouver Island is growing in commercial importance, and with development there, Victoria and other cities will reap much benefit. There are immense timber areas on the island and extensive mineral deposits, including much coal. Of late a number of transfers of interests have been reported. Among these was the sale of the timber near Cowichan Lake by the C.P.R. to an American concern which will not only cut the timber but will utilize every portion of it. The establishment of a pulp mill is proposed. Other timber sales are announced, and the prospect is that that portion of British Columbia will be a scene of activity in the near future. The C.P.R. will build a line from Cowichan Lake to tidewater to aid the lumber mill project. They are also constructing a line across the island to Alberni. While the primary value of the resources is in timber and minerals, there are fine areas adapted to agriculture, and once the railway affords transportation settlers will go in in larger numbers. The Salvation Army has completed arrangements to bring out suitable people from the Old Country to place on land in the neighbourhood of French Creek, the first of whom are expected to arrive in April next. With projects of this kind on foot, it will easily be seen that in a comparatively short time a rich territory will be opened up and a worthy class added to the population of the province.