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CANADIAN TRADE WITH BRITAIN.

The average Canadian who thinks of doing business as an exporter to the United Kingdom would be the better of an interview with Mr. P. B. Ball, commercial agent for Canada at Birmingham, England, who is now in Canada for a brief visit. He may learn of some things to do and some things to avoid in his transactions with Old Country folk. He will be pretty sure to learn that in the opinion of Mr. Ball, the English business man is by no means the dense individual that some esteem him. The Englishman, though he may be quick to see is not quick to change his trade connections or his methods. And, secondly, he has such an enormous trade over both halves of the globe that he may be excused for not grasping greedily at any new extensions of it. This "secondly" is what many Canadians require to bear in mind, because the sales of Great Britain to Canada form but a small portion of her total export trade.

In a half hour's chat with Mr. Ball—who has now resided for two years in Great Britain in his present capacity—the writer learned enough to convince him that we in Canada have still much to learn about the English market. Take the item of wooden handles for tools—files, hammers, picks, screw-drivers, bread-knives, and scores of other products of Birmingham, Sheffield, or Wolverhampton. "There is a market for millions upon millions of wooden handles in our district," said Mr. Ball; "I know of two or three firms who are prepared to take hundreds of thousands of dozens. And yet, when the partner in a large manufacturing concern in England went to Canada prepared to make large contracts for these goods over a term of years, the Canadian makers said: 'Well, you see, we are very busy as it is, and cannot undertake more work.' Is there not enough enterprise among Canadian makers of such eminently staple goods as these, to justify an enlargement of their existing output?"

An answer to this enquiry of the Birmingham agent did not present itself readily. When British people who have been accustomed to buy their handles in Norway or Sweden, and who offer Canada their trade cannot get Canadians to take it, there is nothing to be said, we venture to think, as to the unconsciously apathy of the Englishman.

Again, take such a product as apples, "I have paid," said Mr. Ball, "from thirteen shillings (\$3.25) to seventeen shillings (\$4.25) a barrel for good apples, such as greenings or spies, in Liverpool. They were such as worthily commanded the price, for they were beauties, properly packed and in prime condition. But I have seen Canadian apples, small, shrunken, ill-packed, offered at auction not worth a dollar a barrel, and no wonder they did not bring enough to pay charges. The freight of a barrel of the one is as great as that on a barrel of the other; there was a handsome profit on the one and a certain loss on the other. Why will not our people in Nova Scotia or Ontario remember that apples are a luxury in England—that *it will pay* to select the best fruit in the orchard, to pack it with extreme care, to make arrangements for its sale to a trustworthy people, to even wrap each apple in paper, as Mediterranean merchants wrap their oranges. When will they learn that it is not wise to consign without a knowledge of the market, and not wise to send inferior fruit, with a chance of its being sold at auction, when first-class product is so certain, so easy, of sale. I know a merchant who is prepared to take twenty-five thousand barrels of Canadian apples per week; and I feel sure that he can not only make money for himself but ensure a paying price for the exporter. The apple market will come right; gluts are caused by unwise shipping of unsuitable fruit."

The average correspondence of the commercial agency for Canada in Birmingham is 600 to 700 letters per week. And this, we understand, consists far more largely of enquiries from Britishers about Canadian