

**CANADA AND THE BRITISH WEST INDIES**

In view of the many reciprocal advantages to be gained by closer trade relations between Canada and the British West Indies, which has been so frequently referred to by Mr. T. B. Macaulay (President Sun Life) through the press, the following editorial from the *New York Journal of Commerce* is well worthy of attention:—

The Spanish-American War resulted in the annexation of Porto Rico by the United States and the assumption of a protectorate over Cuba. A few years later came the virtual American protectorates over San Domingo and Haiti, with the purchase of the Virgin Islands from Denmark.

This extension of American authority and influence at once has brought into sharp discussion the question of the ultimate destiny of the remaining European possessions. America needs tropical products, affords a near market, and her recently acquired possessions have an opening to these markets on such advantageous terms that the other West Indies find it difficult to compete. As an illustration, Jamaica's position, where she is compelled to meet the competition of Porto Rico, which enjoys free trade with the United States, and also of Cuba, with especial reciprocal advantages, has been difficult in the extreme. This is merely typical of the situation in the other islands. But the British possessions have an especial opportunity to make new commercial arrangements with the Dominion of Canada, which is likewise a part of the British Empire. The growing population of Canada also needs tropical products, and its eastern ports are much nearer than those of Europe. If proper trade and tariff agreements can be entered into there would be an opportunity for Jamaica, Barbadoes and other British possessions in the West Indies to acquire a market that in time might equal at least the advantages enjoyed by the American possessions.

That our British friends at home have not been unaware of these trade problems is shown by the various suggestions during the past year that the United States might accept Jamaica in payment of the British war debt, thus meeting in advance and solving a destined separatist problem and "cashing in" while yet there was time to realize upon the colonial property. But this suggestion has not met with favor among the inhabitants of the British possessions in the western hemisphere, either continental or insular. They have felt the wonderful impulse toward unity that was the almost miraculous result of the war efforts throughout the whole world empire of Great Britain. Their loyalty to the British Crown is stronger than at any time in

history. They have met the present commercial difficulty, which probably will increase in force during the next few years, with a strong and logical movement toward unity on their own account, and this movement is worthy of careful study on the part of American business, which now, as never before, must look to the future.

The first result of this new British colonial development may be the final uniting of Newfoundland with the Dominion of Canada, of which it is not yet a member. This would add to the breadth of future Canadian markets. Also Canada itself is about to enter upon a period of tariff readjustment, the whole matter being the subject for careful study by the present Government, and also by experts well fitted for the purpose. Some two months ago a commission of business men from the West Indies, especially Jamaica, were in Canada and were received with great hospitality. The conferences that were held cannot but have important results in the near future. The Canadian business men and those from the various British possessions around the Caribbean Sea have too much mutually to offer each other to allow this opening of negotiations to fall short of some final accomplishment. It should be remembered that the trade between the British and French possessions in the East Indies, on the one hand, and the continental colonies in Canada, and later those which became the United States, on the other, was the cause of the political controversies that resulted in the many wars of the eighteenth century and these conflicts changed the whole map of the world, being just as influential in India or Africa as in America or the Far East. The building of the Suez and Panama canals was only a later expression of this world movement to acquire trade and markets. The United States has at present a position of wonderful strategic advantage in the West Indies. It cannot afford to sit back and let things slide. Other powers, by the use of perfectly legitimate and fair measures, will finally absorb the largest share of this trade or we must meet them on terms of equality and acquire our proper share. But this will not come merely for the asking.

**NOTICE**

We regret that owing to a delay in shipment of paper, there will be no issue of *The Chronicle* on the 10th inst. The difficulty in procuring the quality of paper on which this journal is printed is considerably intensified, and the price has advanced nearly two hundred per cent. during the past few months.