

TRADE WITHIN THE EMPIRE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Three Hundred Million People are Buying and Selling in a Territory of
Eleven Million Square Miles.

Although there is the danger of Canada losing its national individuality as a result of the proposed and later tariff agreements with the United States, that factor is distant. Largely through Great Britain's indifference to the welding of stronger trade links with its overseas empires, Canada is taking an important commercial step which will intertwine its commercial interests far more closely with those of the United States. The advocates of trade within the British Empire are therefore discouraged. Last year Canada sold to countries within the Empire \$165,354,712 worth of goods and purchased therefrom only \$60,709,707. Although Canada has absorbed £300,000,000 of British capital, Canadian trade as it relates to Great Britain and the United States is, despite the present tariff, greatly in favor of the latter country. Last year, the United States sold to us \$239,000,000 worth of goods, of which \$106,000,000 came in free of duty. In exchange we sold to them \$110,000,000 of goods, only \$4,000,000 in excess of the value of the American merchandise which entered Canada duty free. During the same year, Great Britain purchased from Canada goods valued at \$149,000,000, while we bought from Great Britain only \$95,000,000 worth. And in the same year we borrowed from Great Britain \$195,000,000. The Mother Country is thus loaning us money for very necessary development at the rate of about \$2,000,000 per annum and at the same time is purchasing from us \$40,000,000 worth of goods in excess of the purchases by the United States.

Empire trade is potential. By means of co-operation it has extraordinary possibilities. The total imports of the British self-governing dominions, crown colonies, possessions and protectorates in 1909 amounted to 366 millions sterling, which was only exceeded in 1907, when the record figure of 378 millions was reached. As compared with 1908, there was an increase of about 28 millions, and the expansion in the figures since 1899 amounts to no less than 140 millions. Taking the comparison with 1908, the biggest advance is shown in the case of Canada, whose imports increased from £63,700,000 to £80,500,000, and, looking back over the decade, Canada may also be said to have made the greatest progress, since in 1899 her imports only amounted to £33,400,000. The Dominion was then a less important consumer than the Commonwealth of Australia, whose imports amounted to £34,300,000, but the tables have now been turned, as, though the latter did fairly well, the last record is for only £51,200,000, an increase during the ten years of £16,800,000. South Africa's progress was, of course, checked by the Boer war, but the substantial gain of £3,600,000 was shown in 1909 over the preceding year, and its imports are now close upon thirty millions. Of smaller account, but still representing an important branch of trade, are the West African colonies, and the increase here has been very steady. The total imports of these dependencies have more than doubled during the decade, and now reach £8,700,000. The West Indies import practically the same amount, but their progress has been much less rapid, and, relatively to the other colonies, they may be said to have lost ground. The great importance to British merchants and manufacturers of the expansion in colonial purchasing power shown by the above figures lies in the fact that a very large share of the trade is done with Great Britain, but there is opportunity for greater things.

Out of the 366 millions of imports of the combined colonies, no less than 163 millions are purchased from

Great Britain. A further 58 millions represent inter-change traffic between different British Possessions, and only 145 millions are taken from foreign countries. An advance of 23 millions in the shipments from British India, combined with smaller increases from Ceylon and our other possessions in the Middle East, was the outstanding feature. In proportion to its total trade Canada came next with an advance of £8,200,000, while South Africa, which had an increase of £5,300,000, came third. The West Indies only exhibited a moderate gain of £800,000, but from West Africa the exports increased from £7,000,000 to £8,300,000, an expansion which is relatively greater than in the case of any other country except India. The latter, as is well known, has made more progress toward prosperity during the last few years than any of our possessions. To some extent this represents a recovery from a period of abnormal depression. The best record for sustained advance in commercial importance is proudly shown by Canada.

The area of the British Empire is 11,199,000 square miles, and its population 343,748,000. In 1909 the revenue of India amounted to £74,374,500 and the expenditure to £74,084,700; the revenue of the Australian Commonwealth was £40,881,274 and the expenditure £40,404,240; of Canada and Newfoundland £21,470,603 and £16,929,477. The amount of public debt in India is £290,156,260, Australia £240,628,641, Canada and Newfoundland £101,486,811, and the West Indies £6,019,992. The value of the imports in 1909 was as follows: India £106,781,239, South Africa £29,842,056, Canada and Newfoundland £82,891,312; total, £366,286,000. From the United Kingdom goods to the value of £66,628,565 were sent to India, £16,853,996 to South Africa, £6,462,000 to West Africa, £20,180,118 to North America, and £3,084,906 to the West Indies. The colonial exports amounted to £403,785,000, India leading with £129,472,024.

The work of the colonial postal departments has enormously increased in recent years. During 1909 the 18,399 post-offices in India dealt with 767,922,728 letters and cards, 101,192,285 newspapers, book packets, and circulars, 6,140,819 parcels, and 13,244,097 telegrams. The figures for Australia are: Letters 372,501,343, newspapers, etc., 201,839,873, parcels 2,917,464, telegrams 13,890,277; Canada, letters 479,670,000, newspapers 85,940,800. The Canadian figures have been more than doubled in nine years.

The quantity of wheat produced in British India increased from 200,866,101 bushels in 1895 to 357,940,800 in 1909. In Australia the increase was from 18,270,348 to 90,413,597 bushels. From the colonies the exports to the United Kingdom included the following: From Ceylon 189,368,905 pounds of tea to the value of £5,889,505, 1,796,734 cwt. of sugar (398,830 cwt. from Mauritius, 646,988 cwt. from the West Indies, and 664,440 cwt. from British Guiana), 60,350,752 pounds of raw cotton from India, 110,210 pounds from Ceylon, and 856,639 pounds from the Nyasaland Protectorate, 244,521,904 pounds of wool from Australia, 180,908,005 pounds from New Zealand, 62,800,179 pounds from the Cape of Good Hope, and 57,454,061 pounds from India.

The Empire's mineral products included the following: India 574,816 ounces of gold, 83,456 tons of iron ore, 83 tons of tin, 11,870,064 tons of coal; Australia 2,967,354 ounces of gold, 1,718,005 ounces of silver, and 8,203,221 tons of coal; Transvaal, 7,295,108 ounces of gold; and Canada 27,878,590 ounces of silver.