

Trade with South Africa

ON the seventh of October there begins a regular steamship service between Canada and South Africa. A contract for five years has been made by the Canadian Government with the Allan, Elder-Dempster, and Furness lines for all-year freight, mail, and passenger service, beginning with monthly sailings. The subsidy is \$150,000. Montreal and Quebec will be the Canadian ports in summer, and Halifax and St. John in winter, while Cape Town and two other undetermined ports, will be the termini in South Africa. The contract is a Canadian one, and subject to Canadian laws. It is, therefore, to be considered as a Canadian enterprise, and the timely action of the Government has been received with great satisfaction in both countries and in England. The first steamer will have a full cargo, including a large shipment of flour, and the opportunity will be improved to extend Canada's trade in various directions. If the experiment proves a success, an Australian service will probably follow.

The promptness of the Government in making the contract is beyond doubt due in a large measure to the efforts of the various trade organizations in Canada, which have for some time past discussed the establishment of commercial relations with South Africa, and have agitated steamship connection as a first necessity. The Colonial Conference acted as a further incentive, and in the ripeness of the present time the scheme has materialized.

A New Canadian Country

IT is possible that a new and important country will soon be opened up in the extreme north-east of Canada. Labrador has hitherto been associated chiefly with Esquimaux, icebergs, and herring, but recent investigations have shown it to be a place of great industrial possibilities. Properly speaking, Labrador is only a narrow strip

of sea-coast along the North Atlantic, between Hudson Strait and the Strait of Belle Isle; the vast country in the interior, half as large again as the Province of Ontario, is mapped under the name of Ungava. It is this territory that possesses a hidden wealth of natural resources. As yet its only inhabitants are a few Indians, while the interior is not only uninhabited, but unexplored. So far as may be gathered from the reports of the Indians who have made partial explorations, there exists an immense plateau between Hudson Bay and the mountain districts near the Labrador coast. It is thought that this plateau may be similar country to the western prairies, and that wheat-growing may be profitably engaged in. It is in any case certain that nearer the coast there are immense timber tracts, which can easily be developed and which offer rich profits. A few years ago a party of Nova Scotia capitalists visited the Labrador country, made surveys, and afterward secured rights and privileges over a large tract of virgin forest, timbered with the finest of spruce and pine. During the present year a complete saw-mill outfit was sent to the spot, and set up on one of the rivers, where an excellent water-power was available. It is the intention of the company to manufacture lumber and ship direct from the Labrador Coast, the rivers providing an easy means of bringing down the logs, as operations are carried into the interior. A good trade in pulp wood is also expected. The natural and climatic conditions of the country are much more favorable than is ordinarily supposed. The climate of the interior is not more arduous than that of Quebec, and the rivers are open the greater part of the year. Parts of the Labrador coast are already sparsely settled, the last census giving a population of 3,634. These are engaged chiefly in the fisheries, and a curious fact is observed in the continued residence there of traders after their original mission has