

the right we have at the present time as Canadians, to call upon the commercial intelligence branches of the British consular service in every part of the world. These officials are not only instructed from the Foreign Office, but from the communications I have had, they are willingly and cheerfully throwing themselves into the work, and providing us with such information as they think will be of use, such information as is asked of them by Canadian merchants and by my own department. So, special reports asked for by my department are obtained from all these countries upon special subjects, from the intelligence department of the British consular service. That gives us a much wider scope than if we had simply our own trade commissioners. Then, there are special and travelling commissioners. As the House will probably remember, I appointed a special commissioner to the West India Islands, who spent nearly a year and a half in those islands, went through them thoroughly, possessed himself of the information which was there to be obtained and which was particularly adapted for the purposes and the needs of Canada, and has lately published a report. I do not know whether all members of this House of Commons have seen it or not, but if any member would like to see it I would be glad to put it in his possession. It is a book upon the West Indies, and it embodies the result of his travels, his observations, and his advice with reference to trade.

Mr. PUGSLEY: What is the name of the commissioner?

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Mr. Watson Griffin. Within the last few months I have also had prepared a resume of the distinctive energies of Canada in production, both natural and industrial, a sort of vade mecum for our outside commissioners, people in foreign countries, British consuls and others into whose hands we put it, destined to answer this question: Is there anything that you want to know about Canada? If there is, here is a book in which you will find something in reference to it. If you want more information, you will know where to apply for it, and get it in detail.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Can we get that book?

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: That book has just been put through the press, and members of Parliament will have a copy of it placed in their hands. It is not for general distribution in Canada; it is for the pur-

[Sir George Foster.]

pose of helping and aiding our correspondents and business men in foreign countries who want to know for instance, where asbestos is found, and obtaining similar information in reference to any of the natural or the industrial products of Canada.

During the last year one of our best trade commissioners has spent five or six months in Russia, going through the country from west to east, from Petrograd to Vladivostok, and he has made his observations and gleaned his information from every part of that country. He has embodied that information in reports which have been published in the Bulletin, and those reports have been collected in a small volume. To-day Mr. Just is in Petrograd as our chief trade commissioner in Russia, and within a few weeks another trade commissioner from Canada will take up his headquarters at Omsk, in the farther east; and those two gentlemen, with efficient sub-workers at several points, will cover the Russian area in the endeavour to get information with reference to Russian trade and send it to us for distribution.

I have adopted a system of training sub-commissioners. Young men who have gone through the universities, or through the colleges or the schools, who are well educated, and have shown excellence in certain lines of economic and business pursuits, have been taken into the department and have been trained in the departmental work so as to get the home view, as it were, of these matters—trained with reference to tariffs and customs regulations. They have then been given travelling commissions through different parts of Canada, under instructions to make for themselves a thorough examination into different lines of industries and businesses and report to the minister thereon. They have visited the exhibitions, the factories and the producing centres in order to get that information. After having passed through a drill of a year and a half or two years in that way, they are going to foreign or outside fields. One of them, a graduate of McGill, will be the commissioner at Omsk; another will take up a position in another district; and a third, a university graduate from Toronto and a clever young man, is now studying the Italian language in connection with his drill in Canada, and I design him to undertake in Italy the work of getting that same information and of acting as our trade commissioner there.