

BRITISH GOODS IN CANADA

By ARTHUR HAWKES

The problem of how the British manufacturer is to sell goods in the greatest British self-governing colony is at present very much alive. It got a strong boost at the time of the tariff settlement between Ottawa and Washington. It was earnestly raked up at the repeal of the German surtax and the readjustment of the French treaty. Fore and aft and from all sides critics contended that the British Preference was being swamped for the sake of foreign bargains. On the other hand it was argued that the Preference had been very largely an optical illusion; the British manufacturer had not risen to the occasion; in short it was Canada's business to buy anywhere she chose at most advantage to herself; if need be let sentiment flicker and John Bull

go his own gait, working out his own salvation.

In the following article Mr. Arthur Hawkes ably sets forth the actual conditions, previously alluded to in the editorial columns of the CANADIAN COURIER. Mr. Hawkes is an Englishman who after years of studying public questions as an English journalist, came to Canada, first as editor of the Toronto World, later as managing editor of the Monetary Times, and now as chief of the publicity department of the Canadian Northern Railway system. His articles on Canadian development are among the foremost appearing in the very best magazines both in America and England. He has recently been back again to England studying commercial problems at first hand.

FROM the British point of view, the commercial side of Imperialism is the dominant side, however keenly you may feel that patriotism should flourish in a pure flame of self-denial. Wherever the English-speaking man has subdued some remote part of the earth he has always managed to make a profit out of the venture. The Empire has been made that way. It must be maintained that way.

No amount of trading with the alien could compensate for decline of commerce between ourselves. The British position has been fundamentally affected by the industrial development of other countries. Great Britain must buy food or perish. Other countries are not so dependent on importing her manufactures as she is on securing the staff of life from them. Canada has no need to worry about a market for western wheat. Western Canada would never suffer, observably, from the lack of British goods. The British manufacturer has to fight for the Western Canadian market; for the American is there, and the German, having obtained the removal of the surtax, is a twice formidable competitor.

There has been a great increase in British sales to Canada. But, as Cecil Rhodes used to say, the comparative is everything. If, with all the emigration of British-born people to Canada the American is increasing his sales in Canada faster than the Britisher is, it is time for the Britisher to take more careful stock of the situation.

People Buy What They Want.

No device that you can induce a free people to accept will compel them to buy what they don't want. The sum of statesmanship is the intelligent anticipation of events. The sum of commerce is the intelligent anticipation of wants.

"These are the goods we make. If you like them will be glad to sell them to you. If you don't like them, I'm sorry. Good-day." That is the proper attitude of him who imagines that trade travels in cast-iron ruts.

"I hope you'll like these goods, but if you don't, and will tell me how you would like them made up, we will try to meet your requirements." That is the attitude of the man who knows that trade moves in liquid channels.

There has been a fine increase in the number of British business men who visit Canada to size up conditions. There has been a lessening of the eagerness to press advice upon us—a growing acknowledgment, if you like, of the simple truth that the customer is king. There is room for more intercommunication. The British Government has recognised that in the appointment of Mr. Richard Grigg as His Majesty's Trade Commissioner to Canada, with correspondents reporting regularly to him, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. But that service, admirable as it is, is only a circumstance to what it ought to be, when His Majesty's Board of Trade really becomes a master in the Israel of Trade.

The United States Government has trade correspondents in every minor as well as major commercial centre of Canada, whose reports appear in the daily bulletins that are distributed, in myriads, from Washington. The American manufacturer has another advantage—last year the Canadians spent three million dollars in buying American periodicals filled with the advertisements of American goods. Now, advertising brings results in North America, and continues to bring results whenever the goods justify the advertisement.

The Britisher, then, is up against two propositions—preparation and propaganda. He starts with one tremendous advantage, the blessing of which he too often fails to turn to account—his goods are honestly made. When you allow the disadvantages of your advantage to outweigh the advantages, you are journeying in the wrong direction. Take an example.

English shoes are stronger than those that are chiefly bought in Canada. Shoes are a grievous burden to thousands of fathers whose children are

as numerous as they ought to be, and as mobile as Canadian children are. It takes no more leather to make a shapely shoe than it does to construct an ugly one. The English maker can buy outright the best American machinery, whereas the American maker can only rent it, on less advantageous terms. The Englishman could do exceedingly well in Canada if he would make shoes that look as good as they are. A beginning has been made. As one of the fathers who watches his children's capers with mingled pride and alarm, I hope it is only a beginning.

It is as necessary to rub in this kind of thing as it is to insist in Canada that the Old Country is not merely an aggregation of decayed industries, holding out their hands for alms. "We should like to sell to Canada," said a manufacturer to a London friend of mine, "but our goods are not suitable"—and left it there. The German does not talk like that.

The Sublime Indifference.

Two years ago, I came east from Edmonton with a party of British journalists. At Port Arthur we inspected the Atikokan Iron Works, just started as the first smelting industry between Lake Superior and the Pacific Slope. One of the journalists, from Tyneside, did not trouble to inspect the furnace. "Why should I?" he asked. "It is a very tiny affair beside ours at home."

In 1905 I visited the largest wholesale dry goods house in London. They boasted that, in a nine-storey building they had neither a passenger elevator, a typewriter nor a telephone. At another famous dry goods house I was told that they did not like new customers with small orders.

The Blackburn Chamber of Commerce sent a delegation to investigate the market conditions in China and other countries, including Superintendent Parker of the Textile Department of the Technical School. Mr. Parker collected specimens of weaving. He showed a book of Russian prints to a Blackburn manufacturer. "Dost ta me-ean t' sa-ay 't these wor ma-ade i' Rooshia?" asked the manufacturer. Mr. Parker said they were. "Then I we'ant believe tha," was the answer.

Assume that your British manufacturer is ambitious for Canadian trade, that he realises he must really compete against Canadian and American manufacturers, and that he is prepared to adapt his goods to the market, what is his propaganda to be? Here is the veritable crux and test of his capacity. Manufacturing is comparatively easy, because you can absolutely control your machinery and staff. But the art of salesmanship is as various as human nature itself. A mechanic who can make a motor car can make ten thousand. But to sell the ten thousand—ah! there's the problem.

The Problem of Salesmanship.

Hugh Chalmers, before he was thirty-one, rose from office boy to general manager of the National Cash Register works at Dayton, Ohio. He abandoned his job and salary of seventy thousand dollars a year to start an automobile factory. He knew nothing about the making of automobiles, but he did know how to sell. He has orders that will keep his enlarged works busy for two years. But he is advertising just as strongly as if he were beginning business. He believes in a waiting list. More, he understands that advertising, properly done, is an investment, and not an expense, to be charged against to-morrow's returns. Here, again, is a vital test of British trade extension in Canada.

Nobody objects to capital expenditure on a building in England in which to produce all the goods he expects to sell in Canada. He does not expect the first batch of orders to pay for the factory. But the bricks and mortar which shelter his plant from the weather are the least essential part of the structure in which his profits are really to be produced. What is the good-will of a business except the public's favourable knowledge of it?

Burn the factory and the good-will is unimpaired. Advertising is good-will. By judicious advertising you lay reputation on reputation exactly as you lay brick on brick in the factory. Good-will is a house, not made with hands, but with brains, and kept standing with brains.

If you expect to build up a trade in Canada, you must, therefore, go about the job in the same way that you tackle the location and erection of a factory. You will no more produce a trade from a single advertisement than you can protect your plant by a single brick. You must not be content with the kind of advertising that was satisfactory twenty, ten, even five years ago.

Next to your customer—perhaps before him—the most important man to think about is your competitor. He advertises; and you must meet efficiency with efficiency. Many advertisements are mixed with printers' ink. Mix yours with brains. Using big space is not the only way to advertise. All great intellects are not housed under big hats.

Jones and His Boko.

I have seen British advertising in Canada that makes the American competitor laugh, and the British sympathiser sorrow. Here is a commodity that was in use everywhere in England before this age of liberal advertising arrived—when, to talk of the psychology of advertising was to put yourself down an ass. Jones' boko was the only boko on the market for twenty years. Every grocer sold it long before it appeared on the hoardings. So, in England, if a lady asked her grocer for Jones' boko she was sure to get it.

But in Canada nobody uses Jones' boko. Other bokes are plentifully used, and therefore if Jones wants to make a mark in Canada he has got to do something more than say in newspapers, "Jones' boko." He must secure the housewife against disappointment when she asks her grocer for it. And in his advertisement he had better tell the good lady something more than that his boko is the best. For if people will read seven words of an advertisement they will read seven lines—if the lines are written with knowledge of the housewifely round and of the qualities of boko.

No sane man will think of proposing hard and fast lines for business propaganda in Canada. Advertising is wooing the public. A "Complete Guide for Lovers" will never be published. The most experienced practitioner of the art can only hope to give a few general hints, and to leave the application of them to the time and place—and the girl.

The Premier Province

ONTARIO still leads as the wealthiest province in the Dominion. The increase-ratio is remarkable. It is necessary only to note the figures for ten years. Note the increase in the values of farm lands, buildings, implements and live stock in 1908 as compared to 1899:

Land—	1899.	1908.	Increase.
	\$563,271,777	\$ 671,531,018	\$108,260,241
Buildings—			
	213,440,281	288,180,121	74,739,840
Implements—			
	54,994,857	74,485,730	20,490,873
Live Stock—			
	115,806,445	186,014,756	70,208,311
	\$947,413,360	\$1,220,211,625	\$273,099,265

To this it is only necessary to add that the production in 1909 aggregated over \$200,000,000, being almost double that in 1899. These striking results, coupled with the elaborate efforts to foster agriculture, prove that in spite of the keen competition of the young giants of the West, Ontario still maintains her premier position and Ontario is still a good place to farm.