

the more one is convinced that this trade ought to be developed to the benefit of all concerned. The difficulties at present standing in the way do not seem to be serious, and with patience ought to be overcome. The precedent of a Canada-West Indies trade agreement might be followed elsewhere with advantage." Certain parts of Central and South America can use our northern goods, and while the United States may offer certain advantages, yet in these countries, with proper treaties and steamship arrangements, there is no reason why Canada should not get its proportion of this trade. British Tropical Africa has a population of forty-five millions, with enormous wealth and resources, and why should we not encourage trade to mutual advantage between ourselves? If we are to cut down the premium on American exchange, we must reduce our imports from that country, manufacture at home everything possible that we require, and purchase from other countries, preferably those in the Empire, tropical and other goods with which those countries can supply us, and supply those countries with our goods in return. We cannot overlook the fact that Canada is exclusively northern, and requires to go outside of her own boundaries for many articles. There are many articles, such as meat, flour, fish, coal, butter and cheese, vegetables, cottons, and other things which Canada is in a favourable position to export to tropical countries, but of which very little has been sent from Canada, most of those outside countries getting their supplies from the United States. The United States produces much the same class of northern agricultural products as we do, and has no need of our exports, save as to lumber, pulp, and paper. Therefore we can see the necessity of looking elsewhere for a preferential market, and not expecting any consideration through free trade with America. Our trade with the eastern nations across the Pacific, such as Japan and China, being closer to us than to the United States, should have close attention for valuable development.

It is in this connection, in seeking new markets, that the Canadian mercantile marine will, I think, find its chief usefulness. Recent months have been a trying time in shipping circles: rates have fallen heavily and a large amount of tonnage has been tied up for lack of cargo. The Canadian Government fleet cannot expect to escape the trials and tribulations common to all shipping; but there may be advan-

tages in possessing a large fleet available for any port in the world where trade can be found, provided that the cost of the service does not exceed the subsidy a private corporation would ask. We will doubtless soon have before us full details of the operations of the Government marine, and will then be in a better position to weigh the policy and count the cost.

It is a matter of deep regret that we have been unable as yet to climb out of the bog of financial deficits which result from the operation of the National Railways, and I fear some considerable time must elapse before this great property ceases to burden the public treasury. The Prime Minister has invited those who can offer a practical solution to do so, and I can only urge upon you honourable gentlemen, and all concerned in the welfare of Canada, to give profound and constant consideration to this question, which nearly touches the credit and resources of the country, and is unquestionably one of the most serious problems confronting us.

His Excellency informs us that his advisers are convinced of the necessity for revision of the Customs Tariff, and that a measure having this purpose will be submitted to Parliament. We will presumably discuss the subject in this Chamber in due course, although the prerogative of taxation pertains to the popular branch. It is a question that has excited great interest throughout the Dominion, and seems by common consent to be the principal plank in party platforms. It is now fourteen years since the last general revision was made, and I content myself with expression of the hope that the coming revision will stabilize industry, promote manufacturing, and advance the general interests of Canada. Sane, careful, and wise judgment must be exercised on this score.

Last year there were more employed in manufacturing than ever before in our history, and probably 25 per cent of the entire population are directly or indirectly dependent upon the manufacturers of this country for their support. Greater developments may still be looked for among manufacturers in the future, with proper protection. Canadian agricultural products have also largely increased, and will continue to increase, and protective markets must be found and held. I fear any serious reductions would greatly affect our prosperity. It is a striking and I believe accurate statement that per head of population Can-