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MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, JULY 17.

## SOME EMPIRE TRADE ASPECTS.

Whether or not the conference contemplated by Chancellor Snowden is to deal with the question of Empire tariffs, or whether or not the conference which Mr. Robb has in mind one day and not the next is to deal with tariff matters, there are other features of existing commercial relations between Canada and Britain which call for study and correction. Canadian visitors to London who take the trouble to study the conditions under which Canadian products are marketed are invariably irritated upon finding that these commodities are rarely if ever offered as being of first quality, or even of second, perhaps not as third. If they seek the explanation for this condition, as some of them have taken occasion to do, they are informed that Canadian goods lack uniformity of standard, either in respect to size or quality, and that in this regard they compare unfavorably with United States products and the products of some other countries. Moreover, it is the complaint of the British trader that he cannot be assured of a continuity of supply, and that, for this reason, even if all requirements as to quality were satisfied, he is not in a position to give these commodities the same selling prominence as is given to similar lines from competing countries. These are faults that can and should be corrected. There is enough Government inspection in Canada, one would think, to ensure the maintenance of a very high standard, at least as regards export foodstuffs—and it is in respect of these, chiefly, that the complaints are made—and if this were not so, the Canadian manufacturer and packer is surely alert enough to his own interest to put up for the British market only such goods as will reflect credit upon him and will create a demand for additional and larger supplies. And as to the failure of Canadian manufacturers and exporters to maintain adequate stocks in British distributing centres, there is little room for excuse. Trans-

portation services operating between Canadian points and the British markets are the equal of any, and the fault cannot lie with them. Clearly, however, there are faults somewhere, and if the experiences of Canadians in London—and possibly in other distributing centres also—are to be relied upon, those faults rest with the Canadian producer and must be corrected by him.

That is one side of the picture, but there are faults on the other also, and the Canadian Export Pioneer, in its June-July issue, deals with some of them. In what is described as a plain statement on British export trade with Canada, the charge is made that some who essay to enter this trade reveal a profound ignorance of the first principles of export, the essential considerations governing the development of sales in Canada, and the tasks which confront a Canadian salesman, the result being that negotiations very often break down. It is stated that these negotiations proceed satisfactorily up to a point, but that the Canadian agent is then informed he must carry his own stocks, pay for them, and advertise them, with no assistance from his principals. In other cases, after negotiations have been concluded and arrangements completed, there are so many delays and uncertainties that by the time the exporter is ready to move, the opportunity has passed. It is pointed out, and with abundant truth, that export to Canada is not a simple thing, and that the rich Canadian market offers no easy money, but that the British exporter must conform to the usages and credits of the market, must carry adequate stocks in Canada, must advertise in Canadian newspapers, and must make prompt deliveries of goods absolutely up to original samples. "Generally speaking, unless the intending exporter is willing to adopt these principles, he had better refrain from any effort to sell in Canada." On the other hand, it is contended that the Canadian consumer would rather buy British than American products; but trade conditions in the Dominion must be observed.

This article stresses the importance of the personal visit by the intending exporter, so that he may study the requirements and conditions of the Canadian market and may know the problems which his representative must face; and he must give the agent all the backing that may be reasonably demanded. It is admitted that some of this criticism applies to Canadian exporters who trade, or attempt to trade, in the markets of the United Kingdom, but these matters, according to the Export Pioneer, have nothing to do with the main issue, "that in marketing British goods in Canada, and in selling Canadian produce and manufactures in Britain, there are immense possibilities for firms on both sides." There is no market anywhere where British goods are more highly esteemed than in Canada. "But it must be understood that export trade cannot be developed at somebody else's expense, and that goods previously unknown cannot be sold without advertising and stocking." All these are trading principles which seem elementary enough, but it is often in the elementary things that mistakes are made and opportunities are lost; and if there is to be an Imperial trade conference of any sort, these matters of marketing will deserve some study, and quite apart from the question of preferences.