

Canada is on much the same footing as the United States of America, and is unfavourably situated in comparison with France. On the other hand, certain British countries may, in the case of goods required for certain colonies, possess an advantage in freight rates over the United Kingdom—*e.g.*, India in the case of goods required for Ceylon. As between the self-governing dominions and India on the one hand, and foreign countries on the other, the principle of preference set out in the last preceding paragraph is regarded as applicable in favour of the former.

8. On the whole question of giving preference to British over foreign products, attention may be drawn to the fact that the Crown Agents, as purchasers of goods on behalf of the Crown colonies, are not in the same position as the buying department of the United Kingdom or the self-governing dominions. They must, generally speaking, buy on the best terms possible, as otherwise the colonial Governments might make other arrangements. Thus the Crown Agents occasionally buy goods in the United States of America for the West Indian colonies, and if they refrained from doing this in order to supply British articles, and paid higher prices, the tendency would be for the colonial Governments to order from the United States of America direct.

9. The manufacturing capacities of certain parts of the Empire overseas have been growing and have in some directions been stimulated by the war. The Crown Agents will readily receive applications from manufacturing firms in the self-governing dominions, India, and the Crown colonies, to be placed on their lists for consideration when opportunities may occur for giving them orders, provided that they are actual manufacturers (not mercantile agents) and can give satisfactory references as explained in paragraph 2 above. It should be remembered, however, that such opportunities are not likely to occur at all frequently.

Office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies, London, April, 1918.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers 3rd February, 1919.

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to state that at a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet of 30th December last the question was considered of giving preference in contracts by British Government Departments to products of the Empire.

In this connection the Imperial War Cabinet had under consideration the following passage in a Treasury letter addressed to the Commission Internationale de Ravitaillement on the 10th March, 1917:—

“It is the policy of their Lordships to purchase from within the Empire rather than from neutral countries, subject to arrangement of the necessary finance and also of shipping, in all cases in which any of the dominions are able to deliver the goods required on as favourable conditions as can be obtained elsewhere.”

It is the desire of His Majesty's Government that the preference in Government contracts here spoken of should be effective; and, whilst they think it undesirable to lay down any exact percentage, they desire that, both in regard to the opportunities to tender and in regard to prices, the dominions, colonies, and protectorates should have the full advantage of their decision.

I am, &c.,

ROBERT CHALMERS.

No. 15.

New Zealand, No. 41.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 11th March, 1919.

With reference to my telegram of the 26th February, regarding wireless call-signals, I have the honour to request Your Excellency to inform your Ministers that His Majesty's Government is taking steps to obtain a reconsideration of the whole question of the allocation of international call-signals for ships, land stations, and aircraft, with a view to the preparation of a scheme to be agreed upon by the Allied Governments and presented at the next International Radio-telegraphic Conference.

I have, &c.,

MILNER.

Governor-General His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Liverpool,
P.C., G.C.M.G., G.B.E., M.V.O., &c.

No. 16.

New Zealand, Dominions No. 196.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 17th March, 1919.

I have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency, for the information of your Ministers, the accompanying copies of an extract from the *Board of Trade Journal* of the 27th February, containing the Time Charters Order, 1919, of the Shipping Controller.

I have, &c.,

MILNER.

Governor-General His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Liverpool,
P.C., G.C.M.G., G.B.E., M.V.O., &c.