

that situation, I feel that the effect of it in the long-run would have been to have set back any permanent settlement rather than to have advanced it. Last year we fortunately got through the winter without doing so much in the way of giving relief on the part of the Federal Administration, though some municipalities had to give assistance. I think we are now to the point where we can welcome immigration of the right kind to our country, and certainly no stock could be more welcome than British stock of the kind which has helped to make our country and our Empire what it is. It is important, however, that regard should be had to the economic situation of the country; to the position of our industries; to what it may be possible for industry normally to absorb. I think it is of importance that labour should have reason to feel that the standards which it has won, and which it has with effort attained, should not be threatened through any excessive immigration. I believe this body can do very much towards working out an arrangement that will ensure the avoidance of the kind of situation that might make the continuous flow of immigration embarrassing.

It is most important that men who are leaving one country and going to another should know where they are going and what they are going to do, and should not become, so to speak, stranded upon their arrival in a new country. Much can be done in conference here by way of working out phases of emigration development which will be of advantage alike to the Old World and to the new.

Empire's Need for British Capital.

Men, money, and markets are fundamental considerations in our trade and industrial development. We want our own capital—when I say “our own” I speak now of British capital—capital available for investment in the British Empire; we want it invested in different parts of the British Empire. I should hope that as a result of these discussions the evident advantages of the investment of capital in the different Dominions may be made more and more apparent to the British public. As to markets, certainly we must seek to develop our markets to the fullest extent possible. The more we can develop them within the British Empire the better.

Canada's Preference Policy.

Perhaps I had better leave the question of preference for more mature and careful consideration at some sitting of the Conference when that subject will be specially discussed. I should like to say this, however, with regard to trade preference: that Canada feels not a little pride in the circumstance that she was the pioneer in granting a preference to British goods. At the present time we are giving a preference averaging 33½ per cent. or more on all goods coming from Britain, and also from different parts of the Empire. In the last session of our Parliament we made a slight additional increase in the preference by undertaking to give a discount of 10 per cent. of existing duties on any British goods that came through Canadian ports. We had in mind there development of trade by the “All red” route, but we had also very much in mind the action of the British Government in undertaking to remove the obstacles to the importation of our cattle into the British markets here. Throughout the Canadian attitude in the matter of preference has been one of good will; it has been based on good will; bargaining has not been the basis of it. We have done what we have done believing it would be to our advantage, but believing also that it would be helpful to the countries to which the preference was extended, and especially to the Mother-country; and I would like to repeat that the action we took at our last session in increasing the preference was due primarily—and I can speak with a knowledge of the circumstances which governed it—to the action of the British Government in meeting us, as they did meet us, with respect to an important commodity of trade and commerce. Now, that spirit of seeking each other's mutual advantage will, I believe, go further than anything else to help to build up the trade and further the industrial development of the Empire.

I am afraid, Mr. President, I have taken longer than I should have, but I would like to repeat that, so far as Canada is concerned, we have come to these Conferences, regarding them as Conferences, with the one motive, which I know is the motive that governs all others who are present—namely, that of doing what we can in the way of advancing the mutual interests of the component parts of the British Empire, believing, as I have already said, that as the strength of the whole is increased, so will become apparent the benefit to each of the parts; in other words, that the well-being of the parts is bound up in the well-being and unity of the whole.

OPENING SPEECH BY MR. MASSEY.

I want, Mr. President, before I go on, to express appreciation of the fact that you have convened this Conference for some very important purposes; among them, that of considering how best to get rid of the present difficulties, not only in Britain itself, but also in the overseas Dominions, and I hope and believe that something effective will be done and agreed upon before we return to our respective countries. You have suggested, Mr. President, that one of the best things to be done in the circumstances, and here I may say I thoroughly agree with you, is to find fresh fields for British enterprise. I quite agree with that.

Absence of Regulated Migration in the Past.

In the proposals that have been made it seems to me that we must always bear in mind that migration and preference go together whatever form they may take, and there are many forms of preference. The difficulty is this, and I am not finding fault with any one or any Government, because I take my share of the blame as much as any one else for what has taken place, but the great difficulty at present is this: that the trouble with regard to migration from Britain and settlement overseas was not dealt with at a very much earlier period. What I mean is this: that for many years past, as long as I can remember, there has been a constant stream of migrants from Britain to overseas countries,