

Various schemes have been suggested which it is thought that Imperial Federation could be accomplished. Fiscal Federation is one of them. The proposal is that England should put a tax on all foreign imports so as to favor colonial imports. Before this can be brought about, however, two mountains now standing in the way must be leveled. The first mountain is Protection which the Colonies believe to be essential to their prosperity; and the second is the mountain of Free Trade which England thinks is her main condition for commercial intercourse with the rest of the world. While such differences exist between the Colonies and the Mother Country it is a waste of time and energy to work for federation in the direction of fiscal unity.

Mutual bearing of the burdens of Imperial defence without fiscal unity has been suggested as another way in which the various parts of the empire could be drawn closer together, but this is also beyond the range of possibilities. What the ultimate plan adopted will be is not yet in the power of any man to say, but it will be strange if something is not soon hit upon which will at least offer a partial solution of the problem.

RUSSIAN FARMERS AND THE FAMINE.

An article, by F. C. Chappell, which appeared in the May issue of the *American Agriculturist*, affords some surprising information in regard to the true inwardness of the much talked of Russian famine. It is now pretty well known that the famine was not such a very unusual occurrence after all. This writer says: "It is commonly supposed that the present famine in Russia is quite an exceptional event. True it is that Russia is not visited at short intervals by such catastrophes, but it is known to people who have travelled much in the country that Russia is always more or less affected with 'land hungers.' The present famine terrible as it is, is only one of the many similar visitations which have fallen upon the unhappy agriculturists." Russian peasants are said to be always in a state of chronic destitution. The wave of sympathy which has swept over the civilized world for the sufferers in the present famine is due more to the enterprise of the newspapers of to-day than to anything unusually terrible in the famine itself.

We cannot quite agree with Mr. Chappell when he says: "The peasants suffer, live and die. They have done so for hundreds of years and will probably continue to do so for centuries to come." He is quite right in saying that they have done so for hundreds of years, but that they will continue to do so for centuries to come is very unlikely, after the great awakening that civilization and Christianity has had during the past winter. If we read the signs of the times correctly, this famine will truly prove to be, to the sufferers, "a blessing in disguise." The Russian Government, for very shame, can no longer ignore their wretchedness, and will no doubt as soon as possible take steps to remove as far as lies in human power those obstacles which prevent the agriculturists of the country from advanc-

ing in, at least, material welfare. This conclusion is borne out in the concluding paragraph of Mr. Chappell's article. In it he says: "The Russian Government is taking all possible means to improve the condition of agriculturists in Russia, in order to enable it to compete more successfully in the grain markets of Europe. The erection of grain elevators, agricultural banks, technical agricultural schools, reduction of railway rates for the transport of farm produce, exhibitions—all these are contemplated by the Government."

The immediate cause of this famine was, of course, failure of crops. The harvests of the years 1887 and 1888, had to some extent, improved the condition of the peasants, but 1889, 1890, and to some extent, 1891 were distinguished by bad harvests and inferior yields of grain consequently the farmers were once more reduced to a state of almost abject poverty. A reduction in the exportation of grain from St. Petersburg and the surrounding district of 62,678 tons on the crop of 1890, compared with that of 1889, betrays the extent of the crop failure for that year. Compared with the exportation from the crop of 1888, which was itself a bad year, 1890 showed a shortage in that district of 193,437 tons.

The close of 1890 saw famine staring the agricultural classes in the face and their troubles were only aggravated in 1891.

IN MANITOBA'S INTERESTS.

Allen Hubar, a member of one of the large manufacturing firms of Berlin, Ontario, spent a few days in Winnipeg during the latter part of April. He is a great admirer of this country and manifests his liking for it, by encouraging the emigration to it of the German-Canadian people of Ontario. There are a great many Germans settled in the district he comes from and some of them, of course, are always looking for better locations. These Mr. Hubar advises to go to Manitoba. He states that in the past considerable numbers of them have left for the states of Iowa and Kansas, paying from \$8 to \$10 an acre for land not nearly so good as that which the Government of Canada have been giving away. Mr. Hubar visited this country once in charge of some delegates sent out by the farmers of his district. These were highly pleased with the country and published the fact when they got home, but nothing further was done towards bringing the farmers here.

CROFTER IMMIGRATION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The Government of British Columbia have accepted from the Imperial Government the first instalment of £50,000 on the loan of £150,000 which the Imperial Government offered some time ago for use in promoting the settlement of crofters in certain parts of the coast province. Interest is to be paid on the loan at a rate of three per cent. The object in view is the development of the coast fisheries of the province. For some time past the scheme has been under discussion and representatives of the British Government, who visited the province for the purpose of reporting on its feasibility, returned a very favor-

able report, and strongly urged the carrying out of the plan. Steps will be taken at once to put it in operation.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The sales of the C.P.R. Land Department during the month of April were larger than for any like period since the boom. Some 60,000 acres were disposed of and nearly all to actual settlers. During the corresponding period of last year only about 12,000 acres were sold. It looks as though the tide had turned.

Wheat seeding in Manitoba and the Territories is now pretty nearly completed. It is a little later than usual, but if the weather remains favorable, as it is at present, the crops will be further advanced by the end of this month than they were at the same period of last year. The acreage under crop is slightly larger.

In the *Liverpool Daily Post*, of April 23rd, there appeared a letter written by A. J. McMillan, Manitoba's agent at Liverpool, in contradiction of an anonymous letter which had been published in a previous issue of that paper under the heading, "Manitoba as a Field for Emigrants." The writer had taken upon himself the imaginary task of warning the British public against the arguments which are now being freely brought forward in favor of the emigration of certain classes of old country people to Manitoba and Western Canada. Mr. McMillan very effectually destroys the venom of the article by showing the utter untruthfulness of its statements.

A report from Prince Albert, of last week, said that application was being made to the Minister of the Interior for the surveying and subdividing of twelve townships of the best land in the Prince Albert district, on which the applicants guarantee to locate 600 settlers from the states of Dakota and Maine and the province of Prince Edward's Island.

IMPERIAL
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BAKING POWDER
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