

their first bags being turned out 25 years ago and sold to the old Hamilton dry goods house of D. McInnes & Co. But jute soon killed off the linen bag trade of Canada.

THE proposed treaty of reciprocity between Canada and the Cape, if carefully framed, will mark an important step in the federation of the various peoples that compose the British Empire. In articles written for the *Monetary Times* fifteen years ago, and in subsequent articles in this journal, the writer showed the importance of developing direct trade between this Dominion and South Africa, and showed how, commercially speaking, the two countries were counterparts of each other. The writer's idea then was that a steamship line from St. John or Halifax and Montreal to the Cape, perhaps *via* some South American port, should be subsidized to promote this direct trade, but the Hon. Mr. Rhodes goes at the question more directly by his free trade treaty, which would so stimulate trade that there would be no need of steamship subsidies. Steamship owners are only too glad to put their boats in any channel that will give plenty of freight at paying rates. Canada is a large consumer of Cape wools, which at present have to come to us either *via* London or through Boston or New York in bond, while the Cape would purchase large quantities of our manufactures instead of getting them as now from the United States and other countries. As a matter of fact, many articles of Canadian produce or manufacture are now consumed in South Africa, but find their way there round about by English or American ports. One difficulty raised is that the treaty between France and Canada will hinder us from negotiating such an arrangement with the Cape. The *London Times* is of opinion that the Cape, not being "a third power" in the meaning of the treaty, will not be debarred from negotiating with us. The French government may take a different view, but if Canada is obliged to make a choice between the two, let us deal with the Cape. On the one side the Cape has more to gain from Canada than from France, while from the Canadian standpoint, however small the direct trade may now be, the future holds more for us in South Africa than in France. Mr. Rhodes' proposition is clear, full and free, and is the only step that can unfetter the restrictions and impediments that now exist in the trade and political relations between the colonies of the Empire. Let us join hands with the Cape.

In large cities and towns, in recent years, a grave danger has threatened the retailer in dry goods and kindred specialties, by the establishment of mammoth houses who deal in almost everything required for domestic consumption. Some of them even run restaurants, repair boots, shoes and umbrellas, and are, to use the phrase with which they describe themselves in London, "universal providers." The dry goods dealer who handles dry goods alone, justly thinks he knows more of this specialty, and can do better for his customer than if he attempted to master the details of every branch of trade; but to his surprise the big

bazaar has made inroads upon the trade until dry goods and other specialty dealers have felt it their duty to start an agitation on the subject. A few days ago a public meeting was held in Toronto on the subject, at which these big stores were denounced, and a demand was made that the Provincial Parliament legislate by taxing each department in these stores. While we sincerely sympathize with the one-department dealers, we feel obliged to say their position is illogical, and their demand cannot be carried out. Where are they going to draw the line between the general store of the town or village and the universal providing establishment of the city; and upon what rule are they going to define the separate departments of these places? There are stores that deal in black goods only, there are others that handle only baby linen, others dealing in corsets only, and so on; so that if what may be called the general dry goods dealer gets the benefit of such legislation against the big bazaar, the maker and handler of baby linen has the same claim against the general dry goods retailer, whose business could legally be split up into a dozen departments. But such legislation would be found to be unconstitutional as well as impracticable. The fact is that the big general store is an evolution of the time, and partly also a fashion of trade, so to speak. A few men are specially gifted with administrative ability, and would be able to conduct successfully a huge store of many departments, even were the conditions of trade against them. But apart from this, the big department store is only an example of the consolidating tendencies of the time. As the *New York Dry Goods Economist* puts it, "Great masses of capital are used to-day, just as great masses of men were once employed to propel ships, build pyramids and perform work now done by machinery, and capital is at once the source of life and the weapon of the department store. By its possession the big stock can be bought up cheap, the factory can be run and owned by the store, the middleman's profits be saved, the consumer be correspondingly benefited, and a hundred other important matters be accomplished. This tendency and this power will, we think, suffice to make the department store, at least in the larger cities, remain a solid institution for several years to come." The dry goods man need not despair, but by working on his own lines and obtaining control of more capital he can hold his own. The fact that these big department stores are more successful in one or two special departments than as a whole, shows that the principle of the specialty store is not in danger. The retail dry goods stores of the future may be larger and fewer in number in big cities, but they will not be extinguished by the bazaar.

ROCK ISLAND, Que. now rejoices in three overall factories—the Standard Mfg. Co., owned by Pike Bros.; the "Star," owned by J. B. Goodhue, and the Rock Island, owned by Gilmore & Frezeau. James A. Gilmore has also recently started a suspender factory, with very good prospects of success, and has now taken a partner, Benjamin T. Ball, into the business.