

ESTABLISHED 1866.

THE MONETARY TIMES

AND TRADE REVIEW,

With which has been incorporated the INTERCOLONIAL JOURNAL OF COMMERCE, of Montreal, the TRADE REVIEW, of the same city (in 1870), and the TORONTO JOURNAL OF COMMERCE.

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY MORNING.

SUBSCRIPTION—POST PAID.

CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS, - \$2.00 PER YEAR.
BRITISH " - 10s. 6d. STER. PER YEAR.
AMERICAN " - \$2.00 U.S. CURRENCY.
SINGLE COPIES, - - - 10 CENTS.

Book & Job Printing a Specialty.

OFFICE: Nos. 64 & 66 CHURCH ST.
TELEPHONE No. 1485.

EDW. TROUT,
Manager.

TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, NOV. 11, 1887

THE SITUATION.

The formation of a Commercial Union Club, in Toronto, with Mr. Goldwin Smith for President, is a guarantee that Commercial Union will be kept prominently before the public, till it is disposed of, one way or another. So far, the agitation must be admitted to have had a somewhat remarkable degree of success. But this is easily accounted for, and past success is no guarantee for the future fate of the agitation. That Mr. Smith believes commercial union to be the best thing for Canada, for England and for the United States, we have no doubt. But it is equally certain that others are using it as a concealed weapon of party warfare. The political consequences of commercial union, foreshadowed by Mr. Chamberlain and the London Observer, are not yet generally understood by Canadian electors. When they are, the agitation is likely to suffer a sudden collapse. No one expects to see a repetition of Earl Grey's dispatch of 1849, threatening to bring the whole force of the empire against annexation; but when the trial of strength comes it will be seen that the national will overbear the separatist feeling. Some who are not afraid of discussing annexation, object to being forced, as they believe they would be under commercial union, to drift hopelessly into a foreign political connection. The commercial union meetings have hitherto been nearly all held in safe places; Toronto and St. John being the exceptions. If the constituencies were taken indiscriminately, and an expression of opinion forced, after both sides were fully heard, we believe that commercial union would now be rejected by an overwhelming majority.

Mr. T. P. Gill, M.P., is credited with the prediction that a Tory Home Rule scheme for Ireland will shortly be submitted to the British Cabinet, by influential members of the party. The scheme, as described, is identical with that which existed in Canada in the ante-responsible government era: a strong executive independent of the local legislature. Experience shows that such a plan would not work. The strength of the Irish executive, in this scheme, is to be

sought in permanent taxes levied by the Imperial Parliament; a mode of action which takes us directly to the source of the Canadian rebellion. Coupled with this crudest of all schemes of Home Rule is a plan for settling the land question, which the landlords might possibly have suggested. The government is to buy the land and deed it to the tenants, nominally without the burthen of mortgage, but "subject to a fairly heavy tax" instead. This is Henry George's scheme of calling rent by a new name; but what reason is there to suppose that the Irish tenants would prefer to pay rent under the name of a direct tax? If ever the government becomes the universal Irish landlord, it may bid adieu to all hopes of collecting rent under whatever name the operation may be tried. Names may be changed, but a payment for the use of land will continue to be in substance rent, to the end of time.

Lord Onslow, under secretary for the colonies, appears to favor colonial discrimination against foreign and in favor of British goods. At the colonial dinner held in London last Friday, he recommended colonists to study a speech of Mr. Hofmeyer, which suggested that whatever tariff a colony might enact, there should be a higher rate for foreign than for British goods, and that the revenue from the extra rate should be paid into a common fund for Imperial defence. This is the antithesis, if not the British reply to the suggestion of commercial union, in the case of Canada. The suggestion of Lord Onslow has the merit of directness and being easily understood. But his lordship did not appear to see that it implies a compliment which he did not state: it implies reciprocity in discrimination, in other words a modified return to the old colonial system. The kind of discrimination suggested is that which is now carried out, in the French colonial system. It has the merit of being at least more logical than commercial union. As parts of the British empire, have the colonies the right to unpurchased protection? This question has been raised in Canada, and has been answered by Professor Grant and the imperial unionists, in the negative. The practicability of Lord Onslow's suggestion is nevertheless open to serious doubt.

Abolition of exemption for religious purposes now finds an advocate in the Finance Committee of the city council of Montreal. That the Roman Catholic Church will resist the proposed change, and even denounce it as sacrilege, may be taken for granted. If its advocates escape ecclesiastical censure, in its most dreaded form, they may think themselves well off. Though such incidents may mark the inception of the movement, its success in the future is not improbable; but this will not be possible so long as the church wields the power of which it is now in possession. Exemption in Montreal bears heavily on the tax payers who have to carry the whole burthen of the municipal rates. But this is more than a Montreal or even a Quebec Province question: it is a living issue in Ontario, as well. It would be a remarkable circumstance, if Quebec were the first province to abolish

exemptions. In that event, the other provinces would not be long in following the example.

Tolls on the York roads are at last in a fair way of going. A joint committee of the councils of the county of York and the city of Toronto agree that the tolls on the York roads and the market fees in the city of Toronto should be simultaneously abolished. To the mutual abolition of these nuisances it is proposed to add that the city of Toronto, in consideration of having received parts of county roads in recent annexations without payment, should assume and keep up the exposed Lake Shore Road, as far as the Humber bridge. The tolls collected amount to \$28,000 a year, but they are an extremely inconvenient means of raising revenue. Should this arrangement be carried out, there would still remain tolls on the Weston stone road, which is owned by a company. When abolition of tolls is being secured, it will be a pity if a clean sweep of the antiquated system cannot be made. What is wanted is some general scheme for the abolition of tolls throughout the Province. But the proposed instalment will, in the meantime, be gratefully accepted.

Judge Dawson, of the District Court of Sitka, has overruled the demurrer of the counsel for the British subjects, whose vessels were captured taking seals in Behring Sea, and declared the forfeiture of the vessels with their furniture and cargoes. The judgment proceeds on the principle that the eastern part of the sea is the exclusive property of the United States; and that Great Britain, by acquiescing in the exclusive claim when put forth by Russia, the former owner of the territory, is stopped from challenging the United States' claim now. But this acquiescence is in fact supposititious, deduced from a treaty which is not properly capable of such a deduction. And before entering into the treaty Britain protested against the doctrine of a close sea. If Behring sea is a close sea, so is Hudson's Bay; and if the three mile limit does not hold on the west coast of America, but the right of sovereignty extends indefinitely, over the water, by what rule is the restriction to be applied to the east? If the fact of a treaty excluding foreigners from fishing within an unusual distance from the coast may be made a precedent, and then elevated from a precedent into a general right; a similar treaty—between France and Great Britain—could be quoted, on the east. But it is obvious that, in both cases, the pretension must fall to the ground.

The condition of trade in the United States appears to be reasonably sound, and its volume satisfactory. In the opinion of the *Shipping List*, whether gauged by clearing house returns, the traffic and earnings of railroads, the movement of the crops or the reports from all important trade centres, the record makes a most favorable comparison with last year. Whatever unsoundness resulted from the rash speculative deals of the past six months has been so far eradicated and liquidated that it no longer threatens to disturb the future.