

save much trouble. There are cases, however, in which there is room for doubt on the point of the legality of the Act. In such case the public interests will be best served by leaving the Provincial Act to its operation, to be challenged, if need be, in the courts. Where a Provincial Act clearly conflicts with some Imperial or Dominion Act, the power of disallowance is properly exercised. But where none of these questions arise—where a Provincial Act cannot be successfully attacked on the ground of ultra vires or of conflict with any Imperial or Dominion law—it will be hard to find reasons for a disallowance. The allegation that an Act is a bad one, that it is unjust to somebody, is not a ground for disallowance. The question of what is just or unjust, right or wrong, is a question for the Provincial Legislature to consider and decide. If the injustice be clearly established, if indeed, it be admitted, the only remedy is to refer the parties concerned to the Legislature to ask for repeal or amendment. Neither the Federal Government nor the Federal Parliament is a court of appeal on such a question.

Big Business

THAT large business organizations are a menace to the public weal is the note running through the speeches, in the House of Commons at Ottawa last week, of those who attacked the reported formation of the British Empire Steel Corporation, the purpose of which is to amalgamate the two large steel and coal companies of Nova Scotia and several ship owning and shipbuilding companies. The mention of a capital of five hundred million dollars was in itself enough to alarm some people, and probably many were ready to accept the view that such a large capitalization implied something adverse to the public interests.

It is to be regretted that such conclusions are reached by so many people without due consideration. Size alone should certainly not be deemed a ground for objection. Much smaller organizations may be formed under circumstances which are more likely to encourage rash speculation than serious development of our industries. Whether a new enterprise be projected on a large or small scale, the character of it must be judged from the nature of its undertaking, and the standing of the men who are behind it. We are living in a day of big things. Properly conducted, a large enterprise should be carried on more efficiently and more economically than a number of smaller concerns.—The consolidation of a number of companies under one control should make for large savings of expense in the management. Competition in business, keen enough at all times in this age, is likely to become keener in the new era upon which the world is entering. Small

enterprises in Canada could hardly be expected to compete successfully with the powerful combinations that exist or are being formed in other countries. From this viewpoint the formation of the British Empire Steel Corporation, if it is in the hands of responsible men and surrounded by the guards which are required in all good business, is not to be condemned, but should be welcomed as a new and valuable instrument in the development of our vast natural resources.

There is in the public mind a natural fear of large organizations, lest they take the form of monopoly. There are many local interests in the various companies concerning which there will naturally be some anxiety as to the effect on them of the new arrangements. As to the fear of monopoly, there is on the statute book law to protect the public against the undue exercise of power. As to the many local interests affected, those connected with them should see that they are protected in the terms of amalgamation, as far as that can be done in a business transaction. If satisfactory assurances can be given by the promoters that no public interest will suffer from it, the large capitalization should not be deemed an evil.

Let it not be forgotten that great as these resources are they can only be made of value through the application of capital. If the creation of this large company forms a ground to which we can draw the capital and the experience of men who have been successful captains of iron and steel industries in Great Britain, surely that will be of much value to the Dominion and to the Empire. Let the iron and steel merger be as carefully guarded in its charter as any business enterprise can be. But let us not look upon it with suspicion merely because it proposes to do big things for Canada in a day when the world is doing big things.

John Bull, Uncle Sam, and Pat

THAT the Irish propaganda in the United States, the public subscribing to the bonds of the so-called Irish Republic, the official welcome by some mayors and city councils of Mr. de Valera, who calls himself "President" of that somewhat nebulous Republic, should annoy loyal British subjects everywhere is easily understood. It is not so easy to understand how Britons of responsible positions can expect the United States Government, or any other public authority in the United States, to prevent such manifestations. True, these proceedings, as Mr. Bottomley said in the British House of Commons on Thursday, are "unfriendly acts toward a friendly nation." But they are the acts of individuals who, under the free institutions of America, have a right to speak their minds. In nine cases out of

ten the aldermen and councillors who vote to welcome Mr. de Valera care nothing about him or his alleged Republic. They assent to the resolution of welcome because in every city there are a number of Irish voters who, it is supposed, can in this Presidential year be influenced in the playing of the political game. Since this fact is well understood, and since there is no reason to doubt that the Government of the United States are desirous of maintaining friendly relations with the British Empire, it is a pity that anybody holding a responsible position takes notice of the propaganda to which reference is made. If those who are promoting these movements in the United States are stirring up trouble between the British and American people, is not a somewhat similar fault committed by those in responsible positions who take official notice of the matter and complain because the American authorities do not prevent such demonstrations?

In a recent issue we commented on the indiscretion, as we viewed it, of the British Consul-General at New Orleans, who issued a public protest against the action of the City Council of that city in giving an official welcome to Mr. de Valera. The Consul's action, we felt, could serve no good end, but would make the leaders of the movement more determined to assert their hostility to all things British. This view, we are glad to see, is taken by the British Government. Mr. Bottomley, Mr. Wedgewood Benn and Mr. Chadwick urged that the Government should take some action to resent what one of them described as "the malicious campaign which was destroying the friendly relations between this country and the United States." Mr. Chadwick referred particularly to the official welcome extended to de Valera in New Orleans, and wished to know "whether any representations had been made to the United States in the face of this deliberate insult by an ostensibly friendly power."

There was wisdom in the answer of Mr. Bonar Law, who said that "he was quite satisfied the good feeling of the United States was not represented at all by such demonstrations, and he did not believe that any action the British Government could take against them would have any other effect than to make the relations worse."

Nothing would please Mr. de Valera and his sympathizers more than to be able to feel that their movements are bringing the Governments of Great Britain and the United States into conflict. The action advised by the over-zealous members of the British Parliament would play Mr. de Valera's game. The British Government very properly refuse to play it. The American Government, we are sure, will feel that in taking the course they do the British Ministers are exhibiting wisdom and promoting the good relations between the two countries which Mr. de Valera and his friends so ardently wish to destroy.