

Hopeful Prospects of Spain.

Late London papers contain extracts from the report of the British Consul, Mr. Roberts, on the trade and commerce of Barcelona—one of the most important commercial centres in Spain, and it appears therefrom that, notwithstanding the war with the United States and the disastrous termination thereto, Spanish trade did not materially suffer, not a single failure of any importance occurred, and engagements were duly met. Mr. Roberts very rightly claims that such facts speak eloquently and point significantly to the stability and business honour of the Catalan merchants and manufacturers. As to the loss of Puerto Rico and the Philippines seriously affecting the trade of Spain, Consul Robert says: "Spain having by 'the Treaty of Peace been granted during ten years 'the privilege of entry, on the same terms as goods 'coming from the United States for goods exported 'from the Peninsula to Cuba, Porto Rico, and the 'Philippines, the loss commercially of these Colonies is not likely to be felt seriously for some time, 'and when it is remembered that the inhabitants of 'these islands are a Spanish-speaking race, that this 'country knows from long experience just the class 'of goods the people like, that the Catalan manufacturer can turn out his goods at a price that even 'Germany cannot undersell, that the masters are rich, 'and the factory hands are most intelligent, frugal and 'industrious, and work for a wage that in England 'would not be looked at, it will, I think, be a long 'time before the Catalan manufacturer loses his pre-'dominance in the markets of Cuba, Porto Rico and 'the Philippines."

Prosperity on Both Sides.

Many Canadians look to the leading bank presidents and managers of their country for information as to its condition, and on the other side of the Atlantic the same interest attaches itself to the utterances of the chairmen at the meetings of the principal banks in London. That the activity and prosperity referred to at recent meetings of Canadian banks as extending throughout the Dominion is also prevailing in Great Britain has been clearly shown by the Governor of the Union Bank of London. In addressing the shareholders on the 12th inst., he stated that the report submitted to them showed increased earning power, due not so much to higher rates ruling in the money market, or to having ampler employment of their funds, but to the steady and regular increase of their business all round. Rates, in fact, had been less favourable for bankers than during the first half of 1898, the average rate being about 3 1-8 per cent. The average rate for three months bills was 2 1-4 per cent., nearly 1-2 per cent. less than last year, and for day to day money the average was about 1 3-4 per cent., against 2 per cent. last year, whereas on deposit they had allowed 1 5-8 per cent., against 1 3-4 per cent. a year ago. Their margin of profit had thus been some-

what curtailed, but the increased volume of business had more than made up the difference. He added that the half-year had certainly been remarkable for the great development of activity in trade and industry in every direction. The workshops of the world had been employed to their utmost capacity, and it was not surprising that this great activity should have been reflected in the principal monetary centre. In Lombard street the old cry of money being unemployed had been unheard, nor was it to be wondered that first-class investment stock should have receded from their high prices. To the banks the increased opportunities of employing their funds of course meant the prospect of increased earnings; but higher rates for money were welcome only when they were due, as they were now, to the increased prosperity and activity all round. Nearly the tenth part of the whole business of the Bankers' Clearing-house had gone through the Union Bank. Referring to the question of the gold reserves of the country, he said the recent speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer constituted a new phase. As far as he was aware no action was intended, nor had ever been contemplated, which could be held in any way antagonistic to the policy or the interests of the Bank of England. His desire was that all should work in harmony for the maintenance of a higher gold reserve. In conclusion, he said there was "every prospect of a continuance of the great revival of trade."

The Transvaal Trouble.

The correspondent of the London "Times," at Pretoria is reported as saying that the Outlanders have been given to understand that no abatement of the demands made by Sir Alfred Milner, Governor of Cape Colony and British High Commissioner for South Africa, will be acceptable to the Imperial authorities.

This is making known to the Boers in no uncertain way that the British Government are not so anxious for a pacific settlement of their difficulties in the Transvaal as they are determined to make Kruger grant the reasonable requests of the Outlanders. That the British are in grim earnest is clearly evinced by the continuance of military preparations. It is to be hoped that the proverbial Dutch obstinacy and President Kruger's rumoured resignation will not bring about war. Although the ultimate defeat of the Boers is certain, the conquest of the Transvaal would be an arduous undertaking. A military man who served five years in Africa, when recently interviewed in Chicago, is reported as saying: "the Boers of the Transvaal are magnificent fighters. They are expert marksmen, born rough-riders, such as your cowboys, and their courage and tenacity of purpose are undeniable. Individually they are as good military stuff as the world possesses. They are also thoroughly convinced of the justice of their cause and would die to a man at the order of Oom Paul."

The People's Poet, Kipling, has also testified to the