

their desire to assist in facilitating trade. The distinction made is very properly between private and public duties. American official agents do, in this way, an amount of "pushing" which exceeds the limits of justification. "It is an admirable thing," says the *New York Bulletin*, to "push trade, provided the pushing is performed by the trader himself, and not at other people's expense. Nothing can be more vicious in economics, or more destructive of general commercial progress in the long run, than government taking upon itself to do the work which the merchant, the manufacturer or the shipper can do so much better himself." Much to the same effect Her Majesty's government reminds the London Chamber of Commerce that "there are kinds of assistance which, however beneficial they might prove to individual traders, cannot be given by public officers without risk, not only to their own character and position, but even to the dignity of the government they serve." Nevertheless consular assistance is very useful to commerce, and a country which cannot have recourse to it is decidedly at a disadvantage.

THE PACIFIC RAILWAY AND ITS WATER CONNECTIONS.

The completion of the Canadian Pacific directs public attention to its water connections at both ends. Sir John Macdonald, in a recent speech made during his present tour in British Columbia, touched upon this subject. He spoke of a prospective fortnightly line of steamers between British Columbia and Japan and China. The co-operation of the British government has been invoked in aid of this enterprise, and there is some reason to expect that it will be given. Salisbury, when in office before, showed himself favorably disposed towards the enterprise; he drew up a memorandum on the subject, which showed that, if he had remained in office, he would have aided it in some permissible form. His successor, Mr. Gladstone, whatever his views on the subject, had little opportunity to do anything, and in fact nothing was done, while he remained in office. The official subordinates, probably echoing the views of the premier, real or supposed, were inclined to throw cold water on the project. The return of Lord Salisbury to power revives the expectation of imperial aid in the establishment of this line. Of the friendly disposition of the premier there is no doubt; but in questions of this kind he is dependant upon the co-operation of Lord Hartington and his followers. Here is an element of uncertainty which forbids us to speak with confidence of what Lord Salisbury may be able to do. So far as he is concerned, there is no doubt about his views, and it is fair to conclude that his opinions are shared by his conservative colleagues; the doubt is about his temporary allies, who have united with him for a specific purpose, to which the establishment of the proposed line of steamers is foreign.

At the other end of the line—taken in the sense of a road connecting the Atlantic

and Pacific oceans—improvements have to be made; but here the matter is within our own control. Sir John Macdonald, in the speech referred to, pointed out that the contract between the Allan line and the Canadian government approaches its term, and when this is reached more rapid steamers must be put on the Atlantic. The Allan steamers have done good service in their day, and are safe and comfortable steamers still, but in point of speed, they are behind vessels recently built and of greater power. The government will ask tenders for a new line on the Atlantic as well as the Pacific. This looks as if the Canadian government would assume a similar responsibility at both ends. The vessels of both lines will have to be the swiftest that can be procured, subject to any limitation as to the depth of water in the canal of Lake St. Peter. The largest class of steamers which ply between Europe and New York could not pass up to Montreal, and it will not be possible that they should unless we obtain a greater depth of water in Lake St. Peter. There will be no difficulty in securing the increased capacity which may be necessary; it is purely a question of cost, of the advisability of the work and the capacity of the country to bear the burthen. The undertaking is of a purely national character, and might well take precedence of others which would serve only a local purpose. Meanwhile, a larger class of steamers than those now employed would have to stop short at Quebec; but as water is less costly than rail carriage this state of things ought to be considered only temporary. Regard being had to the through voyage between England and the East, rapidity of transit by the Canadian route is essential.

The trade with the far East will be both through and local, but to what extent it will be developed is as yet largely a matter of conjecture. Some essays in importing teas by this route have been made. In the domestic export trade Sir John mentioned a fact which indicated his belief that a new opening for Canadian products will be found in the East. On the vessels trading between San Francisco and Australia, he said the goods carried were, to the extent of ninety per cent., such as Canada can furnish as well as the United States. Canadians who seek a share of this must do their best to supply superior articles; for in Australia quality has preference over cheapness, and inferiority is at a discount. Sir Charles Tupper, it appears, is doing what he can to promote cable connection between New Westminster and Australia. This is a convenience which trade will exact if it should develop to a point where cable connection will become a necessity.

Canada would have been unworthy of the great heritage which she possesses in the North-West, if she had not assumed the responsibility of traversing it by a national railway. Without the railway, the country remaining closed to agriculture, would have been the exclusive home of wild animals, savages and half-breeds. By favor of the railway, it is now in a position to offer homes to millions of agriculturalists, whose presence will give rise to a great expansion of trade and industry. The burthen of the cost is greatest when population is lowest;

when population increases this burthen will relatively undergo great diminution.

The construction of the road was fully justified by the service it rendered in putting down the North-West insurrection. In some supposable contingency, it might be of essential service in the defence of the Empire. This fact is fully recognized by Lord Salisbury, who clearly sees the advantages of having a choice of routes to the East. For Canadian purposes, this main artery in the North-West, will require to be supplemented by branches to the North and North-West. These will come in time, and will probably keep pace with real requirements. Where so much has been accomplished, in a short time, confidence in future achievements will not be wanting, and this confidence will be a powerful lever in achieving enterprises which may from time to time become necessary.

TRADE BETWEEN BRITISH COLONIES.

Month by month the subject of more intimate business intercourse between the great colonies of the British Empire is being agitated. The Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire last month in London, gave a valuable opportunity for the face-to-face discussion by delegates from various parts of the world. In further pursuance of the idea of a series of conferences and the formation of a board for the promotion of commercial intercourse among the various British colonies, a gathering of gentlemen from the different colonies was held in Old London Street exhibition offices, on the 26th July last. The chair was occupied by Mr. S. C. Stevenson, of Montreal, and Mr. G. L. Sait acted as secretary. In pursuance of this view that advantage should be taken of the present gathering of colonists to advance the interests of direct trade between the colonies bound by the same allegiance, a committee consisting of Messrs. Ira Cornwall, (Canada), James Thompson, Victoria; H. J. Scott, South Australia; Mr. Hardt New South Wales; W. H. Whyham, West Indies; Mr. Fox, Cape Colony; B. P. Gupte, India; Messrs. O'Brien, Briggs and Sait, with power to add to their number, were named for the purpose of drawing up a code of regulations and defining a general plan of action in carrying out the object mentioned. It is intended, we understand from the *Exhibitor*, that as Room No. 3, Old London street, has been placed at the disposal of the committee, colonial tariffs, colonial newspapers, hand bills and pamphlets shall be placed in it and a register of names, addresses and businesses of merchants and exhibitors kept. We would suggest the addition of the best and latest maps, without which no such apartment is complete.

We learn that the committee has appointed Mr. H. J. Scott, of South Australia, chairman, and Mr. Ira Cornwall, of New Brunswick, vice-chairman. It is intended that the organization be called the "Exhibition Commercial Exchange," that all interested in promoting trade between the colonies be eligible for membership; that there should be no membership fee; that committees be appointed to visit each court