

CANADIAN PATRIOTISM.

IN our last issue we had much pleasure in publishing a letter from a Western correspondent, in which he describes the intense feelings of affection, with which Canadians dwelling among our neighbours regard their own country and its institutions. That our correspondent draws a true picture of the vast majority of Canadians in the United States is unquestionable, although, unfortunately, there are a few unworthy exceptions to be found here and there. It is on the growth and extension of this sentiment that the "Dominion" must repose its chief hope of future greatness. We must learn not only to love our country, but to be proud of it, as the land of our residence or birth. Until we have learnt to do this, fully and unreservedly, we cannot take rank among the nations of the world, but be looked down upon as an inferior race. Confederation has opened a new field for us in that respect, and it is one of the many advantages it is calculated to confer upon us. Hitherto in England we were looked at as mere Colonists, who did not come up to the imperial standard of humanity and our American Cousins always affected to consider us as minors in an eternal state of pupillage. But we have now changed all that, and it should be our endeavour henceforth to make the name of Canadian in the new what that of Englishmen is in the old. And why should it not be so? We have a noble country, teeming with wealth and beauty; we live under good and just laws; we possess unbounded freedom, with entire security of person and property; and if the whole continent is not ours, we own a fair share of it from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. Canadians therefore have good cause to love their country, and they will have more reason to do so, by and by, or the fault will be our own.

THE CURRENCY QUESTION

WE published in our last issue, without comment, a letter signed T. G. B., advocating the introduction into the Dominion of Canada at large, the system of currency at present existing in Nova Scotia, but we do not wish to be considered as holding the same opinion on this subject as the writer of that letter, and will proceed to show how unwise and even unjust such a measure as that he proposes would be.

The reasons given by T. G. B. in favour of the proposed change are twofold, and are first, that we should be able to make use of the British coins in circulation without the trouble of making calculations involving fractions, as at present necessary where the sovereign stands for \$4 86½ instead of as in Nova Scotia, for \$5, and second that adopting the system of the Nova Scotians would be a graceful and to us not very costly compliment to them in return for the strong dislike which many of them entertain to the idea of confederation, a sort of "Sop to Cerberus," to induce them to be good children and behave themselves.

Now, in the first place, the amount of British gold and British silver in circulation in these Provinces is small as compared with the entire volume of coin in circulation, and the calculations of fractional values troublesome to people of weak arithmetic, are, here at least, as well as in the Province of Ontario, so occasional, and in fact so unusual that they may be very well left out of the account. Very little gold of any kind is in circulation and as the British shilling passes currently for one fourth of a dollar it is readily seen that the use of British coin gives little or no annoyance. In New Brunswick, there are, perhaps, more English sovereigns in circulation in proportion than in Ontario and Quebec, and the benefit of the proposed change would undoubtedly appear greater, and the injury less, to the public of that Province.

We may lay it down as a principle, which cannot be controverted, that any change made in the value of coins, while their denomination remains the same, is most impolitic, unless the gain to be derived therefrom be very great and very apparent. The change made here, some nine years ago, introducing the decimal system, was one which did not alter a single value. The pound currency, was then, as it still is, the precise equivalent of four dollars, and the calculations involved in altering books of account from the old to the new currency were simple and easy. Besides, except where Government could directly interfere, such as public offices, &c., no compulsion was possible and none attempted. Those who so prefer can still and do still reckon by pound, shillings, and pence, so keep their books, &c. show their profits at the end of the year. The change was a nominal, not

a real one, and consequently did no one any harm. The change from our present system to that of Nova Scotia would be real and would involve a complete change of value in every existing contract, whether that value had been expressed in pounds currency, or in dollars and cents. Our entire Bank and Government Note circulation would at once be at a premium, unless the dollar of the new system should by Act of Parliament be a legal tender for the agreements to pay made under the old system, and until every old note was withdrawn from circulation, there would be the curious anomaly of notes passing side by side, similar in denomination while different in value. All Government and railroad bonds and mortgages, all securities now in existence, all annuities, would have a changed value, while nominally they would be the same. Briefly, there would be endless confusion and trouble, and for a very questionable gain.

In reply to the second reason that the changes should be made to soothe the feelings of the anti-confederates in Nova Scotia, who have been dragged into a hated union with New Brunswick and the Canadas, we have only to say that those opposed to confederation who would prefer to have the dollar remain of the present value vastly outnumber those who would like to see it made the fifth of the pound sterling; and however graceful it might seem to yield to the wishes of our maritime friends, the matter is of altogether too great importance to be so lightly dealt with. Would not our correspondent also advise that the currency of the Dominion should be altered to suit the tastes of the little colony that would not join us at all, and in that way make things agreeable to the P. E. Islanders? It might be a good stroke of policy.

The simple way out of the coin difficulty is this: let us have a mint of our own, and coin our own gold, making it the only legal tender. Comparatively little is needed to carry on the business of the country. We already have a large amount of Canadian silver and copper coins, and whenever the United States shall be in a condition to resume specie payments, and the silver of that country flow back to its proper place, our coins will at once come into general use. The proposed change would by no means relieve us of the "silver nuisance." There would still be a surplus of silver, and the fact that its nominal approached more nearly its intrinsic value, would only have the effect of reducing the rate of discount when sold or used in large amounts, and would not have the practical effect of making it a legal tender except in retail transactions.

By gradually obtaining a sufficiently large currency of our own, foreign coins of differing values would be elbowed out of the country, and an end would be put to the annoyances from which we have suffered for so many years in this regard.

While on the subject of coinage, we wish to call attention to another branch of it, which though comparatively more local in its character, is nevertheless of importance. We allude to the existence and general circulation of what pass for pence and half-pence, Canadian bank tokens, English pence and half-pence, any copper coin in fact of about the right size, brass buttons, &c., &c. Were these once called in (and the total amount cannot be very great) and cents only put in circulation, a great gain would at once be obtained and the decimal system would make greater advance amongst the ignorant classes (who in the main adhere to the shillings and pence) in one year than it has done in the nine years that have elapsed since its introduction into Canada. We trust our Government may see the importance, if not the actual necessity of taking the necessary steps to accomplish that which, while not costing much, will be a great boon to very many people.

PEACE OR WAR?

THOUGH the rumours of warlike preparations by France and Prussia may not be of such deep and immediate importance to us in this country, as they are to the neighbours of these two great powers, yet a war between them would have no small influence on our agriculture and commerce; viewed in that light alone, then, we must regard the question with attention and interest. We have on former occasions, spoken of the bearing of a great European conflict on our trade, and need not repeat what we then said. But with the evident jealousy and distrust existing between Prussia and France culminate in a war? It is difficult to conceive what they have to fight about. France, if successful, might acquire, as she has before acquired, the Provinces lying between her and the

Rhine; but it is all but impossible that she could retain them in opposition to the strong Teutonic feelings of the inhabitants generally, backed by the rest of Germany, North and South, Catholic and Protestant. Nor, on the other hand, can we see that Prussia, busy in the consolidation of her newly acquired dominions, can be anxious for a war with France, or any of the other leading nations. If she really entertained such a wish, it strikes us that she lost her opportunity, by arranging the Luxemburg dispute, as she was then fully prepared for a conflict, while France was far less so than she is now. Still, we much fear that the peace between them is little more than an armed truce, and we suspect that the day of a deadly struggle, in which they shall contend for supremacy, is not very distant. Prussia, collecting under her banner the entire German race, and with her unequalled military organization, would be a rival such as France has not encountered since the times of Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second; and she will not resign her position as the first power on the Continent without a long and fierce struggle, in which, indeed, it is probable she will be successful. Yet, it is to be doubted if Napoleon will not shrink from a conflict in which he will have so much at stake, for if beaten in it, it would be the ruin of himself and his dynasty. The result of the war between Austria, Prussia and Italy, has given a heavy blow to his prestige, to which the Mexican misadventure has been still more fatal; and the defeat of France by Prussia would fill up the measure of his offences against the national pride and glory. The act, then, when it occurs, will likely be that of the French people rather than of the Government. One strong inducement for Prussia to keep the peace is the attitude of Austria towards her. We have seen a letter from an Austrian officer of high rank, which describes the feelings of the Austrian army in connection with the disasters of last year. It is burning with a desire to revenge its defeats, which are wholly attributed to the incapacity of Benedek, and which officers and men are determined to retrieve whenever the opportunity can be snatched at. But Austria, at this moment, has enough to do at home, without thinking of attacking other countries. So, on the whole, we should be inclined to say that, whatever may be in reserve for Europe, the chances, this year, are in favor of peace.

A PLEA FOR CHEAP POSTAGE

THE subject of postal reform is one of so much importance to everybody, and is so entirely outside of mere political considerations, that we cannot afford to let it drop. The experience of every day seems to accumulate additional reasons why the very necessary project of a reduction of postage throughout the Dominion should be at once carried into effect. The astonishing results of the cheap postage system in Great Britain is full of encouragement, and should stimulate us to follow in the same path with the least possible delay. The last quarterly returns of revenue published in England show some extraordinary facts in connection with the postal system of Great Britain. We quote the following from the London Times:

"The Post Office receipts," says the Times, "form, perhaps, the most remarkable items in the quarterly returns. They produced £1,150,000, or £80,000 in excess of the return of 1865. The return of 1866 was itself £100,000 in excess of 1865, so that in two years the receipts of the Post Office in the second quarter of the year have risen from £970,000 to £1,150,000. It is satisfactory also to observe that the growth of the Post Office revenue has been very striking throughout the past six months. For some reason not easily discernible, the income of the Post Office is always less in the first half of the year than in the second. Bearing this in mind, the Post Office returns for the six months which ended on Saturday, are full of hope. They show an income of £2,250,000, or £175,000 in excess of the corresponding six months of 1866, and the income of the half-year on which we have just entered, may fairly be expected to show a similar increase. The estimate of Post Office revenue in 1867-8, framed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, liberal as it was, will apparently be fulfilled, and we may even hope that the sum of £4,650,000 anticipated, will be found more than realised at the end of the year. It is no small testimony to the efficiency and cheapness with which the work of the Post Office is in general performed, that a revenue of more than four millions and a half should be obtained without remonstrance; but the prospect of reaping so large an income from such a source, at least, open to question. Cheap as the service is, it is plain from the profit on it that it could be performed still more cheaply, and a monopoly on the part of the State ought not to be converted into a means of excessive gain. The amazing influence which a cheap post has had in the past quarter of a century upon the diffusion of knowledge and the education of the people, should encourage some of our reformers to enquire whether its surplus revenue might not be