

would be partially solved. But if defective organization, physical or mental, or both, be allied to crime, climatic causes would limit the experiment. The same limitation would apply to habitual drunkards, whom we might otherwise employ. But it is possible that something could be done that would be a real public and private benefit.

M. Boucher, the French Minister of Commerce, is reported as having expressed the opinion that the Government of Washington will remove the present limit of \$100 to the value of baggage which any passenger across the Atlantic can carry free. M. Boucher is reported to have characterized this limitation as barbarous. It is nevertheless true that there were grave reasons for the change. Atlantic passengers brought in personal luggage consisting of all sorts of articles, on which other and poorer people had to pay. The chance of smuggling for friends who were not Atlantic passengers was, it is believed, not always left unimproved. The practice of thus bringing into the country large amounts of goods, which the process made discriminately free, rose almost to the height of a national scandal; its injustice to all others who had to pay was the worst feature of the practice. The smuggler is sometimes the only agency by which the rigor of an excessive tariff can be relaxed. In this case the smuggler made only a discriminating relaxation, and made it in favor of the class best able to pay. Congress overshot the mark in making the limitation less than the reasonable needs of travellers call for.

Mr. Ernest Heaton is trying to discover some plan by which colonization of new districts can be carried on with more than ordinary energy, by some means of combination which looks to the obtaining of loanable capital for four per cent. He makes a number of suggestions, such as that the colonists should mutually guarantee the loans; that the Provincial Government or the county should do so. It is obvious that of the various plans only the first is co-operation; the others simply provide outside guarantees. Ontario lent \$100,000 to Menonite settlers, Mr. Heaton reminds us, on the guarantee of outside persons in Ontario, and got the money back. But we are not all Menonites, and cannot all get similar guarantors. The experience of the Government of Canada, under the Union, with the Municipal Loan Fund is not favorable to the notion that the position of guarantor is necessarily one of no risk. In that case the Government was not originally responsible, but only manager of the fund; when it became responsible it lost heavily, though municipalities were responsible for the debts. Some of them simply would not pay when the Government was creditor.

CANADIAN COMMERCE AND THE BONDING SYSTEM.

From the full text of Mr. Blair's St. John speech, it is clear that he regards it as possible that the United States may some day go to the length of practical non-intercourse with Canada. He sees this in the blow, so far abortive, aimed at the freedom of the bonding system last session of Congress; and for such a future condition of commerce, he thinks it only prudent to take precautions, in the form of "a safe and perpetual roadway over our own territory, at all periods of the year." This is a revival of the original idea of the Intercolonial Railway, which is capable of being carried out in more ways than one. Mr. Blair was speaking to an audience which has set its heart on getting to St. John a share, if possible a large share, of the Canadian traffic which now passes through the United States, under privilege of the Bonding Act, which confers benefits on the United

States, as well as Canada. In proportion as the danger of getting farther, commercially, apart from the United States, by no fault of ours, Mr. Blair thinks it necessary to draw the Imperial tie closer, though that tie may be the better for being impalpable. He recognizes that the solidarity of the Empire, under diversity of forms, may be put to a practical test, and he has a strong conviction that "there is no part of the great extended Empire that would not rise spontaneously when the moment came when Imperial interests were imperilled or England were in jeopardy."

On the question of the relative claims of the ports of Halifax and Quebec, Mr. Blair distinctly takes the ground that it is one which "the Government could not be expected to determine." He thinks that, by virtue of its shorter distance to Montreal by the C.P.R., the port of St. John will largely command the heavy traffic. And the Intercolonial runs to St. John as well as to Halifax, though the connection of that road with Montreal still requires to be completed. When this is done he feels confident the Intercolonial can be made a factor in Western freight carrying to St. John. True, it is 250 miles longer than the C.P.R. to Montreal, but this disadvantage of distance, he contends, is compensated by the easier grades on the Intercolonial, which equalize the time of the trains, so that the Government will be able to take contracts to carry freight from Montreal to St. John in 36 hours, the same as the C.P.R. The two roads, it is alleged, need not be injurious rivals, as they draw their traffic, to a large extent, from different parts of the country. St. John may compete for some of the traffic that Portland now gets. Mr. Blair warned his hearers against supposing that St. John is best situated for doing all kinds of carrying. He spoke strongly in favor of the fast line of Atlantic steamers. This means that Halifax is to be the winter port of the new Canadian line of steamers.

REACHING OUT FOR TRADE.

The Russian Government is realizing the importance of the adoption by Russian farmers of improved implements and machinery in their work of cultivation. In June last a committee was appointed by the Minister of Finance to examine the question of the duties with which all agricultural machinery and implements are charged on importation into Russia, and this committee has held several sittings, at which many witnesses on the subject were examined. The decision of the Russian Government has not yet been made known; but the British consul at St. Petersburg ventures the opinion that the duty will be entirely abolished on some machines and implements, that there will be a reduction of duties on others, and the free importation into Russia during the course of the next five years of certain machines not made in the country, such as sheaf binders, steam ploughs without engines, compound threshing machines, hay scatterers, sorters with spiral cylinders, potato sorters, cream separators, brick-making machines, etc., and further, that machines and implements newly invented and adopted in use abroad be also allowed free importation into Russia during the next five years.

If Canadian manufacturers could sell agricultural implements to the value of \$595,277 in foreign countries last year, competing with American and British manufacturers, they should be able to obtain substantial advantages from this new market if the proposed changes in the Russian tariff go into effect. A few agricultural implements of Canadian make have already found their way into Russia, the sales in 1896 amounting to a value of \$28,535, and to \$42,657 in the previous year. The grain products of Rus-