

OUR VISITORS FROM AUSTRALIA.

The Premier of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Minister of Defence of that colony and a member of the Legislature, were guests on the 9th inst. of the Board of Trade of this city, by whom they were entertained at a public banquet. The function was brilliant and in all respects successful. Nothing could have exceeded the cordiality shown to the Australians who were intensely delighted at the welcome shown them by Canadians. To give special *clat* to the event it was honoured by the presence of the Governor-General. The Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec and of New Brunswick were also guests of the Board of Trade. Sir Edmund Barton, Premier of Australia, in opening his address expressed his gratitude and that of his colleagues for the warmth and generosity of the welcome they had received. The subjects of the British Crown were much alike all over the Empire, they were all loyal, all proud of British citizenship, all deeply attached to their free institutions, all deeply imbued with the sentiment of Imperial unity, and all determined to contribute to its maintenance and the integrity of the Empire.

He threw out a forecast of the possibility of some great Imperial Council being organized in the future for purely Imperial purposes, uniting all parts of the Empire with representation on a popular basis. But, this magnificent project Sir Edmund considered impracticable at present. He, however, favoured frequent conferences on Imperial questions. He declared himself as a thorough protectionist. He favoured a clause being inserted in cable contracts to which the Government were parties, giving the Government power to assume those cables themselves on occasions upon equitable terms and upon due notice. He considered that Government contracts for army and navy supplies should be restricted to the Empire; we should "help the members of the family," said the Premier of Australia. He favoured postal rates being reduced so that newspapers and periodicals published within the Empire should pass more freely than those which have "a colouring that does not resemble that of the British flag." The Imperial Conference was stated to have expressed its approval of tariff concessions being accorded in favour of the products of the Empire, but he was evidently not sanguine of any scheme being formulated on this line that would be accepted by the mother country and her colonies. Sir Edmund closed his address with an eloquent expression of his conviction that means would be found to bind the Empire closer together, and make each part share in the general prosperity.

Sir John Forrest, Australian Minister of Defence,

drew attention to the growing importance of Canada and the Australasian colonies, who were now looking to the time when they would share in the councils of the Empire regarding peace and war. Respecting Imperial defence Sir John said:

"Canada and Australia for many a long day had relied for peace and security upon the strong arms of the mother country, and they should not longer be absolved from contributing, especially to naval protection. If they were not British countries they would be in the same position as others—Argentina, for instance, and would be obliged to keep up forces for themselves. The Argentine Republic paid \$5,000,000 a year for its navy. Australia paid next to nothing, and Canada nothing at all. If the navy of the mother country were beaten not only she would suffer, but the colonies as well. There was only one sea, and the mother country in the future, as in the past, must be mistress over it."

He spoke of Canada as having set the example which had led the Australian colonies to become federated as the Commonwealth.

Mr. Chapman, an Australian M. P., said their visit had been a revelation and the knowledge they had gained would be valuable.

The Honourable Mr. Tarte, after eulogizing the old land for conferring responsible government on the colonies, proceeded to dwell upon the resources and the achievement of Canada, which he described as "the finest country in the world." Our forests, mines vast agricultural lands, our enormous supply of pulpwood, our unrivalled water-ways, were dwelt upon with enthusiasm. The Minister of Public Works emphatically enunciated his belief in the policy of protecting our native industries; he said:—

"I would humbly suggest to my colleagues in the Ministry to build a series of blockhouses along our border to prevent the enemy from coming in and cutting our throats, from severing the principal artery and letting out our life blood."

After developing this theme Mr. Tarte closed by predicting that by the unification of the Empire, "Britannia would continue to rule the land as well as the seas."

The speech of the Honourable Sidney Fisher spoke of the development of Canada, of its great prosperity, of the prospects of its rapid growth in riches and strength, as attributable to a great extent to the Parliament of this country. So far as the present prosperity of Canada is concerned, it is simply an extension to this Dominion of the vast wave which has been flowing over the whole of this continent and other parts of the world. Great Britain, with its fiscal policy directly the opposite of what is in force in the United States, has also had a long reign of great prosperity. Tariffs are needful for raising revenue; they may also do good service in protect-