

cal parties, believing that the general policy they advocate is the best for the country, do not allow themselves to be deflected from the path they have marked out for themselves, by a single question, outside of their programme. The election will turn and must turn on the great questions of the day, not on the single question of Prohibition. How many Prohibitionists could be elected, if nominated as such, in every constituency? Scarcely any. The Prohibitionists would do well to try their strength in this way; they would then realize how weak they are in comparison with the great political parties. They are not likely to do anything of the kind. They will, as usual, get pledges from some, perhaps several of the candidates of the two great parties; but the election of a Prohibition Parliament we are not destined to see, this year of grace, 1900.

#### CANADIAN TRADE EXTENSION, SOUTH.

It is only of comparatively recent years that the feasibility of building up an enormous trade with the Mother Country has made itself popularly recognized; but already, in spite of still deficient energy in certain lines, great progress has been made, and we need not at this time dwell upon its importance. Eastward is not the direction to which we wish to draw our readers' attention in this article; but rather to places even nearer to hand, whose trade with this country, while at the present moment almost nothing, yet presents a most promising field. We refer to the British and Spanish-speaking islands, and the Spanish-American republics to the south of us, which, from the point of view of climate and productions, may be said to be Canada's natural complements. That is to say, we grow and make in Canada articles impossible to be made in the regions referred to; while what those countries produce is forever shut out of the field of production in this country. Here, then, is a true basis for commercial relations—mutual interdependence; and those relations may become of a highly profitable character, if we will go the right way to work.

In considering these countries, more especially the Spanish-speaking ones, one thing should be borne in mind; and that is, the importance of an early start in the laying of a solid foundation for trade connections. In the first place, there are other and powerful competitors in the field; and, secondly, the inhabitants of those parts, being of extremely conservative habits, are strongly inclined to cling to those they have once begun to depend upon commercially. The firm they have confidence in now will be, all going well, the firm they deal with fifty years hence. This conservatism, while implying considerable work and difficulty in making headway at the start, yet militates in favor of a profitable continuance of the trade, when once it shall have been gained by Canadians.

Referring first to the Spanish countries, we find, on a perusal of the latest report of the Department of Trade and Commerce, that, whereas Canada exported to Brazil, in 1899, goods to the value of \$460,953, an increase of nearly \$54,000 since 1897, Brazilian exports to Canada were only \$102,294—less than half of what they were in 1897. To Central America, Canada exported last year \$37,224, while to what may still be called, we suppose, the Spanish West Indies, the

Dominion shipped last year \$1,207,541 worth of goods. Exports from this country to the wonderfully progressive Republic of Mexico, show a very satisfactory increase, the figures, \$31,472, of 1898, having increased in 1899 to \$103,978, and this amount, we have reason to believe, does not represent the whole; many Canadian exports to that country going by way of the United States, and being lost sight of in our official returns. The amounts quoted are almost absurdly small, yet they may be increased indefinitely, as is the case also with many other South American countries.

In order to bring about this good result, it is absolutely imperative to remember a few common-sense rules. It should not be forgotten that while the inhabitants of these countries adhere to customs different from ours, yet those customs are not on the mere ground of that difference, necessarily absurd. It is their own experience which they have behind them, not ours. We may think our own methods of carrying on business the best in the world; perhaps they are; but, for all that, it does not pay to say so to a possible customer of a different way of thinking, at every opening, legitimate or illegitimate. We have seen an enthusiastic American drummer, trying to prove (through an interpreter of course; for "United States" was good enough language for him), to a Spanish merchant, grown grey in the course of a successful business, that such and such a thing, done by the merchant or by his employees, was foolish, that Americans did it in quite a different manner; and after a time he went away with strong language in his mouth, wondering at the merchant's crass stupidity in not giving him a single order. And the Spaniard would softly murmur something to the effect that that young man would do well to learn manners before seeking customers in that country; and would then calmly set himself to writing out a large order for somebody who was not so anxious to teach foreign methods at the "point of the bayonet." We have heard several Americans make the remark, on first landing in a Spanish country, that they would soon teach those people a lesson how to do business; and we have also heard some of them—the candid ones—acknowledge, after a month or two, that they themselves are the ones who ought to take lessons. Some of these agents are extremely "speedy" in their methods, and express impatience at what they call the slowness of the natives; but the Spaniards, at any rate the mercantile element among them, are, rightly or wrongly, of the opinion that sureness is an equally valuable attribute.

#### THE COTTON GOODS SITUATION.

The present position in the cotton goods market may be described as unusual. Owing to a combination of causes, cotton manufactures are likely to reach a higher price than has obtained for years. Grey and white cottons, ducks, drills, cantons, bleached and grey sheeting, pillow cottons and warps have advanced from 5 to 10 per cent., and bags about 50c. per bale. These are spring prices, and will likely continue in force for some time; in fact, from the present outlook in the raw cotton market, it would not be unsafe to prophesy still further advances before long. The Dominion Cotton Co. has, we hear, already decided to withdraw all quotations