

What did Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, mean when he said:

"I know that some persons have suggested that you should impose duties as against foreign nations—duties which do not now exist as against foreign nations—in order to give an advantage to our Colonies. That is not the policy of His Majesty's Government. But it is our policy, adhering to our own principles, to do what we can to make trade between ourselves and our Colonies freer, in order, as we believe, to promote the best relations of the Empire."

It is generally interpreted as a declaration in favour of concessions being granted to the Colonies by preferential treatment of their goods. Concessions imply a reduction of import duties and it is believed in England that the duty recently imposed on wheat and other bread stuffs will be foregone or lowered in favour of such imports from Canada. The greatest interest is felt in the question. How does the Home Government propose to make trade freer between Great Britain and the Colonies?

The suggestion of THE CHRONICLE if adopted in some form would overcome the main difficulty, that is the adoption of an "Imperial Preference," of a certain percentage to be conceded by all the colonies on all Imperial imports. This would leave each of them free to impose its own tariff, and thus there would be no jealousy aroused as to their self-governing authority.

As to the Imperial defence problem it is perhaps as well to have the views of the Imperial Government and of the representatives of the self-governing colonies before us before entering into this vexed question.

We hope the reports respecting the neglect of proper accommodation being provided for the Canadian troops sent to the Coronation are exaggerated. Some confusion and over sights were unavoidable under the extraordinary circumstances. The War Office officials, we learn, were almost driven to desperation by the overwhelming pressure put on them to meet all the needs of visitors whose singular variety and large numbers created most difficult conditions for their proper lodgment, feeding and hospitable treatment as strangers. One thing is deplorable, if true, that a fee was charged for entrance into the quarters of the Colonial troops. No doubt the sight of them was worth the money. But, to make Canadian and Australian soldiers into a raree-show, like that of a calf with two heads, or a bearded female, was an indignity that disgraces only proprietors of the ground whereon our men were encamped. Our men, however, made a profoundly favourable impression on those who witnessed the review before the Queen, and saw them at the demonstration at the Canadian arch.

Now the Carnegie grant has been accepted for the erection of a public library in Montreal the furnishing it with books and its future management will need the gravest consideration. On the choice of a properly qualified librarian very much depends; he will, to a great extent, make or mar its usefulness and popularity. The choice of the Managing Committee will be a difficulty. Were the following public officials selected the public could not fail to give them their countenance and support, viz., the Mayor, the president of the Board of Trade, president of Chamber of Commerce, Principal of McGill College, Principal of Laval University, chairman of the Protestant School Commissioners, chairman of the Catholic School Commissioners and two or more Aldermen.

It is good news to hear of the Grand Trunk Railway having been granted a site for an elevator in the Harbour. Every reasonable encouragement should be given to railways to aid them in developing traffic which brings trade to this port. Sacrifices made to do this are good investments, the more transportation facilities are provided the more transportation business will be done, all of which involves the enlargement of the trade of Montreal.

From the Yukon comes a story of the finding of a prehistoric vessel, 1,200 feet long stranded on a lofty hill in Alaska. The Indians judge it to be the remains of Noah's Ark. The rarified air of the Yukon seems to stimulate the imagination of the residents, for the flights of fancy to which they attain make them rivals of Dean Swift and modern romancers. "A Yukon Story" is in a fair way of becoming a common saying when doubt is to be thrown on a narrative, in polite terms.

The Contagious Diseases Hospital may not be built on Fletcher's Field after all, as a site is under consideration elsewhere. It would be a deplorable mistake to alienate one foot of that public park for that or any other purpose. Except some amendment was made in the Civic Charter, which we, for the moment, do not remember, the City Council has no right to alienate any part of Fletcher's Field.

Work on the Liverpool and London and Globe, and the Guardian buildings is progressing rapidly as also on the Board of Trade building. These structures will add materially to the architectural adornments of this city, more especially the handsome offices of the two insurance companies.