

THE COMMERCIAL BANK.

WE are glad to learn that the statement of a run having been made on the branches of this bank in Hamilton and Toronto was incorrect. The Hamilton *Spectator* gives the following explanation of the affair—a very discreditable one to the parties who gave currency to the story of the bank's unsoundness.—

"A story was circulated yesterday that a run had taken place on the Commercial Bank in this city. Upon enquiry we learned that the statement was quite incorrect. Some thoughtless person started a story on Monday—All Fool's Day—by way of practical joke, at the Great Western Railway works, that the Company had withdrawn their account from the bank and that it was unsound. The story coming to the ears of the Treasurer, Mr. Price, he took means at once to contradict it, but in the meantime some few persons holding small amounts of bills, presented them for gold. As soon as the story was contradicted, the momentary want of confidence ceased, nothing at all approaching to a run having taken place. The circulation of such stories, however, is a most unwarrantable act, and subjects the parties guilty of it to a criminal prosecution. The Commercial Bank of Canada stands deservedly too high in the public confidence to justify even a suspicion of its perfect stability, and we only notice the matter at all to state the circumstances which gave rise to it."

OPENING OF NAVIGATION.

OUR correspondents at the West inform us that preparations for the opening of Navigation are being rapidly effected. The ice on the rivers, bays and canals has almost disappeared, and shippers and others interested in lake navigation, are looking forward to an early resumption of business. Navigation can hardly be considered open until the Welland Canal is free from ice, but this result was expected in a week or ten days from the time our advices left.

The steamers which usually ply between Toronto, Hamilton and Montreal, are being rapidly put in order, and are expected to commence their regular trips immediately. The steamers of the Royal Mail line, the Kingston, Passport, Grecian, Spartan, Ban-shee and Champion, will form a daily line between Toronto and Montreal, and the excellent boats of Messrs. Jacques, Tracy & Co., will also make a daily line between the two cities as formerly. The latter line has seven steamers, the Indian, St. Lawrence, Huron, Avon, Ottawa, Magnet and Bristol. The steamers America, Osprey and Brantford, will also ply on the lakes, and there will be communication between Hamilton, Toronto and Port Huron each day. Tourists will be glad to learn that the Algoma will run from Collingwood to Sault Ste. Marie and to Fort William as formerly. Judging from present appearances, the sparkling waters of Lake Ontario will not remain unused during the approaching summer months.

The restrictions enforced by the American Government with regard to Canadian shipping, will no doubt have some effect on the lake trade for 1867. At the same time, we are glad to notice signs that a good business will be done. There will certainly be an increase of our direct trade with the eastern part of our Dominion, and several new lines of steamers are projected to supply the demand for transportation which is likely to arise. At Hamilton, Toronto, and other ports large quantities of grain, lumber, staves, &c., are awaiting transshipment, and there are other indications that our lake commerce during 1867 will be more active than for some seasons past. We trust these expectations may be realized.

The Province has spent much in improving our water communication, and during the summer season we would like to see our lakes and rivers covered with sails.

The "Dominion of Canada" is already the fourth Maritime power in the world. But there is no reason why we should not take still higher rank in this respect. This can be done by increasing our foreign trade with Great Britain, the West Indies, Brazil, and other foreign countries. But our internal shipping trade might also be largely increased. The development of our trade with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick must necessitate the employment of a larger number, and a better class of vessels, than have heretofore been engaged. This will not only be the case between Montreal and the east, but also advance shipping interests between this port and the West. This will be one of the sweetest fruits of Confederation, and one which every friend of Canada must look forward to with much gratification.

THE FRENCH EXPOSITION.

THE great Exposition at Paris will be one of the chief events of the present year. The preparations which have been in process therefor during the past eighteen months, were nearing completion at the latest accounts, and the Exposition was opened on the 1st of April, the time agreed upon. A report got abroad some time ago that the Emperor had expressed fears that it would prove a failure. There seems to have been no good grounds for such a report, but, on the contrary, the best of reasons for believing that the Exposition will be entirely successful.

The building in which the world is to exhibit its wares is said not to exceed the Sydenham Crystal Palace for symmetry and beauty. But it is, nevertheless, a very fine specimen of architecture, and has the merit of being large and commodious. Recent letters from correspondents in Paris, indicate that nearly all the nations are represented, and that the palace is crowded with goods. The Canadian department, in which we are more particularly interested, was found at first far too small to display all the articles sent from this country. Further space was obtained after proper representations had been made, but even the increased space is said to be scarcely sufficient. Under the energetic management of Dr. Taché, our department was nearly finished weeks ago—being, in fact, rather ahead of any of the others in this respect. The design is said to be very handsome, and to reflect much credit on those who have taken part in its execution.

The grounds about the exposition will be exceedingly beautiful by the middle of May, and, with the display within, and the thousands of visitors from all parts of the globe, will make up a most exciting and enchanting scene.

Paris occupies a better position in some respects than London does, for a gathering of this kind. Taking Europe generally, it is quite come-at-able. The jam of sight-seers is, therefore, expected to be something prodigious. This expectation will most certainly be realized. From America, from England, from the Orient—from all parts of the world—they will come and come, until Paris is crammed. The Parisians are anticipating "a golden harvest," and are trimming their sails accordingly. Rents are said to have risen in the city—hotels are adopting exposition rates—and prices generally are rapidly becoming inflated. There is always a little "fleecing" of the public on such occasions, and if all reports be true, Paris is not likely to prove an exception whilst the exposition continues.

Canada is already well represented at the exposition as regards its productions, manufactures, arts, &c., there is every likelihood that we will also contribute a fair share of visitors. Many throughout the country are preparing to set out for Paris as soon as spring is fairly begun. During the summer months the number will be greatly augmented—although, should the elections then take place, not a few of our principal men may be compelled to remain at home. The "Great Eastern" will be the most popular mode of transit, and large as is the leviathan ship, she will be crowded at every passage. Let us hope that nothing may occur to mar the success of the exposition, and that all may go

"Merry as a marriage bell."

CONFEDERATION IN NOVA SCOTIA.

IT has been with mingled surprise and pain that we have perused the speeches of many of the anti-Union members of the Nova Scotia Legislature, now in Session. We hoped that, with whatever reluctance, they would have submitted to the verdict pronounced on the question of Confederation, by an immense majority of their fellow-colonists, backed by the almost unanimous decision of the Government, Parliament, and people of the mother country. Nor was it at all extraordinary that we and others should have indulged in such an expectation. While the matter was undecided, while the alternative of Union or no Union admitted of discussion and debate, the honest opponents of the measure could not be blamed for their antagonism to it, beyond charging them with lack of knowledge and judgment; but now that Confederation has been consummated, we can scarcely conceive an excuse for the course they are pursuing. They cannot undo what has been done, and perseverance in a useless and meaningless opposition will only render them liable to the accusation of creating mischief for mischief's sake. No one denies them the right of free opinion, or the free expression of it; but freedom becomes license when it is exercised to the general in-

jury. The Nova Scotian orators cannot rally the real from off the bond which now connects them with their brethren of the other Provinces, they cannot repeal or nullify the Imperial Act which has called into existence the Dominion of Canada, but they can, by their complaints and protests, sow the seeds of future evil. Now, we are curious to know in what light it is that they view themselves, what they consider to be the actual status of Nova Scotia among the communities of the earth. Are we to regard that Province as an independent State acknowledging no exterior influence, or are we to look upon it as a member of the British Empire? If the former, it is, of course, entitled to wander thru high space like other "lone stars," at its own sweet will, but if the latter, it must submit to the interests, observe the conditions, and perform the duties inseparable from that position. When Nova Scotia rejects Confederation, we might view the act as that of a minority opposing the voice of the Empire; when we know that it is only a small fraction of its Legislature which is arrayed against the scheme, we can only view it as the opposition of a minority of a minority. We do not go so far as to assert that the assumptions of the anti-Confederate party there are altogether baseless, or their arguments wholly worthless, when detached from the great general question at issue; yet at best the dispute is only the old one of the relative rights of the individual and of the community whereof he forms a part. But as the wishes of the few, in that case, must succumb to those of the many, so, too, it is with the states constituting one empire or dominion, when they come in conflict. The rule is alike applicable to both: in short, the majority must always govern. The minority cannot be allowed to do so, even when it happens to have justice on its side, much less when it is in the wrong, as now happens with the Nova Scotia anti-Unionists.

It were a waste of time to discuss, at this late day, the objections urged by our Maritime friends against Confederation; but we cannot help wondering what will be thought some twenty years hence of many of the opinions now expressed on the subject. Such positions as that, in the special instance of the British North American Provinces, Union is not strength, but weakness, that their commercial intercourse would not be simplified and increased, and that their defence from foreign aggression rendered easier by having one united government instead of many—these propositions seem utterly untenable at any time, but we are much mistaken if, after a short experience of the new career upon which the country is about to enter, they will not be regarded by everybody as the utterances of sheer folly. For ourselves, they appear so wholly extravagant to us, that we are often inclined to parody Napoleon's axiom, and declare that if you scratch the anti-Unionist you will find the Annexationist. In saying so, however, we are aware that we would be acting unjustly, for there are undoubtedly many good men in the anti-Confederate ranks against whom the charge cannot with truth be preferred. We shall not, therefore, speak of some indistinct mutterings and covert allusions on that head, which are, indeed, of infrequent occurrence.

But while the arguments against the Union of the Provinces may safely be assigned to the great limbo of the past, it is somewhat different with the utterances of the same parties on the subject of the Intercolonial Railway, which chiefly concerns the future. Their ideas in connection with it are not a little confused and contradictory, as is not unusual when men's reason is under the guidance of their passions. They would not object to the railway *per se*, but they contend that the money to be expended on it might be applied to more useful purposes, that it will not pay, and that it will be unavailable as a channel of commerce, owing to the great distance over which goods would have to be carried to the seaboard, as compared with American routes. Now, we might easily show that the commercial value of the road will be far greater than what it is thus described and that, especially for the supply of the rich valley of the St. John and other sections of the Lower Provinces, even with respect to length of route, it can compete with United States railroads, with undoubted advantages in its favor. But let us take the case as stated by the anti-Union objectors themselves, and see how matters would stand as to the probable increase of international trade after Confederation.

Direct communication by the St. Lawrence with Upper and Lower Canada closes in the end of November of each year, to re-open in May. It is well known that much loss and damage are incurred by shakeage and other causes in conveying flour, wheat, provisions