

the support that it deserves. All needful information will be furnished on application to Mr. Ira Cornwall, Board of Trade Rooms, St. John, N. B.

The Montreal *Gazette* has made a bold suggestion—to make Montreal the *locale* of the proposed art convention which has been under discussion with our neighbours. Doubtless, as our contemporary points out, such a convention would be of advantage to this city and to Canada. "Art, like nature, knows no political boundaries." But would our neighbours agree to yield the *pas* to us and to pass over New York and Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and other centres of art culture in the United States? And if they did, have we enough to show in the way of *matériel* to justify us in contemplating their acceptance with complacency? In reply, it may be recalled that Montreal has already been the chosen seat of two grand scientific conventions—those of the American and British Associations for the Advancement of Science. When the holding of the latter meeting in Montreal was first broached, there was no end of pooh-poohing. Nevertheless, we have not heard that Lord Rayleigh and his learned colleagues ever found reason to regret the choice. In like manner, if it were determined to hold an art convention in Montreal, or any other Canadian city, public spirit would, no doubt, ensure that the home and environment of the undertaking should be in harmony, from an artistic standpoint, with the objects of the promoters. Of artists, art connoisseurs and wealthy and cultivated patrons of art we have no lack and combination is the order of the day. Let them take the matter up.

TO CONTROL THE PACIFIC.

There are certain considerations which make it more than ever advisable that Canada should lose no opportunity of getting hold, with as little delay as possible, of her fair share of the Pacific trade. For three hundred years nations and companies and individuals had been risking limb and life and expending fortunes in the effort to secure a Northwest passage to the East. The name of Lachine is to us a perpetual reminder of an implied promise not only to make the discovery, but to turn it to the best advantage. The Hudson's Bay Company, which, long before the decisive struggle under Montcalm and Wolfe, had anticipated the establishment of British power on this continent, kept looking for such a passage until the middle of the 18th century. The explorations subsequently undertaken by our native companies both before and after the conquest had the same end in view. Du Luth, Verendrye, Mackenzie, were all, consciously or unconsciously, tending to the same goal. When the railway movement began half a century ago, the first sure step on the path that destiny had marked out for the attainment of the great object was taken, though at that time the notion of a real and practicable ocean passage by the extreme north still held possession of some minds. But the iron track once laid even over a few miles of ground, there was no longer any doubt of the ultimate achievement of a trans-continental route. Such a route was, indeed, forecast, as long as thirty years ago. To whom the credit of the idea may be due we need not now inquire. Suffice it to say that the federation of British North America made such a connecting link essential to the permanence of the bond.

We enjoy the benefit of that great line several years sooner than the most sanguine could have looked for its completion. Already we are so familiar with the marvel that it has ceased to be one. But the great task is not yet finished. It is true that the Dominion has been bound together by bands of steel. But there are bands stronger than steel—those of self-interest. And to make the Pacific Railway the success that it ought to be, it must be supplemented by a line of fast-going, splendidly equipped ocean steamships and a complete system of Pacific telegraphy. On this last point we would again refer to the map and accompanying comments that appeared in our issue of the 6th inst. But what we wish especially to point out is that this needful supplementing should be done speedily. Delays are sometimes more dangerous than rash precipitation. Those who counselled a transcontinental railway a generation ago were laughed at. Yet, had it been built then, England's intercourse with the East would have been established through Canada before the Suez Canal had riveted attention on its advantages. Instead of acquiring an interest in that enterprise, the British Government would have done all in its power to build up the Canadian Pacific. And now our neighbours discuss unreservedly the opening up, under United States auspices, and on the basis of the Monroe doctrine, a canal through Nicaragua. "England," say the advocates of this scheme, "has the command of the Mediterranean at Gibraltar and Malta and Suez. We shall have command of the American Suez and who shall interfere with us?" They even talk of having Hayti or Cuba by way of adding to the strength of the position. But what interests us still more, they are looking forward (and with a very determined aspect) to the command of the Pacific. They must, they insist, have Samoa or the control of it, and the harbour of Pango Pango must be theirs. Now, if the United States be really in earnest in these plans of aggrandizement, and are bent on becoming a great naval power and having the control of the Pacific, it is of the utmost importance that Canada should lose not a moment in consolidating the agencies that will give her the lead in the carrying trade to the East and also extend her own commerce. The Nicaragua canal cannot be built in a day; the great American navy that is alternately to sweep the Pacific and take shelter in Lake Nicaragua cannot come into existence even at Mr. Blaine's fiat. Nevertheless, we are assured that, as far as the Secretary of State is concerned, there will be no apathy in carrying out those grand designs that are to make the Monroe Doctrine, as revised by Blaine, a power in the world. Let us too, then, be up and doing. If we cannot control the Pacific, we may, at least, be one of the powers that control it.

ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE.

In the year 1868, before the Dominion of Canada was a year old, a number of gentlemen, interested in Colonial affairs, held a meeting at Willis's Rooms, London, for the purpose of organizing a colonial club or society. At the first meeting the subject was merely broached. The press took it up and some newspapers gave the project a cordial support. Other meetings followed and, in due time, the Royal Colonial Society (as it was first named) was inaugurated, Viscount Bury, whom some of our readers may recollect,

delivering the inaugural address. Among those who helped to promote the enterprise were Mr. Edward Jenkins, at one time agent-general for Canada, Mr. R. J. Haliburton, Mr. W. F. Lynn, Col. Maude, Mr. Gisburne Molineux, Dr. Bourinot, Sir J. W. Dawson, Sir Richard Graves Macdonnell and Mr. (now Sir) Frederick Young. To this last gentleman, for many years the secretary of the Institute, fell, in great part, the responsibilities of organization. Without his efficient aid the scheme would not yet, perhaps, have passed its initial stage. The objects which the Institute set before it from the first were to provide a place of meeting for gentlemen connected with the colonies and India and others taking an interest in Colonial affairs; to establish a reading-room and library, as well as a museum for the collection and exhibition of colonial productions; to facilitate exchange of experiences and afford opportunities for reading papers on topics connected with the colonies and with India, and to undertake and encourage investigation into the history, progress, resources and people of the scattered portions of the Empire. The membership is of two classes, that of resident and that of non-resident Fellows.

A few weeks ago the Institute, which was incorporated by royal charter in 1872, celebrated its coming of age by a banquet, at which the Prince of Wales, who has been president for some ten years, occupied the chair. The occasion naturally offered opportunities for surveying the progress of the colonies and the Institute's share in it during the last twenty-one years. The speeches of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Knutsford, Sir Arthur Blyth, Lord Charles Beresford, R.N., and H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, while touching on a variety of questions, Imperial and Colonial, were at one in advocating the integrity of the Empire. No one who has followed the career of the Institute, as set forth in its annual proceedings, can deny that it has been a widely felt power in the direction of unity. It has brought the colonies nearer in interests and sympathies to the motherland than they ever were before, and has very materially modified the opinions of statesmen and the public at home as to the position, importance and destinies of the colonies. The Rooms of the Institute, in Northumberland Avenue, have a ready welcome for every colonist who sets foot on the shores of England. There he will meet with men whose aspirations are akin to his own, and make him feel that in spite of dividing seas, he is still at home. There he can obtain all needful information regarding any question that comes within the scope of the Institute and the range of the Empire. The twenty published volumes of the Institute's Proceedings contain a mass of knowledge concerning every corner of the Queen's Dominions—from the greatest to the smallest—contributed by persons who have had the fullest opportunities for verifying it in each instance, which is to be found in no other publication. The membership comprises a fair representation of what is most enlightened and progressive in India and the colonies, and of the best type of British public men who would do the Colonies justice. The Resident Fellows number above 1,200; the non-Resident nearly 3,200. In the latter list Canada figures prominently, though there are names still absent which should long since have been included in it.