

freight. It is quite clear that when the \$20,000,000 is expended in improving the New York State canals, the conditions of the problem will be changed. To meet that change we shall have our canals with 14 feet of water at all points, where auxiliary canals are necessary, between Lake Superior and Montreal. That the American competition will be less severe in the future than in the past, we have little warrant to conclude. If we look at the past we shall find that relative cheapness of internal freight alone fails to give Canada the palm of victory in carriage from the Western prairies to Liverpool; and there are reasons to fear that this may be just as true in the future.

Sir Cecil Rhodes, Premier of Cape Colony, who, in common with our own Premier, received a new year's gift of knighthood, is said to favor closer commercial relations with Canada, and it is added that steps are being taken to sound public opinion in the Colony on the question of steamship communication with Canada. If favored by the Chambers of Commerce of the Cape, a proposal for steamship connection between the two countries is likely to receive attention.

A story that a mob took charge of the Newfoundland Assembly, on Wednesday night, and refused to allow the Opposition speakers to be heard, if true, is deplorable, if false, is atrocious. Some English journals see in the confederation of the island with Canada a remedy for the present ills. The trouble not being even half political, is not one which a change of political relations would not wholly meet. Such an union might be expected indirectly to improve the commercial aspect not less than the political. The opinion expressed in England that if any question of Newfoundland joining the Confederation is to present itself for decision, it must come from Newfoundland, not from Canada, is one that will find general acceptance in this country. Whether Canada would take the responsibility of accepting the union if union were offered, would depend a good deal on the conditions which might be obtainable.

SHIPMENTS FOR SUMMER TRADE.

The winter is now but barely beginning and in many parts of the country the first snow of the season has only recently fallen, and yet with the new year the warehouses begin making shipments for the summer dry goods trade. In part, an excuse may be found for this misdating of the spring season. Manufacturers of blouses, underwear and other fabric articles must receive their raw material at an early date if they are to be in the market for the spring trade of 1895; and in supplying the demands of these industries the wholesale houses are pursuing only normal business methods. But to send the retailer goods with paper therefor dated from April is inexpedient and foolish. Every wholesale merchant is willing to acknowledge the folly of this custom, but none appears brave enough to depart from it. Many events may happen within eight months. A retail firm which is a good enough customer in December, may in the following August be unsafe for credit. Many a retailer who knows that he is treading on dangerous ground, orders freely when certain that his liabilities will not fall due for eight months. He flatters himself that within that time his finances will improve, that he will be able to sell a part of the stock he has received, and when August comes around all payments will be met. The unforeseen happens, and assignment follows, and both the retail and wholesale trade are sufferers in consequence. There is but little likelihood that this custom will pass away; it receives encouragement at the

hands of the larger wholesale houses. For under the present conditions of trade only those with considerable means can engage in the wholesale dry goods business; not every one can buy goods and distribute them all over the land, waiting one-half of the year before any returns for the expenditure is received. Probably no other feature in the trade has helped to close more warehouse doors than this custom of "dating ahead," and certainly none has been more instrumental in calling forth the importer who sells by order only.

BETTER COUNTRY ROADS.

It is gratifying to be led to infer, from the latest bulletin of the Ontario Department of Agriculture, that the meetings of farmers' institutes in the province are likely to possess increased interest and value during 1895. Not only are the subjects to be introduced (by specially informed delegates) and debated at these gatherings those of a kind immediately connected with the farm and the dairy, the orchard and the stable, but special attention is being given to considering the improvement of our country roads, the draining of fields, and to debating how best to keep the sons of farmers on the farm. These are matters of moment, for while, as we learn from both Canadians and Americans, the condition of the ordinary country road in Ontario is better than is the case in either Ohio or New York State, there is still much improvement to be desired. The country is losing a frightful sum every year by reason of poor roads.

In the counties of Prescott and Glengarry, Carleton and Lanark, Mr. P. Mahon, of Aberfoyle, will lecture to the institutes during January; J. C. Judd, of Morton, to the group of counties from Durham to Addington; J. F. Beam, of Black Creek, to those of Ontario, Victoria and Peterboro'; Alan Macdougall, C.E., of Toronto; James Sheppard, of Queenston; A.W. Campbell, C.E., of St. Thomas; Wm. Dickson, of Attwood; Alf. Hunter, of Harrowsmith, and Isaac Ussher, of Thorold, are other delegates from the Good Roads Associations of Ontario to the farmers of the counties lying west of Toronto. We trust their efforts may result in great benefit.

A WAR OF INDUSTRIES.

The people of Quebec, while they have of late shown marked ambition in the direction of industrial enterprise within that province, seem still to cling to the notion of paternal government, by which the French Canadians were so long ruled, and they want the Provincial Government to help this and that commercial enterprise. Just at present the Hon. Mr. Taillon, who is Provincial Treasurer, is withstanding a perfect siege of this sort. The finances of the Province of Quebec are limited; there is not enough in the treasury to justify yielding to such demands, and we trust Mr. Taillon will be firm. Mr. E. P. Bender is seeking \$20,000 a year as a bonus to guarantee the interest on \$500,000 for twenty years, which sum he proposes to have invested in an abattoir scheme at Three Rivers, Que. Mr. Bender's argument is, that as the Imperial authorities have placed such restrictions upon the exportation of live cattle, there is nothing left but to have the cattle slaughtered on Canadian soil. Further than this the slaughter of cattle in this country would give employment to a large number of Canadians, while the hides, tallow and other products incidental to slaughtering would all encourage trade in Canada. But to carry on a vast export trade requires a great deal of capital, and Mr. Bender, in consideration of the good which he thinks his scheme will accomplish for the people of the province, makes bold—Mr.