

The veto becomes dormant, but it does not cease to exist; it retains all the potentiality it ever possessed. Attacks were made on the right of veto with a vigor which recalled those levelled against "Monsieur and Madame Veto," in the dawning of the French revolution. But no province, as represented at the recent Quebec conference, objects to the veto or asks for its abolition; what is asked is that it may be transferred to a new depository, the Imperial Government. The change is asked in the belief that it would lead to the veto being exercised less frequently. Properly speaking, an imperial veto should be confined to matters of imperial interest. But the extent of that interest may be variously conceived. If we go back to the time when the imperial veto was not infrequently exercised over Canadian legislation, some half a century ago, we shall find that it went beyond mere imperial interests; for instance, one of its avowed objects was to prevent bank charters being granted on principles which the Lords of the Treasury, or the head of the Colonial Office, considered unsound. Sometimes it was exercised in spite of the colonial Administration. We cannot go back to the veto in that form; but there are two conceivable occasions on which the imperial veto might be exercised, if the proposed transference were made. The veto might be exercised from the imperial standpoint, as it is at present liable to be, or from the point of view of the federal Administration. For a knowledge of the weak or objectionable points of local legislation, the Colonial Minister would have to depend upon reports of the Governor-General, based on information and advice tendered by his constitutional councillors; he could have no intuitive knowledge on the subject, and must rely on information conveyed through this channel, the only one open for its passage. That the Imperial Government would sometimes object to act upon a recommendation to exercise the veto is probable, if indeed it should consent to accept the trust, which had been practically relinquished, and of which a new tender is now made. The most probable answer to the offer will be that colonial institutions derive their best guarantees of success from the free play which they have been allowed by the removal of the friction of outside direction by which they were previously impeded.

It is more pertinent to enquire whether a federal veto had not better be dispensed with. In the United States it does not exist. The question of a federal veto on State legislation was raised when the present American constitution superseded the old confederation, and it was decided in the negative, wisely we think the event has proved. Some of the leading minds of the Republic favored the veto, among them, if our memory serves, Hamilton and Chancellor Wallworth. It is one of the few points on which experience has proved them to be in the wrong. If the separate States may be trusted without the check of a federal veto, could not the same liberty be safely allowed to the Canadian Provinces? The United States rely on the constitutional rule that the several States shall not be at liberty to violate the obli-

gation of contracts, and on the justice of the Supreme Court. Whether we can safely follow the American example or not, the veto power of the federal Government, at Ottawa, remains suspended but is not broken.

The Dominion loan of \$25,000,000, for which authority has been taken, is in greater part required to meet existing obligations. But there is a balance of \$9,000,000 applicable to the possible reduction of the deposits in the Government Savings Banks, under a reduced rate of interest. This looks to a change of the form of the loan, not to an increase in the amount, a change, too, accompanied by a reduction in the rate of interest paid. This movement is called for by an obvious rule of economy not less than by the needs of commerce. It is entirely in accord with public sentiment, to which it is a somewhat tardy homage.

The Lake St. Peter's canal debt has been assumed by the Government, to which it properly belongs. The channel is to be still further improved, and the port of Montreal is put in a position to compete with foreign rivals. A larger class of ocean vessels than any heretofore employed will soon be able to reach that port. The larger the vessels the more economical for carrying purposes, and the further ocean freight is carried inland the less it will cost to reach its destination. The improvement of Lake St. Peter canal is a matter in which the whole country is interested.

Justice to a hard-worked and underpaid class of public servants has at length been done, in the raising of the salaries of the Superior Court Judges. Of late, we have been obliged to accept for the bench men who occupied secondary positions at the bar; and they will now get salaries which might have tempted abler men to accept seats on the bench. The salaries of the Canadian county judges remain without alteration for another year. That they are inadequate will scarcely be contested. A few of the county judges have their remuneration supplemented by pay for outside work which the law throws upon them; but the majority of them derive little or nothing from this source. One county judge may perhaps receive as much as a chief justice of a Superior Court; but such an exception does not count in the aggregate. The salaries of the county judges will have to be revised before they can be deemed fitting remuneration for the work done and the positions held.

#### THE GROWTH OF MONTREAL.

Three centuries and a half ago, the elevation which gives its name to the City of Montreal was ascended by the gallant Jacques Cartier, first of Europeans to ascend the height and fix the noble site. Two centuries later, the French settlement upon the Island of Montreal was a considerable one, cultivated and well planted with trees. A fort had been built, with batteries commanding the streets. A hundred years ago, at which time the place had passed under English rule, the fortifications were increased and both the lower

and upper towns showed signs of improvement. Fifty years since, the population was about 30,000, increasing to 90,000 in 1861, to 140,000 in 1881, while to-day, counting the population of the territory recently annexed to the city, there are in Montreal probably not less than 200,000 souls.

Her commanding position at the head of ocean navigation and the commencement of river and lake travel, early ensured to Montreal the advantages which made her the chief city of Canada. And from the early days of the century to the present she has never lacked for men of far-sightedness and enterprise to broaden her foundations and make the utmost of her natural advantages. As early as 1826, the Assembly of Lower Canada was memorialized by her merchants to deepen parts of Lake St. Peter, and so make Montreal accessible to ocean-going craft; and in 1838, Austin Cuvillier, chairman of the Board of Trade, secured a grant for a survey. But not till 1844 was a beginning really made, and by 1856 a depth of 16 feet in the channel was reached. For thirty years the Harbor Commissioners toiled at this important work, with the result that there is to-day a 25-foot channel from Montreal to the Atlantic Ocean. This great achievement has cost over \$4,000,000, and another million will be spent to make its depth, in another year or two, 27½ feet. At last the Government at Ottawa has recognized that this channel is properly a national undertaking, and what remains to be accomplished will be paid for out of the public purse.

Sixty years have passed since Hugh Allan's father laid the foundation of the Allan Line of ships, by means of sailing brigs of 300 tons. In 1851, Hugh and Andrew Allan determined upon steamers for the St. Lawrence trade; and two years thereafter their first steam vessel, the "Canadian," made her earliest trip, the line obtaining a Government subsidy of \$120,000 annually. The enterprise thus modestly begun has expanded into the 30 iron and steel steamers of the Montreal Ocean Steamship Co., of an aggregate tonnage of 96,820 tons, besides 12 sailing ships of 17,430 tons. The Dominion Line, established in 1872, numbers ten steamers of 31,720 tons; and there are in addition eight lines of ocean steamers, with a tonnage of 100,000 tons, plying between Montreal and various Atlantic and trans-Atlantic ports, carrying passengers, cattle, coal, and merchandise. The craft clearing from Montreal for sea in 1887 numbered 409, of 621,000 tons, flying British, French, Norwegian, German, Spanish, and Russian flags. The extent of Montreal's connection with Canadian and American inland navigation by river, canal, and lake is shown by the following compend of her receipts by canal and river within the last ten years of:

Butter .....	59,835 packages.
Cheese .....	828,929 "
Barley .....	1,365,911 bushels.
Flour .....	1,255,943 barrels.
Ashes .....	60,617 "
Wheat .....	49,576,244 bushels.
Corn .....	28,691,212 "
Peas .....	16,705,716 "
Oats .....	7,138,535 "

Of the railway interests of Montreal there is little need to write at length. Forty