

excise duty in Canada, as in the United States, is \$3 per thousand, but our neighbors protect the domestic article by a tariff of \$2.50 a pound and 25 per cent ad valorem, while in Canada they are allowed only 60 cents per lb and 20 per cent on the value. It is contended that the effect of this is to limit the production of the better class of domestic cigars; for the name of Havana—even the brand and stamp on the box—will influence many people in favor of trashy Cuban goods which cost them not less than 10 cents retail; for all imported cigars, whether they cost \$60 or down to \$20 per thousand in Havana, will be retailed at that price, and the natural tendency is to the purchase of the lowest grade that will suit. We have before us a Bock, "Golden Eagle, Reina Maria Victoria," the price of which is \$80 a thousand in Havana, and it retails singly for 15 cents in Montreal, or \$14 per hundred. As the thousand of this brand weigh 11 lbs., our readers can estimate the profit to the importer, adding perhaps \$1.50 for export charges in Havana. The Luis L. Varilla, Esquitos, another small cigar, sells for \$38 per 1,000 in Havana and for \$8 to \$9 per 100, or 2 for 25 cents in Montreal, according to the fancy of the retailer. Henry Clay Concha or Concha Regalia, about the same weight, are bought in Havana at \$40 and \$50 respectively, and sell here at retail for 10c to 12½c each, or \$8.50 to \$11 by the hundred. Most people who lay claim to be judges prefer a well-made domestic cigar to any of the above brands; it weighs nearly twice as much, and sells for far less money. But they lack the import brand; and so uncertain is the taste in cigars that, were the cheap article, which is sold to the way-side innkeeper at from \$1.75 to \$2.50 per 100, done up in Havana boxes, they would pass muster with some people at 10c each. The trick of filling empty boxes with cigars of inferior quality is not altogether unknown to the retail trade. Manufacturers contend that the higher duty in the United States to whom our legislators occasionally point as an example, has the effect of promoting the manufacture of a better class of domestic goods, the greater demand enabling them to produce at a lower price, and the increased competition compelling them thereto.

There are styles of fashions in cigars, and the average smoker buys a cigar through his eyes. "Now, here is one," says a dealer, taking it from a glittering show-case, "that sells for 5 cents. You will notice that it is rich, dark, glossy, and handsome. It has no quality; but a

smoker is satisfied with it because it looks well, and, stuck in his mouth, it serves the purpose of a 25-cent cigar." It was once fashionable to smoke light-colored cigars, Claro or Colorado as they are known in the trade, but now everybody wants dark, colory goods. This has led to the use of coloring extracts, and Havana tobacco extract is now a staple article of merchandise in the trade. In shapes the cigar manufacturers are controlled by mold-makers, who, in order to stimulate their business, are as inexorable in their season's changes as are the makers of hatters' blocks. Cigars are pressed into wooden molds before the wrapper is put on, and, according to the mold, the cigar is turned out to be thick or thin, dumpy, pointed at end, or entirely round. Smokers are attracted by appearance, and some shapes become very popular and have a great run. As for quality, it is simply a matter of taste. Some men actually prefer the taste of a 5 cent cigar, just as the habitant will cling to his clay pipe and home-grown leaf. But it is a curious fact that if a smoker once inhales the flavor of a fine cigar he loses all taste for a cheaper article.

Tobacco is a peculiar plant. Every leaf differs. The more tender the leaf the finer the quality. No machinery has yet been perfected to supplant the skilful manipulation of the human hand, although there have been numerous attempts to make cigars by machinery. The essential parts of a cigar are the filler and the binder, which is called a bunch, and the wrapper. The wrapper is not the thirtieth part of a cigar, and yet it is the part which imparts flavor to the whole. A bad wrapper will spoil the filler and binder, while a good wrapper put on a poor bunch will make a very good smoke.

Cigar-makers earn good wages. In this city a good workman on ordinary and better grades gets from \$5 to \$12 per 1000, and as high as \$15 on high class goods, and he can make from 350 to 500 and even 700 cigars a day.

AUSTRALASIA.

The current number of the *Nineteenth Century* contains an interesting paper by Mr. Archibald Forbes on "The present and Future of the Australasian Colonies," which gives the impressions of an intelligent traveller, who spent a year among them. We have sometimes heard that the exuberance of Canadian loyalty had produced strong impressions on English travellers, but it would seem that our Australasian fellow colonists infinitely surpass us. Mr. Forbes tells that "for a

"man who betrays in talk that he has dared to let his mind stray towards the question of Australasian independence, for such a man there is the cold-shoulder in the most emphatic manner." Again, "every public speaker, who would sit down on good terms with his audience will weave into his peroration expressions of devotion to the Crown, of congratulation that Australia lives under the flag of the Empire, of fervent aspiration that this shall be ever so." Mr. Forbes finds that there is an element of oppressiveness "in this Australia fervor of loyalty." Intolerance comes of it; it frowns down liberty of speech.

An instance is given of the effect produced by a visit from the Redmond Brothers, Irish Nationalists, who visited Australia to raise money. Certain members of the Victorian Parliament put their names to an address to Mr. Parnell, which contained the words "foreign despotism." It is said by Mr. Forbes "the colony rose against them in its wrath; indignation meetings were held in every township." They only escaped expulsion from Parliament by abject explanations; and at the general election, which followed soon after, "four out of the five members, who had perpetrated the outrage on colonial loyalty, lost their seats." Mr. Forbes evidently looks with disfavor on this exuberant loyalty, as he remarks:—"Returning to Australia I shall have a sense of nervousness as I land, because of this article, guarded as I design its tone shall be." Mr. Forbes intimates very plainly that the loyalty which he rather sneers at is contingent on the maintenance of the *status quo*. "The ægis of the empire is worth a good deal to Australia in peace time, whatever it might be worth in war time." Again, "the British investor is a copious milch cow of capital, not alone in regard to Colonial Government loans, but in regard to the thousand and one colonial, financial, land, and industrial enterprises with which the stock exchange list has been so greatly lengthened of late years."

It is evident that Mr. Forbes ascribes Australian loyalty entirely to self-interest. He thinks that at present there is an existing difficulty, if not impossibility, of federation, without which independence would be an experiment fraught with folly, danger, and mischief unspeakable." And yet at the very time that this opinion is expressed by an intelligent traveller we have news that an effort is about to be made to bring about federation. We doubt much its present success. Canadian federation was in a manner