

CONNECTING LINKS.

During the latter part of May an influential deputation composed of representatives from the Association of Chambers of Commerce waited upon the Prime Minister, with the object of bringing under notice a resolution passed at the autumn session of the association, held at Huddersfield, to the effect that "this association expresses its hearty approval of the resolutions adopted by the Inter-Colonial Congress, recently held at Ottawa, in favor of inter-imperial postage and telegraph routes between this country and the colonies, and between the colonies themselves respectively, without such routes passing through other countries." In introducing the deputation, Sir Albert K. Rolitt referred to the deep interest naturally felt by the chambers of commerce in the subject of the development and consolidation of the colonies, particularly with reference to trade matters, and he dwelt at some length, as did also subsequent speakers, on the advantages which must undoubtedly accrue both to them and the Mother Country by a continuance of steps in that direction. As is well known, the markets of the continent and parts of the New World are closed, to a certain degree, against us by the operation of hostile tariffs, and it seems, therefore, the more desirable that we should lose no opportunity of cultivating those markets between the dealers in which and ourselves exist bonds of sympathy and mutual interest. There can be no doubt that in recent years much has been done to compass this end. The principle of Imperial Federation has come to be regarded as something more than a mere visionary scheme evolved by enthusiasts from unpractical premises. We are, in fact, if slowly at least surely, getting nearer and nearer to the ideal of a united Empire, of which the component parts will acknowledge no intervening barriers save such as are purely geographical, and which may find even in that widespread distribution of its parts throughout the inhabited globe an additional source of strength and prosperity. At the same time, however, it must be admitted that much remains to be done before the full benefit of so grand a confederation can be reaped and the ripe maturity yielded in a succession of golden harvests.

What the substance of the resolution submitted to Lord Rosebery really amounted to was simply something in the way of an Imperial mail subsidy. It is notorious that we are far behind other countries in this respect, when the extent of our trade and the largeness of our interests is taken into account. Some little time ago Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P., compiled some instructive, and, we believe, trustworthy statistics on this subject which may be quoted. Taking our foreign trade as representing 740 millions sterling, we pay as subsidies for mail services a paltry £637,000 per annum. Germany, with a foreign trade of 313 millions, pays subsidies to the amount of £1,000,000, and France, with 800 millions of trade, pays £1,043,513 for like services. Italy, with 182 millions, pays £400,000, and even Russia, with 111 millions, lays aside £251,000 for the support of its mercantile marine, so that it will be seen that we, with the greatest interests at stake, pay a sum ridiculously disproportionate. Moreover, the amount of our foreign trade does not afford an accurate measure of those interests, for we, of all the nations in the world, occupy a position which depends for its maintenance on the existence and continuance of proper and constant means of intercommunication. Accordingly, the chambers of commerce, in passing the resolution already detailed, had in view a subsidized Atlantic steam service, railway accommodation across Canada, and two Pacific lines of steamers to Australia and New Zealand. One of the latter already exists, and has become a commercial success on its own merits. The vessels intended to take part in this project would cost about £400,000 each, and would have a speed of twenty knots per hour, and they would be built in accordance with Admiralty requirements so as to be available as armed cruisers in time of war. By this means it would be possible to communicate with almost all our colonies and dependencies without passing off British territory, while the establishment of such a service would mean a material diminution in time of transit. At present, upwards of £100,000 per year is spent in subsidizing the mail services between England and New York, and the Dominion of Canada is left to receive its communications through that channel to a great extent, which seems on

the face of it to be a somewhat remarkable arrangement. But by the proposed service this condition of things might well be altered in view of the material saving of time effected. Thus, it was stated that the saving of time to various places would be as follows: Montreal, 29 hours; Toronto, 30 hours; Winnipeg, 26 hours; Vancouver, 24 hours; Chicago, 23 hours; St. Louis, 21 hours; Boston, 17 hours, and Philadelphia, 5 hours. In the same way, the Australian service would be improved by the shortening of times of transit from 33 or 34 days to 30.

Still more important, however, than this mail service, from the Imperial point of view, is the question of telegraphic communication with our colonies independently of foreign countries. At present, for instance, the lines to the East are five in number. One goes through Russia and Siberia; one through Vienna and Turkey in Asia and down the Persian Gulf; two through Lisbon and Gibraltar, and one round Africa—all of them being more or less at the mercy of a foreign power which might cut off all our communications in time of war. To remedy this weak point in our armor, the proposal was made by Mr. Thompson, representing the London Chamber of Commerce, to lay a cable between Vancouver and Australia. This, in conjunction with existing lines, would practically establish communication with the entire Empire, which would be independent of the good will of a foreign country. It may now be asked, what are the proposals of the chambers of commerce with regard to the defraying of expenses? We surmise that the telegraph cable would be the affair of the Post Office. Otherwise, there was no actual sum mentioned either for that or for the subsidized mail service, and it was evidently thought that suggestions in this respect should follow a formal acceptance from official sources of the necessity for the movement. In the meantime, however, Sir A. K. Rolitt quoted some figures which are especially encouraging. Towards the establishment of the mail service, he said, the Dominion of Canada now gave £25,000, and was willing to give £175,000. Colonies, such as New South Wales, gave £10,000; New Zealand offered to give £20,000; and, if Great Britain co-operated, other colonies would certainly contribute in proportion. We shall be greatly interested to learn to what degree the Ottawa conference report deals with the subject in a practical and tangible manner. The matter is too important to be allowed to drop at this stage.—*Birmingham Trade Journal*.

THE THEORY OF TRANSPORTATION.

In the most recent issue, that for the present month, of the "Annals of the American Academy of Philadelphia," appears a review of "The Theory of Transportation," by Chas. H. Cooley, Ph.D., one of the publications of the American Economic Association. The review is by Dr. Emory Johnson. We make some extracts:—

"Dr. Cooley says that his essay 'is an attempt to put two things together: to write a theory of transportation from a sociological standpoint.' This he regards as the chief merit which his work possesses. It may seem strange that one who is thoroughly in accord with Dr. Cooley at every point in his discussion, and one who regards the work of especial value, should not consider the sociological character of the monograph as its chief merit. To my mind the book is valuable because it is a truly economic discussion of transportation."

"The most valuable part of the work is contained in the third division: the discussion of transportation and economic organization. A portion of this discussion is devoted to a suggestive chapter on the location of towns and cities, in which the author outlines a subject to which, it is to be hoped, he will give a more elaborate treatment in the future. It is in Chapter XII. on the general theory of rates that students of transportation will find the most important part of the monograph. In this chapter four principles which underlie the theory of rates are advanced. These are: that rates should secure justice among persons; that they should bring about the utilization of special facilities arising from immovable natural agents; that rates should favor a diffusion rather than a concentration of manufacturing and commercial industries; and that they should give the greatest possible freedom to the action of economic forces. These four principles are briefly discussed and declared to constitute the basis of an adequate general theory of rates."

"In the closing chapter of the monograph the author reverts to the political relations of transportation, and takes the conservative and thoroughly tenable position that competition between railroads for the traffic of cities is 'inconsistent with the just or efficient performance of the function of transportation, and should cease to exist.' The railroad industry is held to be 'essentially organic, and in it the system of unity must and should prevail; its introduction should not only be permitted but encouraged and enforced.' The author thus believes in railway combination and railway organization in order to bring about unity of management. He, however, believes 'that efficient railway organization must be associated with public control.' He believes in private railways for the United States, subject to efficient public control. He rightly claims that it is a mistake to imagine that public ownership of the railways would do away with the railway evils. He says, 'there would still remain the most complex question of all, the adjustment of rates among different places and different commodities.' As Dr. Cooley maintains, it is the formulation of a comprehensive theory of rates, and not the question of public or private ownership, that lies at the basis of the transportation problem."

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION.

A work under this title is published by Macmillan & Co., New York and London. The author is Benj. Jones, but there is a preface by Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke Acland, M.P., a member of the recent Rosebery administration. Mr. Bernheimer, of Philadelphia, contributes a review of this work to the July "Annals of the Academy," and thinks that a better title would be "The History of Co-operation in Great Britain."

"The following sentences from the preface explain sufficiently the character of the work: 'To preserve the experience and knowledge of those who remember some of the earlier efforts in associated industry, . . . and to search such scanty records as remain, is the task which has been undertaken here. . . . Here, for the first time, are put together, in a compact form, the records of many efforts, successful and unsuccessful, to realize the aims of the older co-operators of the earlier part of this century. . . . This information was fast slipping away when Mr. Jones began the series of articles in the *Co-operative News*, which are to a large extent embodied in this volume.'

"The second and by far the most important part of the book is that devoted to the history of the hundreds of co-operative experiments which have been undertaken since the time of Owen. It contains a wealth of information and shows a considerable amount of careful research. The author has obtained his information at first hand, and gives numerous quotations and exact references, which should prove invaluable to the student. All departments of industry are treated. Fully three-fourths of the book are devoted to these descriptions, which cover experiments in corn-milling societies, cotton factories, woolen factories, sundry textile and kindred societies, boot and shoe societies, the iron trades, the collieries, building and allied trades, printing, publishing and paper making, agriculture and miscellaneous societies. An interesting chapter is also devoted to the wholesale societies. The plan pursued in these sketches is to take up each society, explain the purpose for which it was organized, mention the number of members, and the capital per person. Figures to show the amount of sales, receipts, expenditures, gains and losses follow. The progress made, its success or failure and the reason for it, completes the sketch and affords sufficient material on which to base conclusions, and make valuable comparisons."

"The volume as a whole," says Mr. Bernheimer, "deserves praise. Some of the subjects have been more fully treated by other writers, but much of the information is not elsewhere available. It is not a display of rhetoric; the author rightly contents himself with telling his facts in a straightforward manner."

—Heard at a meeting of creditors: Official receiver—"What have you come here for?" Professional beggar—"To put in my claim. Herr Meyerstein used to give me twopence every week."—*Eulenspiegel*.