

1878-9.			
	lbs.	Value.	Duty.
The United S.	71,611,708	\$3,618,924	\$1,617,744
Great Britain.	28,193,218	1,394,500	623,188
British W. I.	3,145,455	124,632	57,637
Spanish W. I.	9,861,532	363,949	184,891
All other countries...	281,803	11,664	5,389
\$113,103,716 \$5,513,669 \$2,488,819			

1882-3.			
	lbs.	Value.	Duty.
The United S.	1,469,107	\$71,204	\$32,540
Great Britain.	5,043,923	196,153	97,053
British W. I.	47,981,133	1,682,944	815,891
Spanish W. I.	40,544,572	1,330,470	702,779
Brazil	36,781,545	1,086,668	569,761
All other countries...	12,082,876	487,540	197,450
\$143,993,156 \$4,844,979 \$2,355,387			

The above tables prove conclusively that the effect of the last tariff has been to increase the imports of sugar from the British West Indies enormously. In 1879 they were less than one-third of the imports from the Spanish West Indies, whereas they are now considerably greater. It is but quite recently that efforts were made to stimulate the trade with Brazil by according some inducements in the form of subsidies to steamers. That trade has been much extended within the last few years, and it is worthy of notice that Brazilian sugars are nearly all admitted at the lowest specific duties, while both the British and Spanish West Indies send higher grades which pay a higher duty per lb. We shall be much surprised if after a careful examination of the above tables any other conclusion should be arrived at than that our sugar trade is, on the whole, on a satisfactory footing, and that any attempt to reduce the duties materially, or to discriminate in favor of one country, would lead to very serious complications, which would be injurious to Canadian interests.

MR. PERRY AND OTTAWA.

There is an old saying that there is a "hole in every man's coat," and Mr. Alfred Perry has certainly done his best to lay open the rent in Ottawa's garment. He has asserted—and we believe with perfect justice—that should a fire start in the lumber district under a certain combination of circumstances Ottawa is doomed to suffer a conflagration, which, in proportion to the size of the respective cities, would completely dwarf the great fires of Chicago or Boston. Mr. Perry points out that should an uncontrollable fire occur in said district the atmosphere round about would speedily become exhausted and a hurricane ensue; and, in short, after reading Mr. Perry's communication to the Canadian Board of

Underwriters, it is difficult to conceive how any conservative company can be persuaded to accept business in Ottawa at all. But there are always two sides to a question, and if fire insurance managers were to take possibilities for certainties there would be very little insurance business transacted, especially upon this side of the Atlantic. The conflagration hazard, like the sword of Damocles, hangs more or less over all our cities, from Cape Breton to British Columbia. It is not so very long since Mr. Perry condemned the fire hazard of Winnipeg in no measured terms, and we presume he would be willing to endorse the opinion that the explanation in Toronto, under peculiar circumstances, might, in case of fire, endanger the whole city, while no one can look at Halifax and not be astonished that it has not long ago been laid in ashes.

Our readers, however, must not suppose that we consider Mr. Perry simply an alarmist; he is something far better, for although he is very ready to point out the "hole in the coat" (to continue our metaphor) he also gives, in addition, very practical advice as to how to remedy the evil, and we believe it to be a positive fact as regards conflagrations that, whereas Toronto, Winnipeg and Halifax have improved and are yearly continuing to improve, Ottawa, in respect to the endangerment from its lumber piles, is growing worse instead of better. We consider Mr. Perry's suggestion that a floating fire-engine be procured and put in working order a good one, but we are of opinion that the raising of rates in the Chaudiere district and along the river skirting the city will be of greater utility, as it will have the effect of driving a large portion of the lumber from the immediate vicinity of the town to outlying districts, and this would do more to insure Ottawa's safety from a conflagration than all the fire protection or brick walls proposed by Mr. Perry. Until this is done Ottawa need not grumble about the cost of its insurance, it is classed along with Guelph, St. Catharines and London, and has an exposure which none of those cities possess.

We were amused at some very silly remarks in one of the daily Ottawa papers lately, the argument used being that, because the insurance companies had collected a large amount in premiums from the inhabitants, it was therefore quite fair to tax said companies, and the idea of raising the rates was too monstrous to be tolerated for an instant. We imagine the writer of those remarks had never studied a profit and loss sheet, and, as to a conflagration hazard his

mind was too feeble to grasp such a contingency.

We think Mr. Perry's letter will do a certain amount of good, as there are many who fail to take in the danger from conflagration, but we fear he has, so to speak, overshot his mark, and that his words would have carried more weight had he used language a trifle less extravagant.—Exaggeration usually defeats its own object.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

The English statesmen who held a meeting several weeks ago to consider the expediency of organizing for the promotion of some scheme of Imperial Federation, held an adjourned meeting on the 18th inst., which was attended by Sir John A. Macdonald, and at which he seems to have expressed himself as favourable to some kind of league, "for the maintenance of common interests, and the defence of common rights." It seems to have been clearly understood that "the existing rights" of local Parliaments were to be maintained, and this is really the most important point for consideration. Sir John Macdonald did not commit himself to more than that the project of a league for the purposes stated was deserving of thoughtful consideration. About the same time Sir Alexander Galt made a suggestion that it might be expedient to levy a small tax on the tonnage of ships to defray expenses consequent on the maintenance of coaling stations. This is one common object, in which all the portions of the Empire might find it expedient to co-operate, and the accomplishment of which might be attained without any sacrifice of "existing rights." It is far from our intention to enter on any discussion of a scheme which has not yet been matured, and which will doubtless engage the thoughtful consideration of the General Committee, the appointment of which was moved by Sir John Macdonald, and which is, we have no doubt, composed of statesmen of various shades of politics.

Our chief object in noticing the subject at present is to point out that Sir John Macdonald has not given any countenance whatever to the scheme of Imperial Federation, which was recently propounded during the session of the British Association by Mr. Stephen Bourne, and which we infer from the reports in the papers is substantially that which was recently brought under the consideration of a Montreal audience by the President of the University Literary Society, Mr. Archibald McGowan, who advocated what