

ENGLAND AND HER COLONIES.

THE subject of the relationship which should exist between England and her greater Colonies is receiving much attention, and is discussed by all the leading English journals. We give elsewhere an article from the *Times*, to which we referred last week. It may not be an authoritative exposition of public opinion in the matter, but it accurately represents beyond a doubt the sentiments of the large, wealthy and influential party, who for various reasons are in favour of practically independent colonies assuming the position of independent nations.

The *Economist*, in a carefully written article, discusses the same subject from a somewhat different point of view. It does not advocate separation, but as a heading to its article, asks the pertinent question—"What price should our Colonies pay for the Imperial connection?" In considering the subject, it takes the ground that the Colonies receive tangible and considerable benefits from the Imperial alliance, as well as increase of dignity therefrom, adequate returns to which are not enjoyed by England. With regard to Canada, it says: "Some States, like Canada, may be so exported that no great power could be tempted on almost any terms to accept the risk which England inherits. Fancy France or Prussia being invited to accept the protectorate of Canada, and the Canadians endeavouring to discover some advantage which would tempt those powers." And speaking of British Colonial possessions generally, "they are directly a most burdensome possession, exposing our flag to attack in every quarter of the world, so that even the wish to be rid of them which finds no little support at home is not to be wondered at." Having pointed out the advantages to the colonies and the disadvantages to the mother country, arising from the present relationship between them, the *Economist* proceeds to answer its question by stating that the price which a colony would offer and be asked to pay—supposing it to be applying for admission to the Empire—"would be to contribute directly and proportionately to imperial burdens. No other arrangement would be consistent with their self-respect, or would really be a price which the mother country would think of considering." It admits that the mother country gains something by having colonies, but thinks it would be difficult to make a precise estimate of the worth of that something, "but it would not be so with any arrangement to evade imperial burdens. There would be no misunderstanding the alliance of a small community which offered to contribute to the common defence, and a few such communities, it is easily conceivable, would even strengthen the greatest Empire." Such contributions, it thinks, need not be in the shape of a money tribute. "An obligation to keep so many ships and men on foot, and place them at the disposal of the Imperial authorities on the outbreak of war—the usual stipulation of an alliance—would be as good."

There cannot be any question whatever that for the protection to Canada afforded by her army and navy, England is entitled to demand some equivalent. The suggestion of the *Economist* might be varied in such a way as to require Canada to bear the entire cost of a certain proportion of the Imperial troops who should be stationed here. We would be inclined however to think it preferable, if compelled to contribute to the expense of a standing army, or to do without the questionable protection afforded thereby, to accept the latter alternative, and let the troops go. Nor should we any the more desire to possess a standing army of our own, which could scarcely be enough limited as it would be by our ability to pay for it, to be more than a guardian of the internal peace of the Dominion. If the maintenance however, of a certain military and naval force at the disposal of the Imperial Government in case of war, were to entitle Canada to be treated as an integral portion of the Empire, and defended from attack with the whole power of that Empire, so far as practicable, the United Kingdom also to be bound to keep up its fighting force to a certain point, that it might be a fair subject for serious consideration whether or not the cost of armament outweighed the advantage of Imperial protection.

In discussing the question of defence, it must be remembered that Canada is geographically so peculiarly situated, that she cannot be attacked unless by the United States. The nation to the south of us is the only one we have to consider as a possible aggressor. And in the event of a war, Canada could

not be held by any regular force that could be sent here by the Empire. The only possibility of safety to Canada consists in its defence being undertaken by the whole mass of its population of an age to bear arms. And if this is so, then is it of little use for us to increase taxation to pay for what after all must only prove a broken reed when the time comes to lean on it. Of what advantage would it be to Canada to know that United States ports, even its greatest cities on the Atlantic coast, were blockaded or destroyed by an invincible English fleet, while our own island was overrun by armies far out numbering any regular force we could detail to oppose them. Our trust must be in ourselves, and expenditure should be, we think, carefully directed towards obtaining the greatest effective results, and making every able bodied man among us a possible and a capable soldier in an emergency. We do not so much want drill in the ordinary sense of the word, as we do education in the use of those weapons without which the most perfect precision of movement in an army, with all the pick in the world, would be of no avail. Every man in Canada should know how to use the rifle, and to do so too with deadly effect, and although the effort to secure such a result immediately might be only partially successful, there is no doubt that a system could very readily be devised by which inside of ten years, every man who was capable of taking the field at all would be as good a rifleman as practice could make him. Any system to do this must include plans for training not merely men, but boys. Boys delight in gunpowder, and would go in for rifle practice with a zest far beyond any love they may now display for playing at soldier. Every public school might be made use of liberally to teach the young idea how to shoot, and competitions for prizes at various times would furnish additional incentives to boyish ambition.

THE REVIVAL OF TRADE.

IT is surprising what a change has taken place during the past few weeks in the feelings of the business community of Canada. After an undeniably dull spring and summer, during which most persons did well who held their own, the harvest was looked forward to with more than usual anxiety. All hopes were centred upon it. If it failed, a period of hard times must inevitably ensue, which might test the stability of even wealthy houses. If it proved an average yield, an improvement in business would take place, which, if not all which was required, would at least partially dispel the dullness which existed.

These were the feelings of the commercial community when August came in, but almost a revolution (in feeling) has since taken place. Our farmers have now got safely and well secured one of the most magnificent harvests ever taken from Canadian fields, and the inspiring effect is already felt in business circles throughout the length and breadth of the land. Gloom has given way to hope. The feeling has become general that trade during the fall and winter will be brisk and animated—that better times are close at hand.

We feel great confidence that the commencement of a marked improvement in business has already set in, and that as soon as the general movement of the crops to market takes place, which will not be before October and November, every one will be able to see and feel it. But it may be well to warn those of very sanguine temperaments not to expect too much. We have already been of the opinion that the recent short period of dullness felt in all parts of Canada did not arise from the country not being in a prosperous condition. That opinion is ours still. The real secret of the dullness was over-trading—the presence of more goods in the market than the public really required. Last season's harvest may not have thrashed out so well as was at first anticipated, but very fair crops were obtained, and there was no particular scarcity of money among the farmers. But they did not require the immense quantities of goods with which so many business men loaded their shelves, and consequently would not buy them. This is the real cause why so many merchants and others have had such difficulty to meet their engagements during the past six months, and splendid as we believe our present harvest to be, it cannot render trade so brisk as to make money plenty with individuals who persist in over-trading—in buying more goods than they can sell.

Those traders who buy moderately and judiciously, however, will not have their hopes disappointed. That a large and profitable business will be done

throughout Ontario and Quebec during the fall and winter may be considered certain. It would be a remarkable thing—something unique in our history—were it to turn out otherwise. Good times follow crops in Canada, almost invariably—a fact that is altogether too much the case. It would be far better if our prosperity did not depend so much upon the harvest turning out good or bad—in other words, it would be better if we had more manufactories and more varied forms of industry. If subjects of our trade so constant fluctuations, so by dependent almost wholly on our agricultural interest, but so it is at present, and we must make the most of it. The present is fortunately one of our years of plenty, and so we have a right to anticipate a corresponding share of prosperity. Money must speedily become more plenty, for the banks will have to increase their circulations very largely to move the crops to market. In the year 1855, when we had our last abundant harvest, the expansion was very great. In ordinary years, it ranges from three to four millions. But in the year mentioned, the circulation of our banking institutions nearly doubled in three months, rising from a little over eight millions in July to upwards of fourteen and a quarter in the month of October. The prices of produce, not less than the extent of the crops, effect the amount of money put in circulation, and this season appearances do not at present indicate very high prices—but we cannot doubt that the expansion on the part of the banks, which has already begun, must soon to large proportions before the end of next month. It may not be so great as in 1855, which was stimulated by the closing of the Reciprocity Treaty, but in all probability the demands upon our moneyed institutions will tax their resources to the utmost.

An expansion of five millions would have a most inspiring influence upon our recently drooping trade, as well as facilitate another object scarcely less important to business men—the collection of outstanding debts. How many individuals are there who have been at times pinched for money since last January, who would always have had a balance at their banking, if the accounts on their books had been squared off when due? This fall, the farmers in particular, and debtors in general, will have no excuse for not paying up. If they cannot or will not settle when there has been such a bountiful harvest, when can or will they be able? The value of those accounts not settled before the first of February may well be doubted, unless there be exceptional circumstances. Surew men of business are fully alive to this, and we have met many who expressed their determination to clear off all the past due indebtedness in their ledgers, before the spring, either in one way or the other. That resolve is a wise one, and there is another which might be taken with equally beneficial results—that is, to curtail the indiscriminate system of giving credit heretofore so much in vogue.

That we are on the eve of a revival in trade admits of little question. Whether it will come up to the expectations which some have formed—or whether it will be of long or short duration—cannot be predicted with any certainty. It is sufficient to know that we already feel the symptoms which precede improvement. A healthier tone—a more hopeful spirit—already pervades the business community. Importers are preparing to meet increased orders from the country districts. The banks are lowering their rates of interest to catch a larger share of the produce trade. Money is beginning to move more freely. These are signs which can hardly be mistaken, and as the organ of the commercial and manufacturing interests of the Dominion, we congratulate them on our improving prospects. Let us make the most of the revival while it lasts. If it should be short, then we will have nothing to reproach ourselves with. If it should be long, the full benefit will be ours.

QUICK TRAVELLING!

THIS is the age of quick travelling. Nowadays, Lightning Expresses alone take well, and the travelling public. The ordinary passenger trans- twenty-four miles an hour—are getting to be considered a cure, the mixed throng are absolute relaxation of spirit. We think the mania for fast travelling has increased since the opening of the Pacific Railway. That event certainly constituted an epoch in American travel. In addition to the Great Lakes for through freight, our Great Western Railway has now got its daily Pacific Express, on which passengers are con-