

SUBMARINE CABLES AND FOREIGN INFLUENCES.

THE sole existing cable communications between Europe and this continent are now largely controlled by American capitalists. These latter exert their influence in a way that is in no sense wholesome for this country. All our press despatches are filtered through American sources, and thus become a most important influence in wielding Canadian opinion on the current topics of the day as from time to time they arise. No public matters of any importance come over the wires without some political tinging. These are primarily prepared to suit the American palate, but on arrival are instantly transmitted to Canada, where they are rapidly republished and universally circulated. Thus many political subjects involving elsewhere inevitable differences of opinion obtain a general circulation, making this foreign telegraphic subjection a most powerful political engine. Fenianism, for one illustration, has had many an endorsement and an invaluable support through this channel. It is about time all this ceased, and that we had a really independent cable—one utterly free of all foreign influence whatever. We are glad to see that we do not stand alone in this view, which appears to have already impressed itself on our colonial fellow-subjects elsewhere. We learn that a conference of delegates representing the British possessions in the West Indies, summoned by direction of Lord KIMBERLEY, the Colonial Minister, to consider the best means of improving telegraphic communication between England and her possessions in that part of the world, has been sitting at Barbados for some time past. After carefully examining into the various interests involved, the delegates have recommended the adoption of a scheme for the establishment of a line of cable connecting all the British West Indian Islands with Halifax, Nova Scotia, *via* Bermuda, thus affording a means of communication exclusively through British territory. The cost of such a cable is estimated at a million sterling, and it is proposed that the expense should be borne in equitable proportions by the Home Government and the various Colonial Governments. It would appear that, summoned as these delegates were for the special purpose by the Earl of KIMBERLEY, the English Government are prepared to give adhesion to the West Indian views. Such adhesion would of course be meaningless and valueless unless backed by financial support. We assume this to have been promised, provided the various Colonial Governments interested are willing to give their formal consent, and each to bear a fair proportion of the cost. It is to be supposed from the action of the delegates that so far as the West Indies are concerned all this has been either secured or assured. In that case it remains only to secure the sanction of Newfoundland and of this Dominion, and with the former we should imagine that the difficulty would

be small, if, indeed, it presented itself at all. As for Canada, not only would such a project not meet with any opposition, but we believe it would be received with universal approbation. The estimated cost would not be likely to act as an obstacle by any of the communities interested, as, divided equitably among them all, it would not be perceptibly felt by any. But here the late general elections brought out an immense development of national self-reliance, and with it pride in its great public undertakings and an abiding faith in its future. American monopolies of any kind, on this side of the line, whether in the shape of telegraph, railway, or in any other form, have become markedly distasteful. No better moment than the present can or ever will be found for the Canadian Government to ally itself with this project, and its adhesion is all that is required to set it immediately afoot. It will form another link in the chain binding us to the mother-country, and it will enable us to educate our own national opinion unbiassed by American guidance and unpolluted by the objectionable matter which but too often accompanies such despatches as we are now perforce compelled to receive.

ADULTERATIONS.

SOME time since the authorities at Ottawa appointed certain scientists to analyse food, potable and edible, with a view to the detection of adulteration. These gentlemen duly reported the result of their labors, which was very much more favorable, as to percentage of honest genuine food, than the public was at all prepared for. This would seem to show either that the analysts did not go far in their researches, or else that Ottawa is a much more moral settlement than any other place in the Dominion, which later, most emphatically, nobody can be found to believe. All but officials know that the difficulty is not to find an adulterated article, as in and about the capital, but to come across anything used for human consumption that is really honest and genuine. Our last issue showed how cocoanut shells are converted into "spices of distant Ind," and it would be easy to show that all fruit syrups are innocent of any fruit, that our butter is oleomargarine, our cheese made of skim milk, and our wheaten loaf largely composed of plaster, alum, and potatoes. The bulk of French wines now, admittedly, contains not a particle of grape juice whatever, and the city of Hamburg, by means of a poisonous preparation peculiarly its own, floods the entire world with the best Spanish Sherry. As for the sham Champagne, it has become a bye-word. Much of our beer contains salt, cocculus indicus, licorice, and other delectable articles. What the cheap "forty-rod" is really made of few know, but it must be something specially horrible and potent, for men come out of low taverns, after only a few minutes' indulgence, their very brain on fire and red murder only in their mind. The very water here is disgustingly impure, and

is itself a standing and an irrefutable argument against teetotalism. As for our air we'll back it for general nastiness as being without approachable rival. A certain satirist has produced the following fable, which after all is not so very far-fetched. He says that there were once four flies, and, as it happened, they were hungry one morning. The first settled upon a sausage of singularly appetizing appearance, and made a hearty meal. But he speedily died of intestinal inflammation, for the sausage was adulterated with aniline. The second fly breakfasted upon flour, and forthwith succumbed to contraction of the stomach, owing to the inordinate quantity of alum with which the flour had been adulterated. The third fly was slaking his thirst with the contents of the milk jug, when violent cramps suddenly convulsed his frame and he soon gave up the ghost, a victim to chalk adulteration. Seeing this, the fourth fly, muttering to himself: "The sooner its over the sooner to sleep," alighted upon a moistened sheet of paper exhibiting the counterfeit presentment of a death's head, and the inscription "Fly Poison." Applying the tip of his proboscis to this device the fourth fly drank to his heart's content, growing more vigorous and cheerful at every mouthful, although expectant of his end. But he did not die. On the contrary, he throve and waxed fat. Even the fly-poison was adulterated! Even the gentle TENNYSON gets mad about it, denouncing this age—

When chalk, and alum, and plaster are sold to
the poor for bread.
And the spirit of murder lurks in the very
means of life.

All the rascal manufacturers and traders who make and sell vile adulterations should be mercilessly raided, publicly exposed, and severely punished. If the law does not already give sufficient powers, it should set about rectifying the omission. But, as a general thing, it is not more laws that we want so much as a more vigorous enforcement of those we already have on the statute book.

THE COMMERCIAL STATUS.

Bradstreet's has just been taking its quarterly investigation into the state of trade in the United States in particular, and incidentally in Canada too. It presents, also, full statistics of the failures in both countries for the entire half year, which we do not deem it necessary to reproduce. They show that in the latter three months, in the United States, the insolvencies were 1,567 as against 2,246 for the preceding quarter, the general liabilities for the latter, \$29,010,944, having descended to \$23,372,345 for the three months terminating with the close of June. As the journal in question remarks, "The comparative statistics which we present to-day give no warrant for concluding that the era of trade activity in the United States, which dates from 1879, is not to continue into the autumn and beyond. The present business outlook in the United States is for a uniformly prosperous fall trade." What is true of the United States