

tivity among those who believe in the practicability and advantages of closer relations among the different self-governing countries of the Empire.

The contention which Col. Vincent put forth in the British Commons, that imperial federation was only to be obtained through commercial federation, is undoubtedly correct. Once made it clear that commercial federation will be to the advantage of the different members of the Empire, and the thing is as good as accomplished. A movement to secure commercial federation first, is therefore undoubtedly the proper course to be pursued. But just here it may be stated that this is really the difficult part of the programme. The varying commercial interests of the mother country and the colonies present the apparently insurmountable barriers in the road to imperial unity. This is shown by the fact that Canada and some of the other colonies have adopted a trade policy which is looked upon as hostile to the interests of Great Britain. No wonder then, that while many British statesmen state their desire for closer relationship between the mother land and the colonies, they are at a loss to see how they can give any encouragement to the federationists. While the desire for greater unity is with them, the practicability of the movement is not apparent to them.

Besides British statesmen at home appear to think that a movement in the direction of closer relationship should come from the colonies, and they are reluctant to move in the matter themselves. On the other hand it has been urged with force by the federationists, that any preliminary steps, such as the calling of a conference to consider the question, should come from the home authorities. The latter seems the more reasonable ground, as the head, and not the members, should move first.

The trade question most prominently involved in that of imperial federation, is the tariff. This is the point which appears most difficult for British statesmen to deal with. A scheme of federation which would be regarded favorably by the colonies, they believe must provide for differential duties, and with the British mind so thoroughly educated to free trade doctrines, the question of an imperial Zollverein, which would provide for differential duties in favor of the colonies, is a most serious matter. However, under an imperial federation, by which Great Britain and the colonies might be considered one nation, absolute free trade between all sections of the Empire, with duties upon certain products coming from foreign countries, could not be considered as differential duties. The Empire would be one nation, and any duties imposed for revenue or other purposes, would certainly not be preferential. The different members of the Empire should not be considered as foreign countries to each other, but as one country, and therefore the duties would not be differential against foreign countries, any more than free trade between the provinces of Canada could be taken as differential against the United States.

The greatest incentive in Great Britain to imperial federation, is probably found in the industrial situation. The high duties levied by many countries upon imports of manufactured

goods, has created something of a feeling of alarm in some industrial centres, and looking about for a remedy to offset the disadvantage of these foreign protective tariffs, the question of Imperial federation is frequently grasped at. Imperial federation, however, has hardly yet assumed an aspect which leaves it in a position for practical discussion, and with high tariff doctrines prevailing largely in several of the colonies, its immediate future does not seem assuring.

So far as Canada is concerned, we would have much to gain from freer trade relationship with Great Britain. Our exports to the United Kingdom are already large, and with the development of our great West, we may look for a rapid increase in our exports to the mother country. In order to encourage this trade we are not asked to enter into any high-tariff compact, and all we have to do is to lower our own duties upon imports from Great Britain. We could not, however, expect the mother country to admit our products free, and place a duty upon the same products coming from foreign countries, at least while our present political status is maintained.

The future of the Empire, especially as regards the colonies, is certainly a great question, but one beyond the grasp of ordinary mortals. It is not reasonable to suppose that the present relationship between the mother country and the colonies will be indefinitely maintained. Whether change will come in the direction of closer relationship or increasing estrangement, we leave the future to decide. In the light of history, however, the hands on the dial of time would seem to point in the direction of further relaxation, rather than a tightening of the ties which now so loosely unite the different self-governing communities which make up the Empire.

DEAD BEATS.

The question of how best to deal with dead beats, is one of interest to retail business men. It does seem strange that merchants will allow themselves to be gulled so easily and frequently by this most dishonorable and loathsome of beings the dead beat. Every community has its quota of these despicable mortals, and they are often found among those who endeavor to be "some pumpkins" in society. They put on considerable style, are often dandies in their manners, but they are simply poor, miserable, low lived, cowardly, contemptible skunks, utterly devoid the lowest instincts of honor, and unworthy to be recognized by respectable people in the humblest walks of life.

We say it seems strange that retailers submit themselves to be swindled by these worthless characters, because it is an evil which can be largely guarded against. A very slight organization among business men is all that is necessary to at once cut down the latitude of the dead beat for carrying on his swindling operations. In a small city one of these worthless scoundrels, will often exist for years by beating the public, when by a little system his career could be cut short in a brief time. Some system should be provided by which dead beats could be thoroughly advertised among the trade. When a dealer has discovered that one

of his customers is a dead beat, he could report the circumstances to the proper persons, and have the merchants generally informed thereon. It would not be necessary to keep up a regular organization of business men to have this work properly carried out. A small committee, appointed say once a year, would be all that is necessary to consider cases reported to them and give the necessary information to the trade. The thing could be so easily done, that it is really surprising that the dead beat is allowed to carry on his nefarious operations on such a large scale.

The same organization which would be necessary to carry out a system of local protection against the dead beat, could be turned to effective service in collecting accounts against this undesirable class. The following is a plan adopted by a grocers' association in a town across the boundary, to force delinquents to pay up:—

A committee was appointed to purchase a collector's wagon. The wagon will have a big live collector in it and large letters painted upon it. The letters will be "Collector." This wagon will be sent to the premises of every dead beat in the city; the collector will have their bills and will present them for settlement. If the debtor sees fit to square accounts or pay over a reasonable amount on account, the collector will pass on to the next. If no attention is paid to him he will give an hour or two in walking up and down before his residence. The wagon will tell who he is, and if folk don't like it that will make no difference. The next day there will be a repetition of the new fangled dunning process, and so on until the dead beat settles his bill. Butchers, bakers and others are reported to be joining the movement, and the dead beat is likely to have an unpleasant time ahead of him, if he persists in his contemptible course.

Dry Goods at Montreal.

There is no forward business doing; a number of travellers have returned from their first spring trip and will not take the road again until after the elections. Travellers, however, predict a good trade on their second trip. Prices are firm all round on both cotton and woolen goods. Mill agents are around soliciting orders from wholesale houses for fall goods but they have as yet placed very few, nor are they expected to until after the elections. Remittances have come in poorly during the past week and city collections have fallen off somewhat. — *Trade Bulletin*.

A number of Ontario farmers and their families, who settled in South Dakota some eight years ago, passed through Winnipeg last night on their way to Yorkton, Assiniboia territory, with six car loads of stock. One hundred families of these Canadians are expected from Dakota in three weeks bound for Yorkton:

In the first five months of the crop year, Franco imported wheat and flour as wheat, equal to 18,939,174 bushels, against 13,048,906 bushels in 1889, and 21,791,220 bushels in 1888. At this rate imports for the current season will exceed 45,000,000 bushels. It seems clear that the Government's estimate of the last crop was much too large.