

bably leading to the resignation of those who are yet young and active enough to get employment elsewhere, as well as preventing the proper class of men from seeking positions in connection with the City, is not at all desirable. All thoughtful citizens will be ready to commend their representatives for being prudent in expenditures, but the parsimony which prompted their action in dealing with old and faithful public servants is apt to destroy confidence in their knowledge of the science of economics. We believe in the saving of waste and unnecessary expenses, and surely the aldermen will find ample opportunity for using that powers in preventing extravagance. Yet it opens an unpleasant train of thought if the City of Montreal is to be known as looking for cheap labour, or if the ability of the Canadian Metropolis to meet its obligations should be questioned by those who have the management of its internal affairs, and we look to our representatives to uphold the dignity and importance of the City they represent.

#### WELDING THE EMPIRE.

The public utterances of Lord Strathcona when discussing questions of imperial concern from the standpoint of a Canadian statesman are invariably characterized by that sagacity of judgment and charity of political vision to which, added to other well-known qualities, he owes the unique position in the public life of the Dominion which he occupies today. His latest important pronouncement is no exception to the rule. With admirable brevity and preciseness he has summed up all that can warrantably be said on the much debated subject of Imperial Federation in its present stage. "If Imperial Federation means legislation for Canada by a parliament sitting in London," says Canada's ambassador to the motherland, "the Dominion is not ripe for it yet. If it means unswerving loyalty to the mother country in peace or in war, we are federated already." And he adds: "Any discussion of Imperial Federation must necessarily be cloudy in the absence of a specific definition of its scope. In the abstract it may safely be said that the idea is growing in popularity among the Canadian people. Their support in the South African war may be regarded as having proved that. While one cannot forecast to what limit they might refuse to go in participating in foreign complications in which Canada had no direct interest, the resources of the Dominion would always be as readily pledged for the Queen as they have recently been. There is a strong feeling in Canada that an alliance which rests on natural bonds of commercial interest and patriotic devotion, and which needs no legislative assurance, has advantages that no formal compact could supply. Such an alliance between Canada and Great Britain is welding itself stronger and stronger every

day." Canada's attitude towards this interesting, if not urgent, question could not be more clearly defined.

That the high commissioner should have been asked for an expression of his opinion as to the progress of the Imperial Federation idea among the Canadians shows the interest which is being taken in the subject outside of the colonies. In the colonies themselves—in Canada, at all events—the question has not yet emerged from the academical arena into that of practical politics. Occasional discussion of it will, however, serve to familiarize colonists with the theme, and may eventually lead to the formulation of a workable scheme of federation acceptable and mutually advantageous both to the colonies and Great Britain. It does not seem to be generally known that the first great advocate of the federation was that wise and far-seeing political philosopher, Edmund Burke, whose speeches and writings have, for generations, formed a text book for British statesmen. In his "Conciliation with America" and "American Taxation" he sets forth with matchless eloquence the principles that are most conducive to the future greatness of the British Empire, both in its old and in its new dominions. Had the British public men of his generation realized the importance of his teaching, the unhappy rupture with the American colonies would never have taken place, and their relations with the mother country would have become as sincerely loyal as are those of the colonies of today. On the principles enunciated by Burke is based the present policy of maintaining the unity of the Empire. He went so far as to consider the question of colonial representation in the British House of Commons; and to decide reluctantly that such representation was impracticable by reason of the obstacles interposed by distance and the slow means of communications, which then seemed incapable of improvement, but which have since been revolutionized by steamers, railways, telegraphs, and telephones. The writs for electing members for America and the West Indies, he pointed out, would take a long time to reach their destinations. Some "provinces" would receive them in six weeks, some in ten, and some in twenty. A vessel might be lost, and then some provinces might not receive them at all. Several weeks would elapse after the reception of the writs before a proclamation would be issued and the elections held. Then there would be the voyage of the newly elected members to London, with its delays and its dangers. Parliament would have sat in the meantime and transacted business. It might happen that it was dissolved, and the American members of a parliament in which they had never sat would have to return home immediately, with the irritating knowledge that the writs for another general election would arrive across