

THE CRITIC.

The future greatness of this Dominion depends upon the development of her varied natural resources, and the intelligence and industry of her people.

HALIFAX, N. S., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1885.

IMPORTANCE OF COLONIES.

It has sometimes been asserted, probably without due consideration, that Britain would readily grant independence to any colony desiring to set up housekeeping on her own account; but the truth of this statement may well be questioned. Mr. Henry Niall, advocating in the *London Globe* the establishment of an Imperial Bureau of Emigration, supports his advocacy with facts and figures, all of which go to show that colonies, as colonies, are of greater utility to Britain than they would be as independent States, British producers finding among the colonists their very best customers. Moreover, British colonial trade is constantly increasing, and as the colonies are in want of finished manufactured goods, and are in a position to supply the home markets with every variety of raw material, there is no good reason why the trade should not continue to increase in the future.

Fifteen years ago Britain's foreign export trade was £185,000,000; to-day it is but £215,000,000. With British possessions it was £52,000,000, to-day it is £90,000,000. With Australia, it has increased from £14,000,000 to £26,000,000. With Canada, from £5,000,000 to £10,000,000. With the Cape, from about £1,500,000 to £5,000,000.

In 1860, Britain's trade with her colonies and possessions amounted to £190,000,000; in 1883 it rose to the sum of £451,000,000, being an increase of £261,000,000.

These statistics prove that the British colonies are a great source of wealth to the mother country, and that the question of preserving them as integral parts of the empire is of paramount importance to John Bull himself.

The Emigration Bureau, suggested by Mr. Niall, would be of advantage to the colonies, inasmuch as it would supply us with the bone and sinew required in the development of all new countries. It would likewise be an advantage to the inhabitants of the British Isles, as it would at once extend and widen the colonial markets, while relieving the British people from the evils resultant from over-population. Emigration properly directed would undoubtedly flow colonialwise, and an Imperial Bureau, established with the purpose of promoting such emigration, would do more towards preserving the unity of the greatest empire that the world has ever known, than can ever be accomplished by those who appeal to us upon a purely sentimental basis.

COMMERCIAL UNION.

The *Toronto Week* in support of its pet idea, "commercial union between Canada and the United States," says, "it was announced the other day that negotiations were going on between Germany and Austria with a view to a customs union, the occasion being the adoption by France of a protective policy with regard to Cereals. Whatever the result of the negotiations may be, it is pretty clear that neither Germany nor Austria supposes its separate nationality to be dependent on the customs hire. A nationality which depended on a customs hire would be frail and precarious indeed. Yet this argument either openly or in disguise meets every proposal to remove a fiscal barrier which cuts off Canada from the commercial life of her own continent. If practical Reciprocity did not weaken the political division between Canada and the States, why should the abolition of the customs hire, which is simply a full measure of Reciprocity, destroy it?" It is somewhat difficult to understand why the abolition of the customs hire between Germany and Austria should have been seized upon by the *Week* to bolster up its so-called commercial union between Canada and the United States. Two-thirds of the trade of Austria is carried on with Germany, while but one thirtieth of the entire revenue of both Austria and Hungary is derived from customs duties. Neither German nor Austrian finances would suffer greatly by the adoption of such a policy, and a small addition to the direct taxes now levied, would soon raise the revenue to its normal state. Moreover, Germany and Austria are in a position to settle their trade policy without regard to that of other countries. This is not true as respects Canada, for this country is an integral portion of the British Empire, and we could not secure commercial union with the United States without the consent of Britain, and it is doubtful whether the United States would agree to such a union unless we, on our part, consented to raise our tariff wall to the same height as that of the American Republic, so as to exclude British and foreign products. The United States would not consent to a commercial union with Canada by which British goods would be allowed to filter through the Dominion into the Republic; nor would Britain consent to a commercial union in which a tariff wall was raised against her manufactures, while American manufactures were allowed to pass into Canada free of duty. It must be evident to all those who have given this question of commercial union due consideration, that, while Canada remains a part of the British Empire, no such policy can be carried into effect. Those who are now urging it upon the people are well aware of this fact, but there are few of them who have the manliness to throw aside this cloak of commerce, so as to disclose the skeleton of annexation which it covers.

THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE HALIFAX GAS CO.

The City Council have decided to light a portion of the centre of Halifax with the electric light. Their right to take such a step cannot for a moment be questioned, but their treatment of the company which has for years provided the gas light for the city is open to severe criticism. This company had vested rights, and paid into the city treasury about \$5,000 annually, exclusive of water rates; their tax being more than double that levied by the city of Montreal, and threble that levied by Toronto upon a like capital. The Halifax Gas Company were certainly entitled to six months' notice that they would not be called upon to provide light for the centre of the city. This notice they did not receive, and we understand that the company were allowed no opportunity to consider reduction in rates. The City Council should be sufficiently familiar with business to know that a contract per gas lamp throughout the city might pay a company, where the lighting of only the suburbs would not, and that a company which has made provision for the carrying out of the larger contract cannot be expected to fulfil the smaller portion of it at the same rate per gas lamp. There are several other points in connection with this matter of city light which we intend referring to in a future issue.

FRUIT GROWING.

Fruit and tree-culture in Nova Scotia has received a great impetus during recent years, owing to the demand for Nova Scotia apples which has grown up in Great Britain. The valleys of the Annapolis, Cornwallis, and Avon, the northern section of Queen's county, and those portions of Cumberland, Colchester and Pictou, lying contiguous to the Strait of Northumberland, are admirably adapted to the cultivation of fruit, but as yet no steps have been taken by the Government to educate our young men in fruit and tree-culture. Russia has set us an example in this respect, which we would do well to follow. The Russian farmers have not been slow to recognize the advantages of the elaborate experiments which have been made under government direction in the culture of fruit, and the results prove that a like system would be beneficial to the farmers of Nova Scotia. The growing of apples is no more to be learned by intuition than are the intricacies of the law, or the curative properties of medicines. Experience may, and no doubt has, taught many fruit growers valuable lessons, but experience is a dear teacher, and when it can be gained by a short term of scientific and practical study, it may save the fruit-grower many hours of unnecessary labour, and many days of unremunerative toil. The Fruit Growers' Association in Nova Scotia has done good service in the publication and distribution of its reports, but the time has now come when its work should be supplemented by something of a more practical character. The growing of fruit is a paying industry in this Province, but it will take time and educational facilities to develop the industry to anything like its proper proportions.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST SMALL-POX.

From all quarters we hear of precautionary measures being taken to prevent the importation of small-pox from the stricken city of Montreal. In fact the trade of that city has already been materially affected by the dread of infection which prevails on almost every side. In New York it is proposed to quarantine all passengers coming from Montreal. In Boston even the mails are fumigated. New Bedford has gone so far, and has been so indiscriminating as to quarantine vessels from any part of Canada. The government of Ontario has authorized the appointment of inspectors to see that all passengers from Montreal shall either produce certificates of vaccination or submit to vaccination on the spot, and has prohibited the importation of rags and second-hand clothing from Montreal. Halifax is in daily communication with that city, mails come in freely, commercial men bring their supplies of goods unmolested, everything goes on in a happy-go-lucky style, worthy of the French Canadians themselves. When we compare this utter wrecklessness of danger with the extreme cautiousness of other places, we must either infer that Halifax is extremely foolish or that she enjoys a monopoly of wisdom.

CANADA TO THE FRONT.

The Canadian exhibits at the Antwerp Exhibition have received most enthusiastic commendation from French, German, and Belgian papers. The *Belgian Daily News* says: "Placed in the middle of three great nations (England, France, and Germany) Canada maintains its pre-eminence; the Canadian section has become one of the attractions of the international exposition. The exhibition of cereals, minerals, wools, knitting-machines, papers, tapestry, and above all, cabinet-making have been a real revelation." A Rouen paper calls the success of the Canadian exhibitors a peaceful revolution. It is indeed likely to produce great and beneficial results. Not only will it educate the people of Europe as to the resources of Canada, but it will open up to Canadian goods a better European market. Already we learn that Canadian manufactures of agricultural implements and of carriages exhibited at Antwerp have effected extensive sales in England, France, and Belgium. These results ought to inspire the people of this country with a determination to win new laurels at the Colonial Exposition. "Peace hath its victories as well as war."

Next week, we intend to open an Agricultural column, and we shall be glad to receive Communications on this subject from all parts of the Province.