

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, MAY 19, 1985.

LEGISLATION OF THE SESSION.

As the legislative session at Ottawa draws near a close commercial Canada begins to realize more clearly, that for it nothing has been or will be done. In fact, the only measures passed affecting their interests are an ornamental Inspection Act, a tinkered-up measure regarding the stamping of canned goods, and a few other trifles, most of which will only serve to further hamper the trading community of the Dominion. The great question of a Bankruptcy Act, the want of which lies like a nightmare upon the credit of the country, has been shirked if not opposed by the Government in power, while a re-adjustment of tariffs, so as to equalize a little the burdens of indirect taxation, has been flatly refused by them. Trade questions are not in order this session, for difficulties are thickening around the Government, and their every effort is being put forth for some means which will enable them to cling to power. In the Northwest they have a first-class rebellion, which is taking up considerable of their attention, and making heavy demands upon the financial resources of the Dominion, and which is the direct result of their mismanagement of the Interior Department. The C.P.R. is in a hole for funds, and they are powerless to help the road at present, as their own position is little, if anything, better.

Here again the load falls upon the commercial circles of the country, for it is they who are carrying the Company to the extent of at least three-fourths of the \$5,000,000 asked to pay pressing obligations. In fact, every move of the Government in financial matters this year, is in the matter of money contraction, and increasing the financial loads carried by commerce, and this, too, immediately after a time of depression, in which panic has been narrowly escaped. Assuredly such a course will bring troubles to any Government, and the present one at Ottawa is only entering upon a series of them, which we question even the ability of Sir John A. MacDonald to pilot his party through.

With such a mixture of troubles on hand it is natural that commerce must go unheeded, and that such a measure

as the Franchise Bill, meant to give themselves longer power by placing in the hands of the Ottawa authorities the power of controlling the popular vote, should be pushed upon the house with such determined pertinacity, and backed by the ministerial press with threats of force if it is further obstructed.

In Canada we have been living under the hallucination that we had a Government of the people, and for the interests of the people. But we are every day getting fresh proofs that it is fast degenerating into a Government of the politicians and run in the interests of the politicians. If we are to have a Confederation that will be cohesive in its elements, the aims of our Government must be to extend and nurse our growing commerce, and cater for the true happiness of all its people alike. But the whole drift of legislation for the past three years, and especially during the present session, has been to centralize power in Ottawa, where mismanagement and muddling seems to have made its head-quarters. Such efforts must fail in reaching their aim, and instead of centralizing power in Ottawa, is fast arraying the different provinces of the Dominion against each other. Already Quebec finds that its best way of securing what it wants is by a threat of secession, while our Northwestern half-breeds adopt the more forcible argument of the rifle and shotgun, and, according to indications, are as likely to be as successful as the politicians of Quebec. Secession and rebellion seem to be the only arguments that will have any effect upon the present Ottawa Government, and it would be strange if other portions of the Dominion did not soon see this and adopt such arguments. The reason for all this is plain, and it is that the only efforts at cementing our interests have been by force, and by the spoilation of one portion for the benefit of another. Already Canadian patriotism is a thing written and talked about, but scarcely in existence, for the policy of breeding discordance by spoilation has now been carried so far that the different provinces of the Dominion are about as sociable as a mixed sackfull of weasels and fishing hooks.

It may be that with many others in Canada we are entirely mistaken as to the means which should be used to strengthen the unity, if such we may call it, of the provinces of Canada. Perhaps

they are liable to follow the philosophy of the Irishman, who objected to stopping the fight between two of his friends, and argued that the combatants were only "showing their respect for one another," and, if they "kilt" one another they would be friends all their lives after, if they were only allowed to fight it out. Such a theory may work with the discordant elements of Canada, but we fear it would end in a re-enacting of another piece of Hibernian history, known as the "Kilkenny cats." Being gifted with nothing more than the foresight of ordinary mortals, we advise a policy which will bring unity without discordance, and upon terms of equality; and in no way can this be better accomplished than by commercial nurture and trade extension in a manner that will divide their burdens and benefits equally among all classes of the community, and all portions of the Dominion. Scheming so as to hold the balance of electoral power at Ottawa will never agree with such a policy.

CLOSER RELATIONS.

Neighbors are expected to cultivate close relations with each other, if the neighborhood is ever to be of any mutual value beyond close proximity of residence, and seldom has it occurred with families, who living beside each other and keeping a mutual reserve, that they have avoided giving birth and nurture to feelings tending to strife or at least jealousy. What is true with families is true with nations, and history furnishes many instances of this, besides that of the Jews and the Samaritans. Nations which are neighbors must be neighborly, or they can scarcely avoid becoming enemies.

Perhaps the most striking instance of this in modern times is furnished by Canada and the United States. Both countries are young and comparatively undeveloped in their resources, and both are engaged in the same great work of bringing a continent under the influence of civilization. They are undivided by any natural boundaries; they speak the same language; and they are undivided by race prejudices, for both are made up of a mixture of the progressive races of the world. It is only natural that two such peoples should be closely related to be valuable neighbors to each other, and their histories, short though they be, clearly demonstrate this. Until the