

irksome stagnation. A better mood of mind is obtainable by contact with the freshness and sunshine of the country. It is usually assumed that, if the running of Sunday cars were allowed, the men would be overworked, or some of them obliged to leave their employment; both of which results would certainly be objectionable. But if a new liberty were given to the railway co., it ought to be enjoyed only under new guarantees; the condition could be made that the men who work six days should not work on the seventh, under a penalty, payable by their employers, and if necessary another payable by themselves.

The working stone-masons and their employers have happily come to an agreement, which it is said is to subsist for three years. There would be a great advantage if an agreement could be counted on for so long a time. The demand of the carpenters, 25 cents per hour minimum rate, cannot be so excessive as to make resistance to it a matter of life and death. The sooner this dispute is settled the better. Building has received a sufficient check already; it will be very active for the rest of the year if a settlement be made; and considering the nature of the demand, there ought to be no insuperable difficulty in making it.

An executive decision, has been come to, at Washington, excluding Canadians resident on this side of the line, from employment in the United States. The decision is by Acting Secretary Thompson, and has reference to men who, residing in Clifton and Drummondville, Wind or and Sarnia, have been accustomed to cross the Suspension Bridge and work in the Republic. The question is whether a laborer so employed enters the United States under a pre-contract, and the decision, for which if we recollect well there is a precedent in the affirmative. This is an incidental effect of a law intended to exclude laborers from Europe or elsewhere imported under pre-contract; and though the exclusion is a petty business, it would perhaps be useless to complain of it. Meanwhile, American crimpers are carrying off servant girls from Kingston, by a process which has a remote resemblance to kidnaping.

Lord Salisbury does not misunderstand, or effect to misunderstand, the object of the Canadian iron duties. Rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely, the object, he admits, is to help a Canadian industry, without the least admixture of a desire to injure British manufacturers, though, he did not make the obvious reflection that that must be its incidental effect. Lord Dunraven was mistaken in supposing that the object was to affect the United States. Lord Carnarvon ventured to hope that these duties would not affect the question of a subvention to the Pacific Steamship line; and the softening language of the premier seems to attest his good will. But the interested iron trade, in Britain, continues to protest

THE COMMERCIAL UNION DISCUSSION.

In declaring in favor of reciprocity with the United States, without the sting of discrimination against Britain, the Toronto Board of Trade merely did what Parliament, speaking for the whole country, long ago did by statute, without bringing any response. Considered by itself, Mr. Macdonald's resolution will go for nothing; but when regarded in the light of the circumstances that gave it birth, it goes for a great deal. It is an answer to the proposal to form with the United States an arrangement which should discriminate against Great Britain. The second resolution which rejects commercial union for political reasons, follows not unnaturally from the first. The explanation of this line of action is that the members of the Board of Trade are citizens first, and merchants, bankers or manufacturers second. The purely economical view is one thing; its application in the existing circumstances of the country is another. Here a number of citizens, rightly or wrongly, believed that a certain proposal involved the political future of the country, and they said so, objecting to run the risk which they saw in it. It is useless to say that the Board of Trade ought to confine itself to the purely economical view; no one contends that the statesman is bound to do so, and the conclusions of the statesmen are generally founded on the average opinion of the electorate. If a Board of Trade sincerely believes that higher interests than those of commerce are bound up in a particular question, the right of taking the broader view cannot be denied to its members.

The farmers, so far, are inclined to take a merely economical view of commercial union; but after the full discussion, it is probable that their vision will be enlarged. Practically, up to the present time, only one side of the question has been presented to them; they view it as producers desirous of finding extended markets; when they come to regard it as citizens, their views are very likely to be modified. Even in the United States, the political view has always had more or less influence on the decision of reciprocity. Horace Greeley was always opposed to reciprocity, apparently on economic grounds, but the real reason, we happen to know, was a desire to force Canada into annexation. Consul Potter, whose exploits in trying to prevent a limited reciprocal arrangement between the two countries are not forgotten, avowedly had annexation for his object. These two men were representatives of a large class. Is that class now extinct? It is not. Many of them have changed their tactics, seeing that Canada has not been starved into annexation, and now advocate unlimited reciprocity, as the surest means of attaining their end. But whether they take the one view or the other, they place political considerations above commercial.

Among the advocates of the old starvation policy may be quoted a special organ of American manufacturers. The *Textile Record* of Philadelphia, the organ of manufacturers, has come out strongly in opposition to commercial union. "If," says the manu-

facturers' organ, "Canada wants free trade with this country, she can get it once for all by casting in her lot with ours." When Canadians manifest a wish to become incorporated in the Republic, we are told "they will be cordially welcomed;" and the *Record* adds, "we may confidently affirm that they will never secure permanent free trade with us until that movement occurs." A long list of reasons against pursuing the other course is given. Commercial union with Canada, it is objected, would set an inconvenient precedent. "The Canadians are neighbors and friends; but if vicinage and good neighborhood are reasons for engaging in reciprocity with Canada, why not with Mexico? Why not with Cuba? Why not with all the islands to the south of us? Why not with Central America and with South America? Why not, in fact, carry out the precedent and give free trade to all our friends in all parts of the world?" It will be recollected that, under the late president, a series of reciprocity treaties was projected by Mr. Frelinghuysen, but that Congress refused to countenance the ambitious scheme. This fact gives weight to the objections on the score of the local nature of the proposed commercial union. These reasons are political and national; they affect a wide scheme of policy, but the *Record* urges other objections from another point of view. Commercial union would "make Canadian custom houses the gateway of Europe to our market, and Canadian customs officers the interpreters of our laws"; and this is held to involve a surrender by the Government of the Republic of the "control of the execution of the laws which shelter our vast industries and supply our revenues." There would be a flood of importations where the treasury department of Washington has no control, and American laws have no influence. And, here is the strong objection from the American manufacturers' point of view: "We should put our industries at the mercy of individuals who would be as likely to regard them with hostility as to regard them with favor." Undervaluation can, with difficulty, be detected in New York; how could undervaluations and smuggling be prevented in some obscure port of Nova Scotia? And then follows an objection which would find acceptance outside the manufacturers' circle. It is that the fiscal policy of the American Government should be kept absolutely within the control of the American people; an objection which, applied to ourselves, finds a wide echo in Canada. "Our laws," says the *Record*, "are made for our own territory," and it adds the opinion that "to affect to extend their operation beyond our borders is simple folly."

The *Record* may be supposed to feel more strongly than it expresses the purely manufacturers' objections; but in putting prominently forward the political view, it indicates where it believes the greatest strength of the opposition to lie. And in this, taking the nation as a whole, it is probably in the right. In the end, we believe, the political view will prevail, in both countries. If the Canadian farmer gets hold of the notion that commercial union means a change of political connections, the abandonment of old aspirations, he