

It is believed that in the event of the action of the Church of England proving successful, the Presbyterians will follow suit. The collapse of the whole Public School system of the Province must ensue. Instead of uselessly deploring what we may regard as the unwise and unpatriotic action of these churches, it may be well to ask ourselves what would be the great loss involved in a return to the denominational schools, pure and simple? So far as we can see at the moment the injury would be twofold. In the first place, it would be manifestly impossible, and unjust were it possible, to enforce universal attendance of children of school age at church schools. In the second place, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to exercise Governmental supervision over such schools to anything like the extent necessary to insure efficiency in instruction, or its first and indispensable condition, competence on the part of the teachers employed. In a word, the net result must be, so far as we can see, to put it out of the power of Manitoba, and, as a logical consequence, of the other North-West Provinces yet to be formed, to make such provision for the education of all their future citizens as is justly considered indispensable to the success, and even to the safety, of self-governing communities.

THERE are just now, if we are not mistaken, some indications of increase in the number and boldness of those who would seek in absolute free trade with all the world the much needed panacea for Canadian commercial ills. While we do not propose to enroll ourselves under the banner of those who are disposed to advocate in this particular a servile imitation of the policy of the Mother Country, irrespective of circumstances and conditions, we confess that it has often been to us a cause of wonder that amongst the various classes into which those who discuss public affairs are divided on the tariff question, there have been so few ready to take the bull by the horns in this bold fashion. The two chief objections that at once suggest themselves against such a policy of "thorough" are to a considerable degree involved in both the other leading policies advocated. These are of course the revenue and the protection difficulties. The advocates of Imperial Federation and of Unrestricted Reciprocity alike must be prepared to face a very material falling off in the income from import duties. So far as appears this deficiency must needs be made good, in either case, by some form of direct taxation or its equivalent—heavier imposts upon necessaries of life not produced in the country with which the reciprocity is to be had, or in our own land. The effects, therefore, upon both revenue and protection, would differ only in degree. On the other hand, how many of the objects proposed in connection with both policies would be much more effectively accomplished by the free trade plan? As a counter irritant to the McKinley tariff the system would be unequalled. If, as is so strenuously argued, the danger of goods being smuggled across our territory, even under the high tariff now imposed, would be so great that the United States could not possibly consent to unrestricted reciprocity save on condition of the Canadian tariff wall being raised to a level with their own, what would the Great Republic do should Canada decide to throw down her walls to the ground and admit the products of all nations free? Evidently a force of revenue officers as large as the Grand Army of the Republic at its best would hardly suffice to protect its manufacturers and revenues from utter demoralization. As a measure of retaliation nothing could equal it in effectiveness. The National Policy is feeble in comparison.

OUR English contemporaries are, some of them, informing their readers that the Dominion Government is about to inaugurate an assisted immigration movement on a large scale. They learn, probably from some Ottawa correspondent, that as soon as the new Ministry has been formed Parliament will be asked to vote an increased sum for the Immigration Department. The Canadian *Gazette*, a few weeks since, outlined a somewhat elaborate plan, in accordance with which the municipalities in Manitoba and the North-West and the Dominion Government were to co-operate in the work of settling the fertile prairies. The plan was essentially that which has been suggested by Mr. C. H. Mackintosh, M.P., and others, the root idea being that of a loan fund, to be used to enable any North-West settler to bring out a relation or friend, security for the repayment of the loan being taken. The great need of Canada, and especially of the North-West, is men, and any scheme which promises to secure these without

ultimate loss to the Government is worthy of serious consideration and will no doubt receive it. At the same time it will be very difficult to secure the assent of Parliament to any proposal for increasing the sum expended for immigration purposes, so long as the drain upon the population caused by the steady exodus continues. To bring men into the country under such circumstances seems too much like putting money into a bag with holes. If our young people cannot be kept in Canada by any means, it is, of course, better that their places should be, as far as possible, supplied by immigrants, but the exchange is, in itself, rather a poor one. If any means can be devised to make it certain that the immigrants aided will remain in the country, not merely until the debt incurred is cancelled, but permanently, the experiment is worth a trial. But the nature of that security must, in view of past experiences, be such as will bear close scrutiny.

DISCUSSION is once more rife in England concerning the quality of the fighting material composing the rank and file of the army. That the quality is far below that required by any high standard is generally admitted. Mr. Arnold-Foster, in a series of letters to the *Times*, attributes the fact to the inferiority of the recruits who are of necessity being constantly brought in to keep up the numbers to the required limit. The reason assigned for this tendency to inferiority is the smallness of the pay. It is obvious that in these days that must be regarded as a very potent, if not wholly sufficient, reason. The day has gone past when the flower of the ambitious youth of any enlightened country were ready to enlist simply for the glory of wearing the uniform, and the chances of winning glory on the battle-field are now happily too remote to tempt very strongly even the diminishing numbers of those whose tastes lie in the direction of that kind of distinction. A material increase in the pecuniary inducements offered might, no doubt, effect a considerable improvement in the age and physique of those willing to enter the service. But it may be seriously doubted whether, under any terms of payment that could be offered without danger of revolt on the part of the British tax payer, the desired improvement could be brought about in a satisfactory degree. During long periods of peace, especially when they are characterized by a growing dislike to war, and a corresponding tendency to rely upon better methods of settling international disputes, the appeal to the patriotic or the racial spirit loses its power. Apart from such motives there is nothing very attractive in the life of the common soldier for the young man conscious of strength either physical or intellectual. Germany and other nations, where there is less of responsible government and more of arbitrary power, are able to settle the difficulty off hand by a system which does not depend for its working upon the consent of the individuals who are needed as units to make up the mass of the great army. What is to be done by those nations which, like Great Britain, cannot resort to such methods? It is not easy to answer the question, and it will probably become more difficult as the years go on. One thing is certain. It is no longer possible that the method of recruiting now in vogue in Great Britain can fill the ranks with men who will be fair representatives of the vigour and manliness of the race, or who can be relied on in case of emergency to prove themselves possessed of those qualities which have given the nation its proud pre-eminence on the world's great battle-fields, through so many generations. The system is too nearly akin to the employment of mercenaries, and mercenary troops can never, even though composed of natives, be relied on to do the work of patriots. This was strikingly shown during the American Civil War. Not until the Northern armies began to be filled up, under the conscription, with the sturdy citizens who had reputations to maintain and interests at stake, and who fought for their country's unity, did the tide of battle really turn in their favour. No doubt any great emergency, calling out the pride and patriotism of the British race, would soon fill the ranks with the same kind of men who have so often proved invincible in other days, but the cost in life and treasure in training such armies in the presence of the enemy is always fearful. But if the free Britons of to-day will submit neither to the conscription nor to the German methods, what can be done? Perhaps the best way of all will be for her to adopt the plan recommended by the Roman poet for Imperial Rome and so conduct herself that if the day shall ever come when the nations shall fear her less, they may all have learned to love her more for her justice and magnanimity.

"GREATER BRITAIN," of the 29th ult., has a lengthy and somewhat interesting *résumé* of a discussion which has been going on for a few weeks in some of the leading English papers touching a proposal to establish a periodical festival in which all British peoples from all parts of the world would take part. The idea was first broached by Mr. J. Astley Cooper, in *Greater Britain*, in July last. The following extract from the article referred to will explain more fully the nature of the proposed festival:—

The rallying idea is embodied in the coalescence of all the social activities of the several portions of the British dominion into a festival, under national auspices, forming a British bond. In this festival, to be held from time to time in London, where (as Lord Roseberry has said) are the title deeds of the race, a universal British contest, covering all varieties of physical and mental culture, should take place. The generous rivalry would extend to all departments of mental culture, while athletic exercises should have the place to which the habit of the British people, all the world over, entitles them. Simultaneously with this intellectual and physical Olympic competition, an exhibition of the various resources of the British dominions should be held; and in the organization of this department the Imperial Institute would find employment. The whole festival should be planned and controlled by the "Council of the British," of which all the Premiers of the several British Governments would be *ex officio* members, to which other councils might be subsidiary, namely, the Council of the English, the Council of the Scotch, the Council of the Irish, the Council of the Australasians, the Council of the South Africans, and the Council of the Canadians.

The scheme is certainly not lacking in boldness or comprehensiveness. It has been met with ridicule, with query, with partial acceptance, and with hearty approval, according to the various views and temperaments of its critics. Most of those who have thought it worthy of serious consideration have been disposed to regard it as feasible so far as the athletic contests proposed are concerned. But the athleticism is perhaps the very thing which stands least in need of being stimulated at the public expense, and at the same time the thing whose stimulation in the manner proposed would do least to promote the higher end which is or ought to be had in view, seeing that, at the best, a series of contests in running, rowing and cricket, to which Mr. Cooper would have the athletics confined, would have no attraction for very large classes of the most influential citizens in all parts of the Empire. Mr. Cooper, however, in a letter to the London *Times*, holds strongly to the "culture" feature of the scheme, advocating the foundation of national or imperial scholarships of science, arts, literature, and technical education, open to all enfranchised subjects of the Queen, and their families; the examinations for these scholarships to be held simultaneously in different parts of the Empire. We have not space for even an enumeration of the leading features of this ambitious project, still less for a criticism of its details, such as is invited by its projector. We may say, however, generally, that it seems to us that there may be something in it. As a means of drawing closer and perpetuating the bonds of union between the widely separated parts of the Empire it is certainly free from many of the more serious objections which attach to the various projects of Imperial Federation which have occupied the attention of so many loyal subjects of the Empire for years past. One of the chief recommendations of the new scheme is that it would substitute for any formal and artificial bond a purely natural tie, akin, as some of its critics have pointed out, to that which holds together the family whose members have outgrown the restraints by which they were united during the minority of the younger members.

AS we have already observed, most of the British and Colonial writers who have discussed Mr. Astley Cooper's scheme have strongly emphasized the athletic contests as constituting, in their estimation, the really attractive and feasible part of the plan, and this, too, notwithstanding the fact which some of them have pointed out that, in effect, this feature of the scheme is already in existence. We do not doubt that if a comprehensive arrangement for carrying on such contests under such auspices as would make them representative of all parts of the Empire, or, better still, of the English-speaking world, and would at the same time free them from "those twin curses, professionalism and gate-money," which now bid fair to "strangle all healthy out-door competition," the effect of these periodical events in drawing more closely together the remoter parts of the Empire might be considerable. But while we are not disposed to lay much stress upon