

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, FEBRUARY 17, 1900.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

REPLYING to Mr. Davin in parliament on Monday, Hon. Mr. Foster said he had asked Lieutenant-Governor Mackintosh for a complete statement of the accounts and liabilities of the Territorial exhibition. As soon as received the government would take the whole matter of settlement into consideration. This looks more hopeful for the creditors of the exhibition. We believe this matter will eventually be settled by the Dominion, and certainly the government is morally responsible in this matter, as the exhibition was certainly regarded as a Dominion Government affair throughout.

THE Montreal Witness has a cartoon bearing on the recent loyalty resolution in the Dominion parliament. The Witness represents Canada as professing loyalty to "England." The resolution made no reference whatever to England. Canada through her parliament declared her loyalty to the Empire, and affirmed her willingness to make great sacrifices to maintain the cause of the Empire. England, like Canada, is a portion of the Empire. When we speak of loyalty, we intend it to mean that we are determined to uphold our own position as a part of the Empire, as well as being ready to defend the general interests of the Empire elsewhere. This is quite a different thing from declaring loyalty to England.

THE fruit growers of British Columbia have organized an association for the purpose of extending their business next season, particularly in the direction of Manitoba and the territories. We understand it is the idea of the fruit growers that they will be able to further their interests by forming a company to ship their fruit direct to the retail dealers, instead of depending upon the assistance of jobbers. So far as Manitoba is concerned we doubt if the growers will gain anything if they undertake to go past the jobbers. On the contrary, The Commercial is inclined to believe that they will find this course to have been a mistake. If the growers will pack their fruit in good shape and place it in the hands of jobbers in first class condition, they will, we believe, come out better in the end than by going to the small retail dealers. The towns are mostly small in this country and most of the retail dealers can take only limited quantities of fruit at a time. Besides their returns would be slow and unsatisfactory to an association such as the growers could form. They would not be in as good position as the jobbers to look after numerous small accounts.

THE remedial act to restore separate schools in Manitoba was introduced at Ottawa on Tuesday. As explained by the Minister of Justice it provides, briefly, for the establishment of a board of education to control the separate schools; the standard of education to be the same as in the national

schools; Catholics may elect to pay taxes to the national schools, thus relieving them of paying taxes to the separate schools; the schools will be subject to provincial inspectors as to efficiency of teaching; school books may be selected by the separate school board from any now in use in Manitoba or in the Ontario public or separate schools, and the choice is limited to these. The board of education may be appointed by the lieutenant-governor-in-council, but in default of such appointments being made by the provincial authorities, the federal governor-general-in-council will make the appointments. The financial basis—really the most important matter—is on the principle of district taxation for the separate schools, Catholics so taxed to be exempt from contributing to the national schools. The question as to the sharing of the legislative grant with the Catholics is left in an indefinite shape, but the act will assert that the Catholics are entitled to share in such grant.

LAST week The Commercial referred in a brief editorial paragraph to the evident need of greater protection for fur-bearing animals. Since then correspondence has appeared in the city papers demanding better protection for deer, and a good case has been made out in support of the demand. Our game animals as well as our fur-bearing animals should certainly be fully protected. There is no doubt but that the game laws are evaded in a wholesale manner. The noblest of all our game, the deer, should certainly receive the most liberal protection. Evidently a more comprehensive and stringent law is required for the protection of game and fur animals. Our game animals are of great value from the standpoint alone of the attraction which they are to the country, and every effort should be made to perpetuate them.

If the Dominion government were approached now, with the object of securing some relaxing of the quarantine regulations, in the interest of immigration to Manitoba and the territories, we do not see that they could very well refuse. The request made by the Winnipeg board of trade in this matter about a year ago, is really moderate compared with the recent relaxing of the quarantine regulations in the East. The government has permitted the bringing in of cattle in unlimited numbers, in car lots or train loads, merely on inspection. The board only asked that bona fide settlers coming into the country should be allowed to bring in their cattle, simply on inspection by a qualified officer. We have not asked that cattle be allowed to come in for commercial purposes. Surely the government cannot refuse, in the interest of the settlement of the West, what it has already done in the East to aid a subsidized steamship line. As it is now we are practically shut out of our best field for immigration purposes, by these quarantine regulations, while we are receiving no benefit whatever in return for this loss. No time should be lost in pressing this matter again upon the attention of the government, if any concession is to be secured in time to be of any value this year.

THE party spirit is always carried to extreme lengths in Canada, and this session of parliament it seems to have been even more bitter than usual. It is therefore a great relief to find that at least one discussion has been carried on in parliament this session free from partizan narrowness and party strife. We refer to the so-called loyalty resolution, which was moved by a Conservative, seconded by a Liberal and adopted by the unanimous vote of the house. For once there were neither Tories nor Grits in the house, but all were Britons. Narrow partyism was lost sight of for the time in the universal sentiment of love and admiration for the great Empire—the greatest the world has ever seen—of which we form no mean part. This expression from the Canadian parliament has been called forth by the various dangers which have recently threatened the Empire. Looking at it in the light which we have at the moment, the recent threatening aspect of affairs has vastly contributed to solidify the Empire and has given the Imperial idea a great boost both in the mother country and the colonies. The action of the Canadian parliament is in no sense a menace to the United States. The American republic is the last country in the world which Canadians would care to see the Empire come into conflict with. At the same time those of our southern neighbors who have courted the allusion that Canadians were anxious to change their relations to the British Empire, should just make a note of this debate. It might not prove entertaining reading to them, but it would remove the cobwebs from their eyes, or at least the false impression from their minds.

THE agitation in Winnipeg on the subject of civic taxation has again waxed quite strong, and it seems likely that some changes will be made again. When the system of the business tax was substituted for the old plan of taxing stocks of merchandise, it was thought that a great improvement had been made, but it seems now that there is a very strong feeling among a large section of the business people in opposition to the business tax. Some have even advocated going back to the old system. We do not see, however, how any reasonable person can for a moment entertain an idea of going back to the old system. It is quite true that the system now in force has increased the taxes of a number of business men, in some cases to a serious extent; but even after making every allowance for this, the new system is certainly a great improvement on the old plan, and taken all around is more equitable. There are no doubt some inequalities and hardships under the present business tax, and every effort should be made to either remove these, or try to formulate a better system of taxation. But to go back to the old personal property tax, absurd as it is in principle and practice, is not worthy of intelligent men. The feeling seems to prevail that the wholesale dealers are the principal supporters of the present business tax. The wholesale dealers certainly agitated against the old system, but they are not responsible for the working of the new plan. They opposed the old plan because it was working a great injustice to them. The wholesale trade of Winnipeg is the most im-