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**The Journal of Commerce**

FINANCE AND INSURANCE REVIEW.

MONTREAL, FEB. 2, 1877.

**A DOMINION POLICE.**

The Grand Trunk strike, and the serious public inconvenience which resulted therefrom, must be still fresh in the remembrance of the public. It has been generally admitted that the means of suppressing sudden riots in Canada are lamentably defective, and many were disposed to blame the Government for want of vigor on the occasion of the late strike, when those who were disposed to do their duty were coerced by the strikers. The fact is that there is no properly organized force adequate to grapple with such emergencies as the one to which we have referred. There are a vast number of policemen employed in our various cities and towns, quite sufficient for every possible requirement, if they were properly organized. Fortunately we have got about as good a model for the force which is required in the Dominion as it is possible to have. The Irish constabulary has been repeatedly tried in a country where party feeling unfortunately prevails to an extent that we have no idea of, and yet, although the constabulary comprises men of opposite religions, it has never been found wanting when the law and public order required its services. We can hardly

doubt that there will be a general admission that such a force would prove of great public utility, but there may be doubts as to the practicability of securing such a concurrence of public opinion in its favor as to render its establishment possible. If we are correct in our opinion that such a police force would not only be a great boon to the country generally, but to our large cities and towns especially, the experiment would be well worth trying, even if at first there was only a very moderate amount of co-operation on the part of the local governments or the municipal corporations. Already the nucleus of such a force is in existence. We refer to the mounted police of the North-west. The Dominion Government has only to extend that force, improving, perhaps, the regulations under which it is organized, to whatever extent the requirements of the country may demand. We shall not dwell on the subject of legislation. It is not improbable that the co-operation not only of the municipalities but likewise of the Provincial Legislatures may be necessary, but, as we should not advocate anything like compulsion in the employment of the force, we should not anticipate any objection to permissive legislation. There should, in our opinion, be a Dominion police, with the requisite inspectors and sub-inspectors, consisting of a sufficient number of men to supply all our cities and towns, and perhaps counties, with whatever number of men they should be willing to pay for. At present the number of men employed in the cities of Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, London, Kingston, Brantford, St. Catharines, and other towns, is very considerable, but, owing to want of organization, they are of little value in case of disturbances such as those we have recently experienced. One great advantage which would be gained by the employment of such a force would be the absence of local feeling on the part of its members. The men would not be in the employment of any particular corporation, but in that of the Dominion Government, and would be, in a great degree, if not altogether, free from local sympathies. The great advantage to be gained would be the existence of a large body of men who would be available at the shortest notice for service in case of need, and who would be under thorough discipline. In cases of occasional absence special constables might be temporarily employed in the city or town denuded of its regular police. Such occasions would be of rare occurrence, and of course the cost would have to be defrayed in the same way as if the militia were called out. It seems to us that, in a coun-

try where there is no standing army, it is indispensably necessary that a force organized and paid for the preservation of order and the enforcement of the laws should be so utilized that, instead of being scattered over the whole country in small detachments, under local control, it should be centralized and thus rendered thoroughly effective. If such a force were organized it would probably be expedient to have a small reserve at some central point where the rest of the force could be sent periodically in detachments for drill and other instruction. The scheme which we suggest would involve little, if any, additional expense, and would, we are persuaded, add materially to the means at the disposal of the government for grappling with difficulties that may occur at any moment, and for which we are at present quite unprepared.

**RECIPROCITY.**

Among the subjects which underwent the consideration of the Dominion Board of Trade, at its late meeting was what we may well term the hackneyed one of reciprocity. It was the one in which doubtless the visitors from the United States took the greatest interest, and we notice that since the meeting some influential journals on the other side of the line have referred to the importance of an early settlement of the question. Past experience leads us to doubt very much the expediency of any further discussions of the reciprocity question by Boards of Trade, either in the United States or Canada, but especially in Canada. There is no occasion whatever to instruct the public in this country with regard to the advantages of reciprocal free trade in our natural products, and it is far from improbable that there would be a very general concurrence of opinion in favor of the extension of the principle to certain branches of manufactures common to the two countries. The question has long since been ripe for diplomacy, and it is vain to imagine that any good could result from the appointment of a joint commission of the character that has been suggested. Of course the present time is most unpropitious for considering the subject. We are on the eve of a complete change of government in the United States, and it will be a considerable time, whatever may be the result of the existing controversy, before the new government will be in a position to decide whether it will re-open negotiations or not. We earnestly hope that there will be no more such blunders as the last. We refer to the mission of the Hon. George Brown, regarding which