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CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

TOPICS—	PAGE
Premier Mowat's Letter	19
The Cabinet Reconstruction	19
Canada and Newfoundland	19
The Manitoba School Question	19
A Free Trade Propaganda	20
Assisted Immigration	20
The Material of the British Army	20
An All-English-Speaking Festival	20
An Informal National Council	20
A Modern Terror	21
PATRIOTISM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES	21
THE TRAVELLERS. (Poem)	E. M. Phelps. 22
LONDON LETTER	C. L. J. 22
ROAMING IN CLASSIC MASSACHUSETTS.—III	Fidells. 22
THE TWO LOVERS. (Poem)	Lockhart Thomson. 24
REVIEW OF THE GRAND JURY SYSTEM	Anon. 24
PARIS LETTER	Z. 24
THE RAMBLER	25
CORRESPONDENCE—	
Art Sales	R. A. D. 25
Curtail Civic Expenditure	A. H. Toiler. 25
HIS OWN GIFT. (Sonnet)	Matthew Richey Knight. 26
ON SPURIOUS WORKS OF ART	26
ART NOTES	26
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	27
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	27
LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP	28
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED	29
SCIENTIFIC AND SANITARY	30
CHESS	31

All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the
editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to
any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

PREMIER MOWAT'S letter to Mr. MacKay, on the occasion of the Annexation meeting in Woodstock, though to the unsuspecting, non-partisan mind the most natural thing in the world, is being made to do yeoman service in relation to the great party and trade issues now under discussion in the Dominion. Assuming that Mr. Mowat takes the same view of the ultimate effect upon our national relations of Commercial Union which Mr. Blake so graphically expressed in his celebrated manifesto at the close of the last general election; assuming, further, that in Mr. Mowat's mind, as probably in that of Mr. Blake, Commercial Union and the Unrestricted Reciprocity advocated by Messrs. Laurier and Cartwright and their followers are interchangeable terms, so far as results and tendencies are concerned, the logical conclusion is easily reached that Mr. Mowat's views on the subject of the trade policy desirable for Canada are at variance with those of the accredited leaders of the Canadian Liberals in the House of Commons. But are not these two pretty large assumptions? Perhaps not. That is a question which only Mr. Mowat himself can answer, and we see no probability that he will think it necessary to gratify public curiosity in the matter at present. Mr. Mowat's letter is, however, valuable to the student of Canadian affairs from another point of view. It helps to mark a distinction which we do not remember to have seen clearly brought out, and which is, nevertheless, of much importance to those who would get an unbiased view of the political situation as it is at the present juncture in Canada. In fact, as it seems to us, this distinction is that which would afford to a disinterested onlooker the clue to what must otherwise seem somewhat incomprehensible in our politics, as represented by the two great parties. In order to understand this distinction it may be helpful to compare for a moment the utterances of Mr. Mowat at Woodstock with those of Mr. Laurier at Boston, a week or two before. It will be observed that the Leader of the Dominion Opposition is no less pronounced than the Ontario Premier in declaring that no trade arrangement which

would interfere in the slightest with the autonomy or dignity of Canada could be entertained for a moment. And yet there is a subtle but unmistakable difference in the ring of the two speeches. Wherein consists the essence of that difference? It will be found on close analysis, we venture to say, in the difference that exists in their respective views as to what constitutes Canadian dignity and loyalty. In this difference will be found the explanation of what must otherwise seem puzzling to the outside student of Canadian affairs. With Mr. Mowat and many men of his way of thinking, in the Liberal ranks, and with the great majority of Canadian Conservatives, loyalty to Canadian interests and loyalty to British interests are convertible terms. With many men of the Laurier and Cartwright stamp, the "Canada-First" idea has become so far paramount that with them the question of loyalty and of national self-respect is synonymous with that of what is proper and dignified and serviceable for Canada, considered in herself, the views and interests of the Mother Country being quite a secondary consideration, and one with which loyal Canadians are not bound to concern themselves to the same extent or with the same anxiety, Great Britain being deemed quite capable of looking after her own interests. Not, they aver, that they love Britain less but that they love Canada more. We do not now undertake to decide which of these is the right attitude of mind for a colony standing in the relation in which Canada now stands to Great Britain. We simply refer to the point as explaining what must be otherwise hard to understand, viz., how it is that while both parties and almost all classes are loud in their professions of loyalty to their country, professed loyalists of the one class are continually accusing the other of disloyalty. Were both particularly anxious to settle the question and wipe away the reproach, the first thing to be done would evidently be to agree upon a definition of Canadian loyalty. This settled, the rest would be comparatively easy. But there is reason to fear that the settling of the question of definition would not be easy. In fact, the views of individuals would probably be found to vary inversely with the number of removes, if any, at which they stood from their ancestors on British soil.

THE weeks are passing rapidly and the promised reconstruction of the Dominion Cabinet, about which we at one time heard so much, is apparently as far off as ever. It is not surprising, therefore, that even loyal supporters of the Government are becoming restive and beginning to wonder whether the task of making the necessary changes has proved too formidable for the prentice hand of the Premier. There can be, we suppose, no doubt that the demonstration made a few weeks since in favour of Mr. Haggart indicates that whoever may be sacrificed to the political exigency, he is not to be one of the number. Nor can it be disguised that this result was, in some degree, a surprise to many who had not been accustomed to think of the Postmaster-General as one of the strong men of the Ministry, either morally or intellectually. This demonstration may, it is not unlikely, have had something to do with the feeling of uneasiness which seems to be showing itself in certain unexpected quarters. On the other hand, it may be said, not without force, that the very fact of refusing to make haste when others are impatient is in itself sometimes a proof of strength. That talent for delay was in fact, as is well known, one of the secrets of Sir John A. Macdonald's wonderful power as a tactician and manager of men. It is quite likely that Mr. Abbott thinks that in his present difficult circumstances he cannot do better than to take a leaf from his predecessor's book. But the time for the re-assembling of Parliament will soon be near, and nothing political is much more certain than that unless the Ministry is materially strengthened in the interim its position will not be an enviable one during the coming session.

THE spectacle presented just now in the attitude in which Canada and Newfoundland stand to each other is anything but edifying. Their petty quarrel has culminated, so far as Canada is concerned, in the imposition of a retaliatory duty on fish and fish products imported from

Newfoundland. The power to do this rests, under the Tariff Act, it seems, in the hands of the Government. The conduct of our island neighbours has certainly been unfriendly and exasperating. Whether the retaliatory measure is wise or dignified, is not quite so clear. On the protectionist theory that liberty to sell goods in the markets of the country is a special favour, to be paid for in kind by the party having the goods to sell, the Dominion has the right to do as it pleases, and Newfoundland has no grievance. From another point of view the effect of the imposition of the tariff will be an interesting study. The fishermen of Nova Scotia have been complaining, it seems, that the importation of Newfoundland fish is operating injuriously against them, while no corresponding advantage is derived by them. It is said, for instance, that the heavy importations of Newfoundland fish made into Halifax by Hon. A. G. Jones has had the effect of reducing the price of fish in Halifax market by fifty cents a quintal. This means, being interpreted, that under the newly-enforced tariff the consumers of this fish in Nova Scotia will have henceforth to pay fifty cents a quintal more for this article of food, in order first to help the Dominion Government punish the islanders for their misconduct, and secondly to enable the home fishermen to secure a better return for their labour. Some tens of thousands of dollars will be transferred from the pockets of the fish eaters of Nova Scotia to those of the fish-catchers, by an Order-in-Council at Ottawa. As a measure of retaliation the tariff will probably fail to bring our obstinate fellow-colonists to terms, and may help throw them into the arms of the United States. Their more likely course will be to impose retaliatory or prohibitory duties on Canadian products which they have been accustomed to use, with a view to diverting their trade into other channels. It would not be surprising should the quarrel end in complete non-intercourse and permanent estrangement between the two peoples, to the great injury of both. Let us hope that wiser counsels may soon prevail.

THE effects of the decision of the Supreme Court in the matter of the Manitoba School Act seem likely to reach much farther than those who were the chief movers in obtaining that decision, and possibly much farther than the judges who pronounced it, contemplated, though the decision itself, as a purely interpretative one, could not of course have been modified by any consideration of embarrassing consequences. It would, nevertheless, be a strange result of the anxiety of the framers of the Manitoba Constitutional Act to secure a Separate School system for the Roman Catholics of the Province should the result prove that in providing for such a system they have rendered it impossible for that Province to have, under the Constitution, any arrangement for free, undenominational Public Schools, and compulsory education, such as are now considered indispensable to the welfare and progress of every free state. The possibility, we might almost say probability, of such a consequence is now suggested by the action taken at Winnipeg a day or two since, on behalf of the Church of England in the Province, to quash the city by-law which provides for levying the school assessment for the year. The success of the application, if pressed, seems a foregone conclusion, for the evidence of Bishop Machray makes it apparently very clear that the case of the Church of England is quite as strong as was that of the Roman Catholic Church. If the rights of the one as enjoyed prior to the Union are prejudicially affected by the Public School legislation of the Province, so, manifestly, are those of the other. The injury in both cases is precisely of the same kind—compulsory taxation for the support of a Public School system, the effect of which is to compel either the abandonment of the voluntary denominational schools previously supported by the church, or payment of a compulsory tax for the support of a system the people of the churches are unwilling to use, in addition to the heavy expense necessary for the voluntary support of the church schools. There seems, unfortunately, little hope of compromise, as nothing less than religious teaching of a distinctly denominational character will satisfy either church, and denominational teaching in schools supported from public funds and controlled by the state is impracticable.