

ed as the Government with regard to coming tariff changes for weeks before they come into operation and will govern themselves accordingly.

Montreal City Bill. The bill now before the Quebec Legislature to amend the Charter of the City of Montreal, contains a number of radical changes some of which are wise and some of which are wiser than others. The clause which gives joint stock companies and corporations the right to the municipal franchise through their president or general manager, as authorized by resolution of the directors, is interesting as establishing a principle, but cannot be regarded as of great importance so far as practical results are concerned. For instance, the vote of a great corporation like the Montreal Light, Heat & Power Company, the Montreal Street Railway Company, or the Bell Telephone Company representing many citizens and millions of capital will be precisely equivalent to the vote of the poorest man who pays water rates. A rather remarkable clause gives the City of Montreal the right of laying out streets in suburban municipalities. While the end in view is eminently desirable, it would seem that the only logical way of arriving thereat, would be either the annexation of the interested municipalities, or the creation of a Greater Montreal Corporation in which the tax-payers of the whole Island would be represented. Perhaps the most important clause in the Bill is this:

"Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the city shall have the full and entire ownership of its streets, lanes, thoroughfares and public places and no person, firm, syndicate, company or corporation shall exercise any franchise, rights or privileges, either under or over the same without having previously obtained its consent."

This if enacted and lived up to, would be the Magna Charta of Montreal citizenship. Unhappily there is no finality about Quebec legislation; and if this clause be enacted this session, there is no guarantee that the Legislature at its next session will not confer unlimited powers granting street privileges to some promoters, "notwithstanding anything to be contrary in the Montreal City Charter." This word "notwithstanding" is the bane of all Canadian law. For many years the Dominion Civil Service Act has carried wise and good restrictions upon appointments to the Civil Service; and every year since the Act has been in force, the Supply Bill has contained scores of items providing salaries for all kinds of people, with the proviso, "Notwithstanding anything in the Civil Service Act of Canada." There was something good, after all, in "the laws of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not."

The Laymen's Missionary Movement.

There is much of hope for the churches in the enthusiasm with which the Laymen's Missionary Movement has been received. A Christian Church void of the missionary spirit is a dead church, and by the missionary spirit we do not mean the proselytising spirit. It is no reflection upon the clergy to say that the success of a movement of this kind is apt to be proportioned to the zeal they can awaken among the laity for the work. There are many good people who question the utility of foreign missions; but these doubts do not prevail to any great

extent among those who have had the opportunity of studying their results at close range in India and elsewhere, whether the observers are Christian or non-Christian. There is, however, a more general impression that missionary work like charity should begin at home; and this seems to be in accordance with the spirit of the divine injunction to the apostles to go into all the world and preach the Gospel "beginning at Jerusalem." Foreign missionaries must often find themselves confronted with difficulties created by reports which reach their people of the moral standards prevailing in so-called Christian lands. The Toronto Congress seems to recognize this truth by the clause in its resolution which reads: "We recognize the clear duty of the churches of Canada to evangelize all those in the Dominion, or who come to our shores, who have not been led into the Christian life; and also to provide for the adequate preaching of the Gospel to forty millions of souls in the non-Christian world."

The British Budget

Old age pensions and increased naval estimates have brought about a deficit of about £13,000,000 in the British budget; and now comes the question, Who is to pay the piper? Income tax by every tradition of English history must bear its full share. Licenses will be willing to play second fiddle on this occasion; and there are rumours that a land tax may help the governing classes to a realizing sense of the situation. The announcement that the Austrian budget provides for the building of four "Dreadnoughts" is a direct and open menace to England and to the peace of Europe. Austria has little use for a navy, except as Germany's ally. It forces the hand of the Imperial Government which is lukewarm on the subject of naval expansion and it immensely strengthens His Majesty's Loyal Opposition, which is anything but lukewarm on the subject. The situation is one of acute financial interest; but the people of the United Kingdom and of the Overseas Dominions will rise to the occasion. It is a time for all sorts and conditions of men to make personal sacrifices, to ensure the integrity of the Empire and the safety of the Englishman's home. If we know them, they will make the sacrifices cheerfully. The experience is disciplinary but perhaps the discipline will do us all good.

Poles and Wires.

Protests of the Union of Canadian Municipalities have been turned down by a vote of 15 to 5 in the Private Bills Committee of the Quebec Legislative Council, the committee having endorsed the Canadian Light & Power Company's bill, allowing poles to be planted and wires extended through the municipalities in the Montreal district without municipal consent, except from Westmount.

Another practically disregarded protest was the warning of Mr. Charles Gaudet, representative of the Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association, who emphasized the dangers of increasing the tangle of overhead wires in Montreal city, and talked of the necessity of underground conduits. He pertinently reminded the councilors that three or four other power companies were before the Legislature for equal rights, with the consequence that there would be more poles and more overhead wires.

Mr. Gaudet further pointed out that as the city