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BRITISH POLITICAL SITUATION.

THE United Kingdom is once more at the outset of a bitter political campaign. All negotiations between the party leaders have admittedly failed and a general election within a few weeks seems inevitable. It is generally believed that by the middle of December the battle will be lost and won. The issues will be much the same as in the last election, except that the budget question will, of course, come up in a different form. The situation points to a radical reorganization of the two chief political parties, amounting almost, in fact, to two distinct coalitions. There is a general feeling that many sacrifices of class interests and personal prejudices and even convictions regarding minor issues, will be called for in order to save the British constitution from irretrievable injury. Statesmen will work and vote together, who never worked and voted together before. From a business point of view it is regrettable that the country should be again plunged into the turmoil of a general election so soon. This, however, is part of the price of individual liberty and national independence. It is earnestly to be hoped that this time the war will be decisive. The immediate dissolution of Parliament rumoured during the last few days has been averted; but nobody imagines that it can be postponed for more than a very short time. There is no agreement or compromise and no prospect of agreement or compromise between lords and commons; or between the leaders of the too numerous political parties. To make a clear cut issue on the constitutional question it may be well worth while to drop the question of protection in this campaign. One reason for the failure of the last election to provide a stable government, or to settle any issue whatever, was that there were too many issues involved.

THE NAVAL POLICY.

WE think that the rumours to the effect that the Dominion Government will, on account of the result in Drummond and Arthabaska, modify its naval policy radically, may be safely dismissed as idle conjecture. The suggestion that Canada's ships should be used solely for the defence of the Canadian coasts is ridiculous. The real fighting for the defence of the coasts of Canada will in all probability be done in the North Sea. The Mediterranean squadron is intended for the defence of the British coasts as much as is the Channel fleet. Be-

side, suppose the British Admiralty were to take such a grotesque proposition seriously, and leave to the Canadian navy the protection of the Canadian coasts, how long would the defence hold out? The suggestion is too silly for serious consideration. That all signs fall in political stormy weather is true; but it would be poor tactics for the Laurier Government to show the white feather because the first fight on the naval issue has gone against them. Unless we are greatly mistaken in Sir Wilfrid he will nail his colours to the mast and if there is any change in his naval policy, it will not be in the nature of a concession to the ignorant prejudices stirred up by political opponents.

ANNEXATION OF WESTMOUNT AND OUTREMONT.

OUTREMONT seems to be as firmly if not as violently opposed to annexation to Montreal as is Westmount. Of course it is only a question of time when all the municipalities of the Island will come into the city. Meanwhile municipalities which are being well administered and are in many respects in a better condition than Montreal must be expected to view with some apprehension the prospect of being taken into the city without ample guarantees that their permanent progress will not be interfered with. The people of Westmount are quite justified in assuming that the rapid growth of that city in population and wealth is largely due to the fact that they have been independent and have had ample opportunity to work out their own salvation, without unsympathetic interference, and without being handicapped by the graft which for so many years retarded Montreal. In many respects Westmount is a model for Montreal's imitation, and it is hardly likely that it will be annexed in defiance of the will of its own people. They should, however, realize that their manifest destiny is annexation. Westmount will soon be entirely surrounded by the greater city and without opportunity for further expansion.

HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.

ON Tuesday morning a delegation representing the Montreal Board of Trade and others on the invitation of the Harbour Commissioners, accompanied the latter upon a trip of inspection of the harbour works. They were most favourably impressed with the improvements which are in progress.