

ment of Canadian military matters is really to be given over to the professional soldier whose interest in Canada is but secondary and transient, we are evidently entering upon a new stage in our colonial development and it is as well that we should understand the fact. What does the change foretoken? If we are to spend half a million upon the Esquimaux fortifications at the request and under the direction of the British military and naval authorities, what is the relation of the transaction to the old maxim about the connection between representation and taxation?

Vaudreuil has been lost to the Government by a substantial majority. As is usual in such cases, there is a wide difference of opinion, or at least of statement, as to the causes which led to the election of the candidate of the Opposition. The journals friendly to the Government, or many of them, attribute the change to Mr. Laurier's alleged declarations in regard to the Manitoba school question. The Opposition papers, on the other hand, and if the interviewers may be trusted, the successful candidate himself, assert that tariff-reform was the one great issue. The fact which is, we believe, shewn by the returns, that the Liberal gains were at least as great in the Protestant as in the Catholic districts, support the latter contention. The fact, if it be such, is of no little importance, as going far to confirm the prevalent belief that the revulsion against the National Policy is widespread and genuine, and that the people will refuse to accept any promises of revision which are made by a Government whose members declare, as Mr. Foster and his colleagues have uniformly done and as some of them emphatically did but the other day at the Kingston banquet, that whatever changes may be made, the principle of protection will be maintained intact. But the question before the country, as there is every reason to hope, to be settled at the next general election, if not before, is not that between a higher or lower protective tariff, but between protection and tariff for revenue as a fiscal policy.

Touching the Manitoba question, it is to be regretted that the Liberal leader has not spoken in less ambiguous terms. His Delphian responses, both in the House and on the Vaudreuil hustings, have not sustained that reputation for courage and straight-forwardness for which we have been disposed to give him credit. True, some of the Government papers have done him injustice in representing him as having expressed himself on the latter occasion as emphatically in favour of Federal interference to restore Separate schools to his compatriots in Manitoba, the fact being, so far as we can gather from any reports of his speech which we were able to see, that he said at Vaudreuil just what he said in the House, viz., that the only thing which could

justify Federal interference would be satisfactory proof that the present Manitoba schools are Protestant schools. Mr. Laurier knows, of course, that the contention of the friends of the Manitoba Government is that the schools are neither Protestant nor Catholic, but secular. What, then, does he understand by Protestant schools? No doubt some of his co-religionists would maintain that secular schools are, ipso facto, Protestant, seeing that it is a dogma of the Catholic faith, or at least a teaching of the Catholic clergy, that public schools should not be secular, but that religious instruction should form a part of their daily routine. Be that as it may, Mr. Laurier knows pretty well what both the law and practice are, under the present Manitoba School Act, and must have formed his own opinion on the point. Should he not, as leader of a political party, state that opinion for the guidance of his followers? The hypothetical and oracular form of expression may do very well for a class of opportunist politicians, such as Mr. Laurier sometimes vigorously denounces, but a statesman who has the courage of his convictions should not leave his position on such a question open to doubt or misrepresentation.

Referring to "a statement by Sir. Charles Tupper to the effect that the most active members of the Imperial Federation League in England are mainly intent on levying a large contribution on the revenues of the colonies for the support of the army and navy of Great Britain," Lord Brassey writes to the Empire to assure its readers that the Federation League was established for a larger and nobler object than that suggested by Sir Charles. "It was," he says, "established to bring the Mother Country and the colonies closer together and to unite them by the bonds of mutual affection and goodwill, while also seeking to form political ties, which should associate the colonies more directly with Great Britain in the control of a common imperial policy and to furnish a permanent guarantee against the risks of separation." Lord Brassey, speaking as Chairman of the Committee to whose report Sir Charles Tupper alludes, goes on to explain and defend in a few words the plans for "the pooling of resources for the purposes of mutual defence" which were formulated by that committee, and to disavow the existence of any desire on the part of any members of the body to see colonial funds expended for the benefit of the Mother Country. For our own part, while Imperial Federation has always seemed to us an impracticable dream, we have never seen any reason to suspect its advocates in Great Britain of selfish or sordid motives. On the other hand, as we have not hesitated to say upon occasion, it has always seemed to us somewhat unreasonable on the part of Sir Charles Tupper and other Canadian promoters of the movement to hope that the colonies could share in all

the advantages, without bearing any portion of the burdens of the federation, save those already assumed in the construction of public works and in making of certain provisions for local defence, which were certainly not undertaken from Imperial motives and could not avail much for Imperial as distinct from local purposes.

This unreasonableness, as we have often pointed out, was particularly manifest in the proposal that has been persistently put forward from the Canadian side, but has received little or no encouragement on that of British Federationists, that the people of the Mother Country should, as a part of the compact, consent to tax their own food for benefit of the Colonies. Mr. Gladstone's emphatic declaration, the other day, puts an end to all hope of any such arrangement so long as a Liberal Government rules, while repeated declarations of Lord Salisbury and other Conservative leaders make the case almost equally hopeless, so far as that party is concerned. It is, therefore, evident that the Canadian advocates of the scheme must either withdraw their preferential trade proposal or range themselves in futile opposition to the views of their British associates in the movement. Withdraw the trade feature and recognize frankly the fairness and necessity of the "pooling of resources for the purposes of mutual defence," and how much vitality will be left in the Canadian advocacy of Imperial Federation? Is not that the question which will, in effect, have now to be faced? We say nothing of the incongruity which will suggest itself to some minds in the idea that under Federation the colonies might still regard themselves as being levied on for "the support of the army and navy of Great Britain," whereas it is clear that Great Britain would no longer possess an army and navy, for these would have become the property of the Federal Empire, in whose councils the colonies are supposed to be fully represented. Lord Brassey's letter suggests a fact of which we were not before aware, though that is perhaps the result of our own remissness, viz. that there must be a serious want of harmony in the Committee whose scheme is under discussion and of which Sir Charles Tupper was himself, if we mistake not, a member. This adds another to the mountainous difficulties which stand in the way of Imperial Federation.

THE MCCARTHY RECEPTION.

In point of numbers and enthusiasm the demonstration in the Auditorium last week must have been very gratifying to Mr. McCarthy and his friends. The numbers might be accounted for on the ground of curiosity; the enthusiasm must have a deeper meaning. It is not easy to determine the political significance of the event. Was it simply a tribute to the ability and worth of the man, as popularly estimated? Was it an outcome of the admiration called