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CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

TOPICS—	PAGE
The Situation	243
An Optimistic View	243
The London Election	243
Anti-Bonus Legislation	243
The Voters' Lists	244
Getting on the Roll	244
Is the Plank there?	244
The Upper Canada College Question	244
The Beet Sugar Industry	244
What does he Mean?	245
A Remarkable Strike	245
REORGANIZATION OF THE CABINET—VII. Nicholas Flood Davin, M.P.	246
"NOT LANCELOT NOR ANOTHER." (Triplet)..... Helen Fairbairn	246
PARIS LETTER	Z
OLD NEW-WORLD TALES—THE EXPULSION OF THE ACADIANS—II.....	247
Pierce Stevens Hamilton.	247
WHAT CHAMPLAIN DID AT MONTREAL IN 1611	248
Alchevist.	248
WHIP-POOR-WILL. (Poem)..... Basil Tempest.	249
THE RAMBLER	249
CORRESPONDENCE—	
Repeal of the Franchise Act..... J. C.	249
Canada's Future..... John Holgate.	249
Bermuda as a Health Resort—II..... F. E. Galbraith.	250
J. Henderson.	250
HORACE: ODES, B.I., 9	250
ART NOTES	250
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	251
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	252
LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP	252
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED	252
READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE	254
SCIENTIFIC AND SANITARY	255
CHESS	255

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.

ON another page a correspondent takes exception very courteously to certain views that have from time to time been expressed in these columns touching the Canadian situation. If we make a few observations by way of reply it is not because we object to friendly criticism, or wish to take advantage of the editor's privilege of having always the last word, but because the subject itself is at the present moment the one subject which above all others demands consideration and discussion in the Canadian press. We may observe, in the first place, that Mr. Holgate seems to have somewhat misunderstood our views in regard to one or two points treated of in his letter. He speaks, for instance, of our "conclusion that the remarkable success which the Government at the capital has experienced . . . has established the fact that the people of this Dominion refuse to be coaxed or coerced into annexation," etc. What we meant to say and, we think, did say, was that the result of the bye-elections shows that the people of the Dominion refuse to accept reciprocity with the United States, however desirable, at the cost of tariff discrimination against the Mother Country. We object to the other way of putting it because we have never been convinced, even by the logic of Mr. Blake, that unrestricted reciprocity would necessarily lead to annexation. On the contrary the arguments of those who maintain that international free trade would tend to destroy whatever annexation feeling may exist in the country have always seemed to us the more cogent, inasmuch as it is well known that such feeling has its origin almost exclusively in the desire for better trade relations and not in any preference for the political system of our neighbours. The question does not appear to us to be one of annexation or non-annexation, but one of what is consistent with duty and honour in our relations as a colony to the Mother Country. We are free to confess that a chief source— we might even say the chief source—of our anxiety in view of the present situation of our country is the fact that, as it seems to us, the process of annexation by piecemeal is even now constantly going on to a debilitating and dangerous extent, in the exodus of so many of our young men, the bone and sinew of our country, to swell the population of the United States. Nor is the extent

of the evil and danger measured simply by the number of those who leave us, considerable as that number is. The fact that in many cases these young men, and many who are no longer young as well, gradually become enamoured of the Republic because of the better facilities it affords for "getting on in the world," and exert a powerful influence upon the relatives and neighbours whom they have left behind, in the direction of annexation, is, in our estimation, another important factor in the situation. We are well aware that this is not always the case. Many of our expatriated countrymen remain loyal to Canada, and would gladly return should opportunity offer. There is no pessimism in looking facts fairly in the face, and no lack of patriotism in stating them frankly as they are. We quite agree with our correspondent in hoping that some honourable way out of the difficulty may be found. It is the duty of our statesmen to seek and point out that way. We would gladly find it, if we could, in either Imperial Federation, or an Imperial Customs Union, or both combined. But for reasons which we have often given, and which we have never seen satisfactorily answered, we are unable to believe that either is attainable, or would bring the desired relief.

NO doubt the Dominion Government, now that all hope of "the re-establishment of reciprocity as it existed in 1854" has vanished, are seriously considering the situation and will announce their new policy before the close of the session, or at farthest at some early day. We cannot believe that they will content themselves, we are sure that they cannot long satisfy the people, with a policy of *laissez faire*. Now that they have a strong majority in both Houses they will be expected to prove themselves equal to the situation and to show the courage of their convictions. True loyalty is undoubtedly a loftier sentiment than the desire for material benefits, but it can never serve as a substitute for it. Men cannot live by bread alone, but they cannot live without bread. No more can a young nation grow strong without convenient markets and extensive commerce. We have little doubt that the crucial test that will in the near future be applied by the electorate to the two parties will be the merits of their respective policies as promising escape from industrial and commercial embarrassment and entrance upon a new era of progression. We hope to see a great extension of our trade and intercourse with the Mother Country and with all the world, but none the less do we believe that nature has decreed that our business interests shall always be closely bound up with those of the continent on which we live. Nor do we despair of the overthrow at no very distant day of the artificial barriers which the perversity of politicians and the selfishness of combinations have erected between the two countries. Powerful forces on the other side of the line are even now moving in this direction. The feeling of the better classes, the intelligent Christian thinkers of the nation, is in favour of free and friendly intercourse, and the intelligent discussion which the question is now receiving on both sides of the border cannot fail to accelerate the day of commercial freedom. Can it be doubted that it is the part of the broadest and truest patriotism, as well as of the soundest philanthropy, for the good people of both countries to do all they can to hasten the day? We would not have our people "look to Washington," but we would have them not cease to look to the millions of good citizens who are to be found across the border, as intelligent and broad-minded as are to be found in any land, and hope for the day when their growing influence shall cause better counsels to prevail at Washington.

PUTTING one's self in the place of one's neighbour, so as really to see the question in dispute as he sees it, is the hardest of all moral achievements. It is so hard that it is doubtful if any mortal man ever fully succeeds in doing it, and it is no uncommon thing for good and conscientious men to fail egregiously. This bit of not very fresh moralizing is suggested by the concluding act of the London election. For many years we have been used to hear the name of Judge Elliot, of London, mentioned with the highest respect by all who knew him.

He has undoubtedly had the reputation of a righteous judge. Far be it from us to insinuate that, in so far as conscious intentions are concerned, he does not still deserve that appellation. And yet it may well be doubted whether a truly thoughtful and candid man could be found in the ranks of either party, who has followed the proceedings in the case in question, who can believe that if, all other things being the same, the effect of Judge Elliot's decision pronounced the other day would have been to give the seat to Mr. Hyman, instead of to Mr. Carling, that decision—opposed as it is to that of so many learned judges in the higher courts—would have been given. And this seems to us all that it is necessary to say in regard to this vexatious case at present.

THERE can be no doubt, at least we have none, that the bonusing system which has been so much in vogue of late years in some of the municipalities is an evil of some magnitude. In violation of all sound economic principles, in accordance with which local as well as national industries should be left to follow the laws which regulate the location as well as decree the survival of the fittest, they tend to turn the attention of those who have or seek to establish industries of any kind from the consideration of natural facilities to a search for artificial aids and stimulants in the shape of tax-exemptions and bonuses. The rivalry thus engendered between contiguous towns or villages is by no means a healthy competition. The fact that the principle involved is, so far as we can see, almost precisely the same as that which underlies every system of protection, does not make it any the less inherently a false principle, or one which tends to injustice and loss. But when it is proposed, as is now being done by Mr. Balfour's Bill to amend the Municipal Act in this particular, to take away from the municipalities the power of bestowing such bonuses, there is some danger of infringing upon another sound principle, viz., the natural right of a community, small or large, to do what it will with its own. Is there not some reason to fear that the Provincial Government and Assembly may carry paternalism in local legislation too far and deprive the smaller municipalities, which are but miniature models of itself, not only of their natural liberties, but of a large part of the educational benefit which is one of the chief recommendations of self-rule, whether in local or in provincial affairs? Is not the Provincial Government, in placing such restrictions upon the freedom of the municipalities, treating them on a small scale to a touch of the same centralizing policy to which they have from time to time so strenuously and effectively objected on the part of the General Government? Would it not be better to leave the municipalities to work out such problems for themselves, even though the education might cost them something? The only answer to such a contention is, perhaps, that the question involves the rights of minorities which the Assembly is bound to protect, seeing that every bonus voted by the majority of ratepayers in a town or city is to a certain extent equivalent to a confiscation of the property of the minority, some of whom are often thereby compelled to contribute from the proceeds of their own toil to the prosperity of their rivals in business. But even this argument sounds suspiciously like that which has been on certain memorable occasions urged on behalf of Dominion interference with what were afterwards declared to be Provincial rights, as, e. g., in the matter of the Rivers and Streams controversy. But it is idle, we suppose, to attempt to apply either scientific or logical laws to practical politics.

TAKING exception to some of our criticisms of the Dominion Franchise Act, our correspondent "S." last week described the manner in which two revising officers, whose methods have come under his personal notice, perform the duties assigned to them. It will, we hope, be clearly understood that we make no personal charges of wrong-doing against the revising officers appointed by the Government. The simple fact that they are appointed by the Government, which is a party most deeply interested in the result, is enough, as it seems to us, to condemn the system. As a natural consequence of the working of the