

THE WEEK.

Vol. XIII.

Toronto, Friday, July 31st, 1896.

No. 36

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Current Topics.

Mr. Laurier's Domestic Policy.

The Liberal Premier has been announcing his programme. The topics relating to domestic matters dealt with by him are:

1. A Reform of the Tariff. On this point Mr Laurier says: "I declare on this occasion that we will proceed with caution in order not to injure the established interests. Such is the programme of the Liberal party. We are to have a session on the 18th of August, but it will be very short. We will vote the budget and nothing more. There will be no legislation. We will provide for the public expenditure, nothing more. The changes in the tariff will be deferred to the new session, which will be held in January or February. Until then what shall we do? We shall communicate with the managers of industries, manufactures, etc., and together we shall elaborate a fiscal policy which will be of a nature to lighten the burden of taxes which lie upon this country."

2. The interests of Agriculture. "It is not for any Government to raise the price of your farm products, but we can reduce the price of what you must purchase for your consumption. That is what we want to do. We can also facilitate the sale of your products by establishing rapid transit and facilitating communication with European markets, and this we will do before long."

3. Development of the North-West. "What we want to do is to increase the population and thus decrease your expenses, and to attain that end we shall develop the North-West."

4. Settlement of the Manitoba School Question. "I only want six months in which to settle the question, and, if I am not mistaken, before that time is over the question will be settled without exciting the prejudices of anybody and rendering justice to whom justice is due." This domestic programme, if carried out, will put Mr. Laurier on the topmost pinnacle of success. He will, if he succeeds in his anticipations, earn the undying gratitude of Canada.

Mr. Laurier's Foreign Policy.

As to our foreign relations Mr. Laurier speaks as follows: 1. With England—
"Another plank of our platform to which I draw your attention is our relation with Old England.

Our party has always been represented on the other side as a party of rebels, who would try to break all colonial ties. I am of the French race, like yourselves, but I do not hesitate to declare that I am a loyal subject of Her Majesty. This is a free country, and it is because we are a free people that we are loyal subjects. Fifty years ago our fathers went to arms to fight and die for their liberty and their rights. If I had been living then I, perhaps, would have done the same, but I am not living in 1837. We are now in 1896, and if we have the rights of all British subjects we also have the same responsibilities. But from a commercial standpoint our relations might be better. The English market is open to all of the nations of the world on equal footing. It might be possible to obtain from England a preferential treaty which would be exclusively for our products." 2. With the United States—"As to relations with the United States, I am of the opinion that they have not been as they should have been. For nearly thirty years the Governments have not treated each other very cordially. We propose to try and establish amicable relations with them like friends, and not like enemies. There are some people who are of the opinion that such a step would not be loyal to England. I will not admit that one nation's friendship with another is a sign of hostility towards a third nation. If we succeed in establishing friendly relations with the United States we will revive the reciprocity treaty of 1853-56, the era of good times for the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario." Here we perceive an attempt to hunt with the hounds and run with the hare. No man can serve two masters. English preferential trade and American reciprocity can never agree. If Mr. Laurier can reconcile these two antagonistic principles of commerce he will do wonders. We hope in his attempt he will not approach our neighbours across the line hat in hand. They have only a *quid pro quo* to offer us, equivalent to what Canada can offer them—not one more valuable to Canada than the offer Canada can make to them. Canadian diplomatists have hitherto discovered that American negotiators commence by urging annexation as the price of their favours. Mr. Laurier will not find them changed in that tone. It is the basis of all their proposals. The question is not one of loyalty to England. It is one of the separate existence of Canada as a nation. Mr. Laurier will find it very hard to preserve Canadian autonomy and while doing so to secure American reciprocity in trade.

The Spectator's Article on Canada

In the London Spectator of the 18th July there appears an article on Canada which is one of the kindest and most sympathetic we have read for many a day. Principal Grant contributed to the National Review an article headed Canada and the Empire. It is delightful to read it. The Spectator, taking that article and Mr. Laurier's loyal and patriotic attitude as its theme, concludes its sensible remarks on Canada in this fashion: "In view of these facts and of the striking recent manifestations of loyal feeling with which Mr. Laurier has decisively associated himself, our Canadian fellow-subjects may be assured that no attention is paid here to such