

THE LATE KAISER.

Had the late Emperor of Germany lived till the 22nd inst., he would have completed his 91st year. He had sat on the Throne of Prussia 27 years, and for 18 had enjoyed the Imperial dignity he was so well fitted to wear.

There would have been nothing remarkable in the close, at that great age, of a life so eventful and so full of honor, had not the attendant circumstances been such as to throw around the event a peculiar sadness. The rigidity and infirmity of his venerable consort—the Empress is in her 77th year—contribute in some degree to this; but its more marked feature is the condition of the son, who is so well fitted to fill his father's throne with prudence, dignity and honor.

It can scarcely be said that the Emperor's death makes any marked change in the European situation, as is shown by the quietness of the stock market; and, if his successor's life should, by good fortune, be spared for any length of time, his well-known love of peace may serve to obviate hostilities for some time yet.

It is not unpleasant to mark that the event has awakened the latent chivalry of the French character, and that some French papers comment on it in a generous vein.

William the 1st was a son of Frederick William 3rd, of Prussia, whose reign witnessed her disastrous overthrow at Jena, and of the noble-hearted Queen Louisa, who elicited the brutality of Napoleon's nature when she visited him to implore more favorable terms for her unfortunate country, after the battle of Friedland. The young Prince was 18 years old at the battle of Waterloo, and accompanied the armies which consummated the overthrow of the universal tyrant.

After the accession of his childless brother in 1840 he became heir apparent, and was at different times entrusted with important governments and commands. Thoroughly imbued with the spirit of a soldier, he was, in the turbulent times of 1848, regarded with dislike and distrust by the revolutionary and liberal elements, and was, indeed, generally looked upon as an absolutist of the deepest dye. There is, indeed, no doubt that he was, even at the time of his own accession in 1861, thoroughly impressed with the divine right of sovereigns, to which he gave expression by placing the crown on his own head at his coronation. But he probably inherited a high-minded spirit of chivalry from his mother. His loyalty was conspicuous during his brother's life-time, and his counsel and advice were frequently sought and freely given. A blameless private life, a dignity equally devoid of coldness and affection, a considerable share of real kindness of heart, clear-sightedness and resolution in diplomacy, perfect coolness in the field, and an unflinching solicitude for the honor and welfare of the Fatherland, soon procured for him as devoted a attachment on the part of his people as monarch ever enjoyed. Almost the last little trait recorded of him—his apology to those around him on his death-bed for giving them trouble—suffices to show how true a gentleman he was.

Such a character admits of no doubt of the simplicity and sincerity of his belief in the Divine favor, and of the reality of his gratitude to Heaven for the splendid victories achieved during his singularly glorious reign. We say glorious very advisedly, for it must ever be borne in mind that the rightful position of the Teutonic Race in Europe was at stake and ever menaced by the intrigues of France. The grand object of unification would have gone far to justify much more doubtful measures than were ever sanctioned by the Kaiser, whose policy was, on the whole, simple, straightforward, and resolute. To no man, since Arminius routed the Augustan Legions, does Germany owe so much, except to Prince Bismarck, and even he could not have accomplished what he did, had he served a master less faithful, stanch and determined.

It is possible that the late Emperor's ideas of Divine Right may have been somewhat modified by his own act of dispossessing the King of Hanover, but it may well be conjectured that that very expedient, if not a perfectly just course, was due rather to the instance of the Chancellor and his determination to aggrandize Prussia, than to a mind so loyal as that of the Prussian King.

The latter half of the century has been marked in Europe by two events which have essentially and beneficially changed the balance of power—the unification of Italy and that of Germany; and in each case a popular resolute and straightforward King was supported by a Minister of phenomenal determination and ability. History can scarcely show two more honest, and at the same time able monarchs, than Victor Emmanuel of Savoy, and William of Hohenzollern, nor two more consummate Statesmen than Camillo, Count Cavour, and Otto, Prince Von Bismarck.

THE MILITIA SERVICE.

Those who take in the Militia Service of the Dominion the interest which every Canadian ought to take in it, ever look forward as the new year waxes, to the appearance of the Blue Book, with the hope (sometimes not disappointed) of finding some reform, some improvement, or some justice done, which the initiated know how to extract from the indications of what appear to the general mere matter-of-fact lists of names. For we congratulate the Department on the happy idea of including the Militia List in the Blue Book. *En passant*, we must couple with this congratulation our regret that the list still remains untabulated, and is deformed by the crude-looking stringing out of company after company in the old archaic form.

We have watched the list for two years in the full expectation of seeing remedied a case of injustice, or—let us say—over-sight, which it is high time was rectified as far as it can be.

When the Red River Expedition was fitted out in 1870, the Surgeons to the Ontario and Quebec Battalions respectively, were Alfred Codd,

W.D., and J. L. H. Neilson. Dr. Codd was the Senior, and had been previously Surgeon of the Ottawa Field Battery.

Mr. Neilson, soon after the disbandment of the two Battalions, was appointed to the Quebec Battery, of what is now the "Regiment of Canadian Artillery." He is now a *Surgeon-Major*, with seniority of the 8th April 1881. Dr. Neilson's service has been continuous—almost, if not quite, without a break—and, so far as he is concerned, he is an officer every way worthy of the promotion he received, not at all out of due course.

Dr. Codd accompanied the disbanded force back to Canada, but only remained unemployed about three months, being appointed to the reinforce expedition sent up in October, 1871, on account of the Fenian raid on the Hudson's Bay Fort at West Lynne, the return force having been paid off in Toronto, in July. The reinforce expedition was incorporated with the two companies of the old force left at Winnipeg, and became a Provisional Battalion, which remained on active service till 1875 or 1876. On the organization of the School of Mounted Infantry, Dr. Codd was appointed to it as Surgeon, and now, extraordinarily as it seems to us, stands on the list of *Surgeons*, with the seniority only of the date of that appointment, the 15th August, 1885, his seniority in the Ontario Rifles, 1st May, 1870, being thus entirely ignored, to say nothing of his previous seniority in the Ottawa Field Battery. If the first only were allowed him, he would stand at least seventh on the list of Surgeons, probably two or three higher, for we are not acquainted with the date of his appointment to the Ottawa Field Battery. As it is, he is the 92nd on the list of Surgeons. This is a case in which we confidently look to see justice done by Dr. Codd's speedy promotion to the rank of Surgeon-Major.

CIVIC REFORMS.

The Local Parliament being now in session, we should have expected that the City Council would have submitted a Bill amending the present Civic Act, with the view of remedying some of the many defects that practice has demonstrated to cause unnecessary friction in its operation. A Bill has in fact been introduced to consolidate and amend the City Charter, which embodies many most commendable features; but some of the reforms are too sweeping, and savor too much of a desire to introduce Ring Rule into Civic affairs, to make the passage of the Bill at all likely. The proposition to increase the Mayor's salary to \$2,000 per year will hardly meet the views of the rate-payers; neither will they grow enthusiastic over the idea of a salaried Board of Aldermen, empowered to manage Civic affairs, under the supervision of the City Council, which is to meet occasionally for that purpose. The bungling work in connection with the City Hall contract is bound to result in heavy financial loss to the City, and the over-burdened tax-payers are not likely to favor any Bill that will largely increase taxation, and deliver the City into the hands of a ring, with all the attendant corruption. The Civic Franchise Act should be amended so that tenants, monthly or otherwise, who pay a certain rental, should be entitled to vote. At present, under the lien law, the landlord has to pay the taxes, which he in turn, if possible, adds to the rent of his tenants. Of course, many tenants gain a vote through the tax on their personal property; but where this is not the case, they should be entitled to vote on a rental qualification. The extending of the Franchise to tenants is simply an act of justice, and this session of Parliament should not be allowed to pass without the Act being so amended as to provide for their rights. Where the lien law applies there is no possibility of the City losing the taxes, and it is therefore most unnecessary to keep up the present qualification for voters. We refer to the necessity of having all the taxes paid up thirty days before an election. This qualification is unnecessary and unjust, results in the disfranchisement of thousands of our best citizens, and throws the elections into the hands of the fitmen and the payers of a paltry poll-tax. If a change is not soon made here, the tax-payers are bound, in the long run, to suffer severely.

Amongst the minor points needing attention, is the present law prohibiting the extension of the water supply into new districts, unless the rates collected in the first instance shall equal 6 per cent yearly on the cost of the extension. In the western districts of the city there are hundreds of families who now obtain their water supplies from shallow wells or open springs. Should an epidemic unfortunately break out, it would certainly spread with terrible rapidity through these sections. Then again, they have no fire protection, and the want of water supply causes many would-be builders of homesteads to seek more central localities. If they petition for water, a survey and estimate is made, and that is generally the last of the matter. In these cases it would be the part of wisdom to extend the water, as the impetus thus given to the building up of the locality would soon result in a large profit on the outlay. In other cities the water pipes are laid in newly-opened streets in advance of settlement, but in a very short time the streets are lined with dwellings, and the taxable wealth of the city largely increased. By all means let this foolish 6 per cent guarantee on the water extension be repealed. Then again, the city is in great danger from fire. We have one of the best, if not the best, fire departments in the world. We refer to the men, and not the apparatus, as there is not a reliable steam fire engine in the city. Our firemen deserve better treatment than they have hitherto received, and should at once be supplied with one or two of the latest improved steam engines. These are a few of the points that occur to us where reforms might be introduced, but nothing less than an earthquake will ever rouse our Aldermen to a sense of the city's requirements.

A correspondent of the *Herald* urges that 200 or 300 copies of the new City Charter be printed, in order that the citizens may be enabled to take full cognizance of the matter, before the measure is passed. We fully endorse this proposition, and emphatically add, that it is a matter in which the rate-payers should be on the *qui vive* at once, and make their full influence felt.