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An Opposition Policy Wanted.

The country is now in excellent temper to listen to any proposition of a new policy that will increase the immigration to Canada from Great Britain, and at the same time keep our people from wandering to another fold. A vast deal of denunciation of the trade policy of the present administration has been let loose on the country, both in Parliament and by the press, based on the last census returns; but it is difficult to detect in it all any intelligible suggestion of measures that will make the showing of the next decade markedly ahead of the one just closed. That the showing was inaccurate, we firmly believe; but, however that may be, it is not at all likely that another enumeration will be made before 1901, and for purposes of comparison and calculation the last official returns must be accepted as correct. MR. LAURIER'S followers should come squarely before the people and state definitely what they propose. Are they in favour of a reduction of our tariff towards the British free trade system, or would they like to see the wall built still higher, in the footsteps of the recent action of the United States? If the former, are they prepared to make direct taxation a plank in their platform, or is the national expenditure to be cut down to balance the reduced income from customs? Is reciprocity wanted with the United States, and if so what basis and measures of exchange do they advocate; and is there any likelihood of getting that nation to agree to their wishes without placing Canada at its mercy, or subjecting her to a degree of humiliation that would arouse national spirit even in the most abject sycophant in the Dominion? Is a fiscal union with the other portions of the Empire desired, and a higher tariff on foreign goods? It is, of course, granted that the Liberal party are perfectly honest in their belief that the country is going to the dogs; why proclaim the disease so loudly to the world without naming distinctly and in detail the remedy they propose to administer if the *vox populi* gives them a chance? To come before the people of Canada now with a clear and temperate statement of their trade policy—apart entirely from all other issues—would wonderfully strengthen the hands of the Opposition,

and the issues could then be discussed and fought over in a sensible and business-like way; until that is done there is little chance of sensible Canadians forsaking the known and tested frying-pan for the unknown and ominous-looking fire.

The War-Scare in Europe.

People who look with fear on the prospect of a war in Europe need not be filled with special alarm on reading the sensational reports that have been cabled over during the past few weeks. An examination of the political state of that continent in the light of its principal newspaper organs shows nothing whatever of a nature tending more closely to hostilities than has periodically occurred during the past twenty years; not only so, but the situation is far less strained than it has been on many occasions during that period. M. DE BLOWITZ in a recent exhaustive article on the subject sums up by predicting an uninterrupted reign of peace until the death of the present Emperor of Austria, when he thinks as general war will occur. He gives no tangible arguments in favour of this latter statement, and at the best it is mere conjecture. The recent exhibitions of the extraordinary state of military efficiency to which Germany and France have attained will go far to inspire much wholesome respect for each other, and a painful certainty of the excessive suffering, expense, and loss of life that must follow a hostile declaration. Every great war of the last half century—except the struggle in the Crimea—has been attended with a great actual disparity between the contestants; none more so than the Franco-Prussian war, in spite of the nominal equality of the two nations. No such disparity exists to-day. In every respect, except physique, the armies of France are now equal to those of Germany; the manœuvres of the former just concluded have shown the existence of marvellous efficiency in all branches of the service, winning the admiration of all foreign officers who witnessed the operations. But this has not been attained without an enormous expenditure, plunging the country into debt to such an extent that the condition of her finances has more than once of late been thought so serious as to become the subject of special articles in leading European reviews, by men prominent for their astuteness on questions of national finance. This fact, coupled with the well-known deplorable state of the Russian exchequer, tends strongly towards the continuance of peace, especially as these two nations have been closely drawn together of late. In Germany, the strength of quiet patriotism that pervades all classes, and the general prosperity and active measures of reform that have been developed under the present Sovereign, constitute to a certain extent a guarantee of peace; there are no internal cancer-spots which demand an aggressive foreign policy to divert the attention of the people.

Russia and Britain.

The recent operations in the vicinity of the Dardanelles by both Russia and Britain seemed to imply a renewal of the war-scare; but, when calmly examined, they do not appear to warrant any grave apprehensions. That a huge empire, like that of the Czar, with its enormous population and correspondingly great army should be for six months in the year completely shut out from all water communication with the European world is an anomaly, her acquiescence in which has often puzzled students of history. As a party to the treaty that enforced this seclusion, the irregular

manner the Czar has adopted to get out of the scrape is the only thing at which umbrage can well be taken. Closed by treaty, opening should be solely by consent of the powers who signed it; instead of which sufficient pressure was brought to bear on the Sultan—diplomatically aided, no doubt, by France—to induce him to authorize the passage of the Russian vessels. Had such a thing happened a century ago, a general war would have been the immediate result; but the world is wiser to-day, and the great powers of Europe are not disposed to interrupt their national progress and risk their reputation—if nothing else—in a struggle with a gigantic military organization for what is not much worse than an irregularity. The action of Great Britain in its temporary occupation of Mitylene was simply a counter-movement to Russia; a mere intimation that there are islands near the entrance to the Dardanelles which could be seized and used as a base of operations for closing the Straits by any power possessing a strong naval force. There is not the slightest probability of England taking any further action unless sinister movements on the part of Russia rendered joint operations by the Great Powers necessary to preserve the balance of power in Europe. The surprise generally expressed at Turkey's leniency to her old enemy had, however, the effect of extracting an official communication from her declaring her foreign policy to be unaltered; but it is improbable that any great faith will be put on this announcement. If the unexpected should happen, we have the satisfaction of knowing that our fleet in the Mediterranean is big enough and ugly enough to blow both Russians and Turks out of the Black Sea whenever it chooses, thanks to the able and energetic policy of Lord Salisbury's Cabinet.

Prize Competitions.

We may state that the answers and MSS. received for the Question and Literary competitions are being examined as rapidly as possible, and we hope to be able to notify the successful contestants in a very few weeks.

A Brilliant Number.

The coming Christmas Number of the DOMINION ILLUSTRATED will be the most magnificent holiday souvenir ever issued in Canada. Splendid supplements, beautiful engravings, charming stories, sketches and poems will embellish this number. In literary features and artistic arrangement it will prove a source of the deepest pleasure to all. It will surpass the Christmas issue of last year, which was so heartily endorsed by the best critics throughout Canada.

Our Public Men.

It is interesting to note that of the 213 men who are now sitting in the Canadian House of Commons, all but two were born under the British flag. Seventy-five were born in Ontario, 66 in Quebec, 41 in the Maritime Provinces, 14 in Scotland, seven in Ireland, six in England and two in the United States.

The oldest member is Mr. Bourassa, of St. Johns, Que., who is 78 years of age, and has been a representative of the constituency of St. Johns since 1854. The youngest M.P. is Dr. Leger, of Kent, N.B., who is 25 years of age.

Of the Parliament which assembled in 1867, after confederation, there only remain ten members in the present House. These are:—Bechar, Bourassa, Hon. M. Bowell, Sir Richard Cartwright, Daoust, Geo. Sirion, Sir Hector Langevin, Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, Hon. Thomas McGreevy and Hon. David Mills. No less than 69 members were elected for the first time in March last.

More than half of the total number of seats are contested, and as there are 49 constituencies in which the majority was under 100 votes, the existing representation will probably undergo a great change before the House assembles again.