

## Prominent Topics.

### Tariff Reform in Great Britain.

The tariff reform policy of the Unionist party in the United Kingdom has been outlined authoritatively by the Birmingham Post. What is proposed is essentially a revenue tariff with incidental protection on all goods that are not considered raw material. Beyond the free list, five per cent. is to be imposed on partly manufactured, ten per cent. on nearly completed and fifteen per cent. on completely manufactured goods. Foreign wheat is to be taxed two shillings per quarter (six cents per bushel) with a preference to the colonies. Flour will pay a higher rate and bacon and maize will be taxed. The estimated revenue from the tariff would be from £16,000,000 to £20,000,000. It is perhaps rather an advantage from a tariff reform point of view that the campaign will be a short one. The English manufacturer is intensely sensitive on the question of what constitutes raw material, and the free-traders will conjure up bogies in this connection which have no terrors in the countries where protection is in practical operation. All that can be hoped for between now and the middle of January is to get the country committed to the General Principle. The details of the tariff will take time to develop.

### Tax on Street Vendors.

The \$200 tax on street vendors is a big tax, but it is a small business. Granting that in certain localities some of them make themselves a nuisance by excessive bawling, they unquestionably are of valuable service to a large part of the community. Then the tendency in Montreal just now seems to be to put all kinds of obstacles in the way of people of moderate means making an independent living. In London the street hawkers are simply indispensable to the system of food distribution. If they were suppressed for a fortnight, thousands of people would die from starvation. To a large proportion of the street vendors of Montreal, a tax of \$200 is prohibitory. We regard it as a most unjust, unwise and tyrannical impost. Our expiring City Council seems to be doing many things for the new council to undo.

### Pernicious Literature.

The managers of the chief circulating libraries in England are to be congratulated upon their determination to refuse to circulate books which by reason of personally scandalous, libellous, imoral or other disagreeable contents are likely to prove objectionable to any considerable section of their subscribers. The publishers of this class of literature denounce this action as an attempt to create a literary censorship. Anything approaching to a literary censor-

ship is to be deprecated, because in these days neither the Bible nor Shakespeare would be allowed to be published without expurgation if they were new. But even a literary censorship would be a lesser evil than the one the librarians are attempting by united action to suppress. Through the medium of the circulating libraries bad books are being introduced into homes. By bad books we do not mean books incidentally objectionable to Mrs. Grundy, but books the whole object of which is to appeal to and stimulate bad taste. To make the movement succeed, continued united action will be necessary.

### Reforms for United States Courts.

"I do not doubt for one minute that much of the lawless violence and cruelty exhibited in lynchings is directly due to the uncertainties and injustice growing out of the delay in trials, judgments and executions thereof by our courts." Such is the frank admission of President Taft regarding a state of affairs that has done not a little, some think, to augment emigration from the Western States to the Canadian West. Further, the President says: "The expedition with which business is disposed of, both on the civil and criminal side of English courts, under modern rules of procedure, makes the delays in our courts seem archaic and barbarous." He, therefore, recommends legislation providing for the appointment by the President of a commission with authority to examine the law and equity procedure of all federal courts.

### Revolver Play by the Police.

The police managed to effect an arrest on Tuesday of a prisoner of no great importance by the process of shooting an innocent by-stander, who happened to be the Swiss consul, and the dean of the consular corps in Montreal. Is it not bad enough to have thugs and thieves and fools generally, carrying revolvers in Montreal, without allowing the police on ordinary duty to have such dangerous playthings in their possession? For a very short time the London police were allowed to carry revolvers but it was soon found that the burglars followed their bad example and the practice was forbidden. Not one man in a hundred thousand has any legitimate use for a revolver. It is one of the deadly curses of this continent and should be suppressed without delay.

### Dominion's Finances.

The financial statement of the Dominion for the month of November, shows a total revenue of \$8,748,923, an increase of \$1,880,935 over November of last year. For the first eight months of the current fiscal year the revenue has been \$64,656,009, an increase of \$9,541,272, or at the rate of nearly \$15,000,000 for the whole year.