

THE CANADIAN ELECTIONS AND THEIR RESULT.

BY J. W. RUSSELL.

THE recent Liberal victory in Canada resembles the overthrow of an established order rather than one of those periodical changes which we look for in the ordinary working of party government. From September 17, 1878, until June 23 last the Conservative party ruled the Dominion. At no time in that period, except during the past year, had there been an opposition strong enough to prevent the Conservative leaders from imposing their policy upon an obedient majority in the House of Commons. During a part of their eighteen years' lease of power a partial acquiescence in the protective system, which had given political control into the hands of the Conservatives, had begun to spread even among the ranks of their opponents. In the general election of 1887 the Liberal leader promised that the protective tariff, the so-called "National Policy," would not be interfered with in the event of his success; and ever since then some concession more or less necessary has been made to the cry of alarm raised against a too sudden disturbance of protection. Questions of emotional patriotism, radiating from the feeling of attachment to the mother country, had been dexterously interwoven in the web of beliefs and practices which had secured Conservative success; and, rightly or wrongly, these questions had on more than one occasion exerted a decisive influence in the exigencies of party struggle.

The causes which led to the defeat of the Conservatives, as well as the change of Canadian policy resulting from it, are eminently worthy of notice. Standing midway, as Canada does, between the democratic federalism of the Republic and the limited monarchy of Great Britain, interest must increase in the contemplation of her commercial, industrial, and political aims.

Americans cannot be indifferent to the growth of an English-speaking power on their northern border, though, in recent years, they may have viewed its progress with mixed feelings, whose dominant tinge has been imparted by the attitude of Canadian Toryism. This election opens up to them a possible change of view.

The two main issues of the contest—tariff reform and the Manitoba school question—have for some time received a considerable share of public attention. They touched essential factors in the young life of the Dominion, and had compelled discussion of a strenuous and exciting character. The vigor or languishment of national industry, freedom or bondage in the expression of electoral opinion, the letter of the Constitution against its spirit—these were the broadly opposed meanings which the campaign presented to the Liberals; on the other hand, the Conservatives stood for the maintenance of protection, opposed any change supposed to involve commercial dependence upon the United States with its corollary of political dependence, and advocated the coercion of Manitoba in restoring the system of separate schools which had been abolished by that province in 1890.

In 1878 a Liberal Government, under the premiership of the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, was defeated on the protective issue, and a tariff averaging thirty-five per cent. on dutiable imports displaced a revenue tariff of seventeen and a half per cent. The fiat had gone forth that Canada was no longer to be flooded with the manufactures of the United States, and a nation industrially independent was to be reared on the basis of protection. The new order of affairs started auspiciously, and for a few years seemed to justify itself. At the same time, the expenditure of large sums of borrowed money on great public works, the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the land speculations resulting therefrom, added a fictitious volume of prosperity with which protection was exclusively credited. New lines of manufacture sprang up, and the enthusiasm of a people which had apparently found industrial deliverance supported the political party which had wrought all this good. As business prospered, the opposition to the new tariff seemed increasingly futile.

Between 1887 and 1891 the Liberals changed their policy to “unrestricted reciprocity” or “commercial union” with the

United States, on the ground that free access to the markets of the United States was more desirable than all other commercial advantages. This policy gained many adherents, but was checked and discredited by its alleged political consequences. It seemed possible of realization only by the making of a common protective tariff between Canada and the United States as against the rest of the world. This accomplished, what would inevitably follow? Commercial union, it was claimed, could only be a prelude to political absorption; and the mere thought of such a result was enough to change the storm centre from tariffs to treason, from the discussion of economic issues to the problem of national existence. Suggestive inferences were drawn from the German Zollverein, which paved the way for the German Empire. Discrimination against Great Britain was charged, and truthfully, against the proposed change; and at the general elections of 1891 it was decisively rejected. The Liberals then returned to their former advocacy of a revenue tariff.

In the meantime, a day of reckoning had come in the application of a test whose validity could not be gainsaid, and which comprehended all minor issues of fact and policy. The census of 1891 showed a dishearteningly small increase of population, the whole Dominion having added but 508,000 to its inhabitants during the decade of 1881-91—a smaller increase than that of the single State of Minnesota during the same period. This revelation was conclusive, and the Conservative party irreparably injured by it. It was vain to argue in support of a system under which more than 1,000,000 Canadians, native and foreign-born, had been expatriated to the United States; and no explanations or comparisons could reconcile the facts with any hope of success. There were, indeed, subordinate proofs of failure. The coal and iron industries had remained practically stationary; the richest mineral deposits were undeveloped; the shipping interest, formerly so prosperous, had declined nearly a half in twelve years; and many industries which had started well had been wiped out by competition in a narrow market. But it seemed unnecessary to give subsidiary proof when the census had given the final and conclusive one. The recently won Liberal success, in so far as it related to the tariff question, naturally followed from the publication of the census returns, and from the business depression which has since continued. The people had given the national

policy a long and fair trial, and nothing could hide or palliate its failure.

Whatever may be said as to the relative importance of the two issues, there is no doubt as to which more deeply excited public feeling. The Manitoba school question strongly stirred the fires of racial and religious prejudice. The French and English-speaking elements of Canadian nationality confront each other in proportions naturally conducive to a powerful rivalry, heightened by traditions of hereditary enmity; and it has taken expert political management and the growth of mutual toleration to gain the comparative harmony which has thus far prevailed. The French Canadians are, politically, loyal to Great Britain and to the federal pact under which they live; but they are also passionately devoted to their racial development and their religion. The Pope has nowhere more faithful spiritual subjects; they have been called the most Catholic community in the world. The school question imposed upon them a severe test—a course of action in which religious subserviency and civic duty contended for the mastery. The legal and technical details of that question are of little interest to American readers, and with its salient points they are already familiar. The upshot of the long struggle in the courts was a decision of the Imperial Privy Council, which in effect, did not finally decide, but referred the question back to the Dominion Government with the result of its introduction as an issue in federal politics. Manitoba was ordered to restore the separate schools, and replied in a vigorous refusal; the Government tried to pass a remedial bill and failed, after which it appealed to the country to endorse its policy of coercion. In doing so its chief reliance was upon the Catholic hierarchy; and the well-known mandate of the Quebec bishops, commanding all the faithful in that province to support the government, was deemed a weapon of such strength and edge as nothing could resist. This unwise course occasioned the greatest surprise of the election, and forty-seven members of the House of Commons, out of a total of sixty-five in Quebec, were returned in direct opposition to their spiritual guides and in support of their eloquent fellow-countryman, the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, the Liberal leader. This unexpected revolt has given new hope and meaning to the national life and progress. Hitherto considered the least enlightened and independent portion of the Dominion, Quebec has

"stamped her strong foot and said she would be free," and has given a memorable rebuke to arrogant clericalism. The distinct functions of church and state have been splendidly emphasized just when and where the lesson was most needed ; and the vexatious question of priestly interference in politics, which has had a continuous existence in Canada since confederation, will never again exert its former power of disturbance. The school question in all probability will, as a result of the election, be removed from the federal arena and referred to the Manitoba government, which has promised to deal generously in the matter. Mr. Laurier has promised the appointment of a commission of investigation, whose duty will be an impartial consideration of the educational condition of the Catholic minority ; and all possible remedial action which can be taken in its favor without actually compromising the public-school system—which is deeply rooted in the affections of the people—will doubtless meet with the approval of the provincial authorities.

The new Liberal administration will naturally turn its first attention to the tariff. It was quite evident from the character of some journalistic comments, and more especially from certain recent Washington despatches, that the Liberal policy in this respect has been partially misunderstood. The fault lies chiefly with the Canadian Conservative press, which has repeatedly impugned the loyalty of the Liberals and represented their tariff principles as the cover of annexationist designs. This was false; the annexationist propaganda never had any considerable number of friends in either party, and such as it had were about equally drawn from both. But the repetition of the falsehood has produced an impression that the Liberals are as excessively friendly as the Conservatives were unduly hostile to the Republic. No one who knows Canadian sentiment can doubt that both parties are firmly attached to British connection, and that any weakening of that attachment is not in the thought of any man of political prominence in the Dominion. It is true that the party now in power have been more genuinely anxious than their opponents for a measure of reciprocity with the United States, but they were never prepared to go unpatriotic lengths in the obtaining of it. Rightly or wrongly, they never admitted, as a party, the annexationist trend of their former political platform ; still less could any possible change of political allegiance be involved in their

present one. They have promised to make no tariff amendments without due notice to the interests affected, and a careful inquiry and deliberation will precede any legislative changes, which will chiefly be the lowering of duties upon the raw material of manufactures. As nearly as can be inferred from the utterances of responsible men and leading journals before the election, the new tariff will average about twenty per cent. upon dutiable imports.

It cannot be denied that in recent years, and especially during the past year, the political outlook of the Dominion has been affected by the growth of the imperial sentiment. Twenty or twenty-five years ago any scheme of federation founded thereon would not have been seriously received by the Canadian people: it was utterly beyond the range of practical politics. The views of the Manchester school were then strong in England, and were accepted as the proper interpretation of colonial destiny. All this has been changed, and during the past year or two Canadian politics has seen the final effacement of ideas which conflict with British connection. The Venezuela embroglio, the South African question, and the progress of Australian federation have strongly reinforced imperial feeling, which hopes for a permanent organization of the Empire on a federal basis. Opponents of the idea have ridiculed the lack of its embodiment in any definite plan, but are compelled to admit the vigor of the sentiment behind it; nor are they disposed to belittle the essential foundation which such sentiment supplies.

A political ideal cherished by Great Britain and her self-governing colonies will, in the case of a people whose genius rules in practical politics, find some way of realization. The first step has already been taken by means of a series of conferences, representing different parts of the Empire, and designed to investigate the conditions under which commerce between them may be more largely developed. Such was the aim of the well-known Colonial Conference, held in Ottawa two years ago; also the conference of Chambers of Commerce held in London during June last; and without doubt future meetings of representative commercial interests will continue these investigations with the object of initiating practical results on this line.

Preferential trade is naturally associated with the new departure; and the attitude of the Dominion, as the largest of the self-

governing colonies, will be influential in determining its progress or its retrogression. The policy of the Liberal administration harmonizes, partially at least, with the conditions which would be imposed from the British point of view. Mr. Chamberlain, in a recent speech before the Canadian Club in London, declared the indispensable prerequisite of a preferential tariff to be freer trade between the different members of the Empire, involving the abolition of protection by such of the colonies as had adopted it; and the first step in consonance with that declaration has just been taken by the Dominion, whose present tariff against British goods will certainly be lowered in the near future. Whatever reception the British masses may give to the preferential idea, it may be said that neither political party in Canada has taken decided ground for or against it. Sir Charles Tupper strongly favors it, and Mr. Laurier, judging from some of his speeches, does not see any insuperable objection to it. From the rank and file of their respective followers no general expression of opinion can as yet be expected, as the discussion of the question has only begun.

In Canada there is a wide-spread feeling of relief as a result of the election, and renewed hope of quickened progress in the near future. Pressing matters of domestic policy will be vigorously grappled with by the new government. The settlement of the great Northwest, which has been long retarded by railway monopoly and a bad land policy, will receive all possible attention and encouragement. The recent discovery of incomparably rich gold deposits in British Columbia, and the vast quantities of nickel ore in Ontario, offer a lucrative field to the capitalist; and the general mineral resources of the country will, it is believed, gain an impetus from the change of industrial policy. Increased wealth and population are the core of Canada's most exigent needs; the framework of government and institutions is strong, but has for some time comparatively lacked the vitalizing movement of business enterprise. Protection, having been tried and found wanting, will gradually but surely be eliminated from the list of contentious questions. Other matters, whose importance has been quite overshadowed by the two main issues, will likely engage the attention of the government; such as improved and enlarged canals, perfecting water communication between the head of Lake Superior and the Atlantic seaboard, a new fast ocean

mail service, and the relation of Newfoundland to confederation. This is by no means a complete enumeration of the problems of progress which press for solution at a time of urgency, but also a time of hope.

Among the planks of the Republican platform formulated a few weeks ago at St. Louis, was one expressing the hope that Europe would withdraw from the affairs of this continent, and that the British people of its northern half would, by their own consent, become incorporated with the Republic. This expression of good will to Canada is genuinely appreciated ; but the invitation is not likely to be accepted. It is gratifying, however, to know that the language of courtesy and friendliness is officially adopted by a great political party ; and it will tend to make less noticeable any fugitive expressions, containing veiled threats, and uttered by irresponsible politicians. In this connection may be mentioned a resolution passed by the Dominion House of Commons shortly after the first echoes of the Venezuela affair had died away. It contained a strong profession of loyalty to Great Britain, but coupled with it a declaration of friendliness towards the United States. Among English-speaking nations, the exchange of such expressions may surely be said to spring from something deeper than the formalism of diplomacy.

J. W. RUSSELL.

WILD TRAITS IN TAME ANIMALS.

VI.—DOGS AND CATS.

BY DR. LOUIS ROBINSON.

WE now come to the domestic animals which are the immediate sharers of our homes, and I hope to show that we have quite as much to learn from the habits of the cat and the dog as from those of the creatures which we have already discussed.

The dog, in his every action, tells us that his forefathers lived in communities banded together for self-protection and for procuring food. The cat's habits show it to have been a solitary prowler from the earliest times. The one is an instinctive socialist; the other is an individualist, pure and simple. Just as the horse yields readily to the will of man because the young animals of every wild mob were submissive to their natural leaders, so the dog is ready to obey the authority of his superiors in the new "pack" in which he finds himself.

I have endeavored to show, in an article on "Canine Manners and Morals," published in another periodical, that the dog regards his master as the chief of his pack, and the other members of the household as his comrades. His very teachableness and intelligence owe their primary origin to the fact that game had to be secured by co-operation of the most elaborate kind. The wild *canidæ*, and especially those which were among the ancestors of the domestic dogs, often prey upon animals larger than themselves, and therefore, intelligent concerted action was an absolute necessity of existence, for a single wolf could not pull down a buffalo or a moose.

Cats, on the contrary, prey as a rule, upon creatures smaller and weaker than themselves; and, from the fact that they stalk their victims silently, they do not find it profit-