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CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any other person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE unseating of Dr. Montague, late M.P. for Haldimand on what is scarcely more than a legal technicality, adds another to many previous instances of the harsh operation of our Acts for securing purity of elections. The offence, as described by Chief Justice Ritchie, was that Harrison, agent for Dr. Montague at No. 6 poll, in the Township of Walpole, had induced Thomas Nixon falsely to take the oath as a farmer's son, his father having died a few months previous, and under section 93 of the Election Act this was a corrupt act. The case is one of undoubted hardship, inasmuch as Nixon was morally qualified to vote in another class, *i.e.*, as owner of the property which had formerly been his father's. But in this respect he was in no worse position than many others in recent elections in different localities who had acquired the qualification since the last revision of the lists, but were unable to vote because not registered. A still more serious injustice seems to be involved in the unseating of a candidate, and putting him to all the cost, and the constituency to all the turmoil, of a new election, in consequence of the act of an agent, when it is clear that that act did not affect the result. The presumption underlying this feature of the law is, we suppose, that the risk of voiding the election of his principal will be a sufficient incentive to the agent to shun the use of corrupt means. The result, in numerous instances, proves that this presumption is not well founded, and that many are ready to run the risk. The question that suggests itself is, Why not amend the law so as to make the men who do the wrong bear the penalty? Suppose it were enacted that no elected member should be unseated for any act of an agent, done without his sanction or knowledge, except in cases where there is some reason to believe that the act in question affected the result? Of course the severest penalties should in every such case be inflicted upon the guilty parties, the takers as well as the givers of bribes.

THE judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in the case of the Queen *vs.* St. Catherines Milling Company, removes, let us hope, from the arena of party strife, another of those vexed questions of which too many have been raised between Provincial Governments and that of the Dominion. This case was, as is well known, an outcome of the decision rendered by the Privy Council a few years ago, in the Boundary dispute. The British North American Act provided that all lands, mines, minerals, and royalties which belonged to the several Provinces at Confederation should continue to be the property of the Provinces in which they are situated. Notwithstanding that the Boundary decision had confirmed the claim of Ontario to what had been known as the "Disputed Territory," the Dominion Government continued to exercise right of control over the mines and forests, resting its claim on the treaty made with the Indians in 1873, under which the territory in question was ceded to Her Majesty, her heirs, and successors forever. The Federal Government having concluded the treaty and assumed responsibility for the payments it called for, claimed that it was thereby entitled to represent the Crown in the ownership. The dispute really turned upon the prior question of the nature of the Indians' interest in the lands prior to the Treaty. Were they the actual owners of the Territory, and so competent to dispose of it absolutely, or did their possessorship merely cover certain privileges in respect to its beneficial use, the absolute ownership being already vested in the Crown? The judgment now rendered virtually affirms the latter view, from which it follows that the rights reserved for the Indians did not affect the right of the Province to revenues derived from sales of minerals and timber, and that, on the extinction of the Indian title, the Provincial Government became sole representative of the Crown in the ownership of the Territory, subject, of course, to any rights still reserved to the Indians in any portion of it.

THE decision above referred to suggests a curious inquiry as to the apparent futility of the cession by the Indians, in the terms of the treaties from time to time made with them, of territories which it now appears were already the property of the Crown to which they are thus formally ceded. Some questions of practical importance, which may lead to further complications, are raised by the seemingly just determination of the Judicial Committee that the Province must be responsible for the payments to Indians provided for in the Treaty. This presumably involves reimbursement to the Dominion Government of the sums already expended under the Treaty. It does not follow, we suppose, that the Provincial Government is to deal directly with the Indians in the matter, but with the Federal Government, whose wards the Indians are. This is a matter which may be of some importance in case of future negotiations for the surrender or modification of the Indian claims in the special reservations which are still set apart for their use under the Treaty. As the territory dealt with in the Indian Treaty lies partly without the "Disputed Territory," and so beyond the boundaries of the Province, a serious difficulty may arise in determining the exact proportion of the payments to Indians for which the Province now becomes liable. It may be hoped, however, that both parties have had enough of dispute and litigation, and will be found, when occasion arises, either able to make a mutually satisfactory adjustment, or willing to refer disputed points to the decision of friendly arbitrators. Surely now we may have peace.

A GOOD many Canadians are naturally, though we dare say needlessly, excited over the remarkable resolution introduced to Congress the other day by Congressman Butterworth, proposing to instruct the President to invite the appointment of commissioners by the Government of Great Britain and Canada, to arrange for the political union of the latter with the United States. The proposal is scarcely worth serious discussion. It has already been condemned by the better judgment of the most prominent American statesmen themselves, who, however they might personally favour such a union were there any reasonable prospect of its accomplishment, are too shrewd not to see that to act upon Mr. Butterworth's resolution would be offensive, if not insulting, to both Great Britain and Canada. Beside so gross an attempt to interfere in the relations between Great Britain and one of her colonies, such an inadvertent slip as that made by Lord Sackville would appear insignificant. Had Canada directly or indirectly invited such interference, the matter would have a different aspect. To Canada belongs, by all the laws of international etiquette, the initiative in any such movement. It is her constitution, her mode of Government, her allegiance which it is proposed to change, and her's only. American statesmen, so far as they have paid any attention to the matter, are no doubt well aware that Canadian annexationists, so far as such a class can be said to exist, are in an insignificant minority. Meanwhile as Mr. Butterworth's resolution is but that of an individual, and has not been adopted, and is not in the least likely to be adopted, by Congress, it is, as Sir John A. Macdonald has observed, a matter of purely domestic concern. Neither England nor Canada has any need or even right to notice it. If nations having free parliaments were to be held responsible to other nations for all the offensive utterances of eccentric individuals in those parliaments, they would never be out of hot water.

THE election of the London School Board is an affair of no small importance. Seeing that this miniature Parliament controls an annual expenditure of about $10,000,000, equal almost to that of a small nation; seeing, moreover, that upon its action depend important questions, not only of educational policy, but also of expenditure, and so of the rates which come home so closely to every man's pocket, it is no wonder that the annual contest attracts much attention. This year the struggle was exceptionally earnest, in consequence of differences of opinion in regard to such questions as those which constituted the battle ground between the majority and the minority of the Education Commission. Notwithstanding all this it is significant of the lack of interest of the majority in educational matters that but little more than one-fourth of the whole number of qualified electors took the trouble to vote. The result seems to have been tolerably satisfactory to both parties, for two distinct parties there were. The Liberals or "Progressists," who are opposed to sectarian control and favourable to an extension of the Board Schools, made considerable gains, though their opponents, the "sectarian reactionaries," as they styled them, are still in the majority. The *Christian World*, which favours the former party, says that of the fifty-five members of the new Board, twenty-four belong to the party of Progress, twenty-six to the reactionaries, and five are independent. The balance of power, therefore, is in the hands of these five. The contest was carried on on similar lines by the two parties all over the country, and with varying fortunes. On the whole the result makes it pretty certain that the policy proposed by the majority Report of the Commission does not meet with popular approval.

ONE feature of the London School Board election, quite apart from the merits of the respective parties and candidates, has considerable interest for politicians. The contest afforded an opportunity for trying on a pretty large scale the cumulative system of voting. To this system *The Spectator* refers, as one of the probable reasons for the abstention of so large a number of voters. The business becomes too complicated, it thinks, for many. If they were required simply to choose between two candidates they would probably make the choice readily. But when it is necessary to pick out five from a list of ten or twelve they become bewildered, and prefer not to vote at all, rather than to risk voting for the wrong man. On the other hand, to the working of this system is undoubtedly due the election of a number of good members, who, as the candidates of minorities, could not otherwise have been successful. This is certainly a strong point. No important class of electors is, probably, without a representative upon the Board. Even the Secularists scattered over the metropolis, have secured, in the person of Mrs. Besant, able and efficient representation.

IT is highly probable that the next great election reform, or innovation, in England will be the adoption of the "One man, one vote" principle. Mr. Gladstone and some of his lieutenants have declared unequivocally in its favour, and it is unlikely that the Unionist wing of the Liberal party will care to oppose it at the hustings. Lord