

correctly represent our position. Instead of wishing the Government to take a hand in helping the opponents of the Catholic Church to free the poor Catholics from clerical influence, we simply wish that the Government should cease taking a hand in helping the Catholic clergy to keep the people under their influence. As we have said before, we hold that the matter of religious teaching and influence is one with which the Government should have nothing to do. Strict neutrality between the sects is surely its proper position. Separate Schools for one church are a violation of such neutrality. Our correspondent's whole argument seems to rest upon the quite unwarranted assumption that a Public School, in which there is no compulsory religious teaching, is a Protestant school. This implies that free mental culture, unbiassed intellectual development, is Protestantism. This is farther than we should have gone, and is surely not complimentary to Catholicism. Does Mr. McPhillips mean to say frankly that Catholicism is opposed to education under influences favourable to mental and spiritual freedom? If so, we should be disposed to go farther than we should have thought of going, and say that no Government has any more right to compromise with, and aid, a system which tends to restrict mental and spiritual freedom, than it has to interfere with personal liberty. As to the statement that all parties object to schools in which there are no compulsory religious exercises, we simply repeat that it is quite incorrect. In maintaining that it is the duty of the State to enforce elementary education, we certainly do not mean to imply that it should compel all parents to patronize the system of public instruction it finds it necessary to establish. If any prefer another method, as many do, it has no right to interfere further than may be necessary to satisfy itself that the minimum of education deemed necessary to the wellbeing of the State is actually given. Of course, such parents cannot be freed from paying their share of the taxes necessary for the education of those whom the State, of which they form a part, is obliged in self-defence to educate. It is useless to attempt any longer to conjure against the Public Schools with that much abused word "godless." If parents and churches, Catholic or Protestant, do their duty, the schools in which their children meet to receive mental and moral training cannot be godless.

THE approaching election in New Brunswick calls attention to the peculiar state of local politics in that province. The old party lines are disregarded, almost obliterated for the time being, and this too in a province whose people are rather notable ordinarily for blind adhesion to party. In itself this breaking up of the old party ties would be matter for special congratulation were there any reason to hope that the new planes of cleavage marked any real advance in independence of thought, or any striving after higher political ideals. But so far as can be judged at this distance from the scene of action this is not the case. The disruption seems to have been brought about partly by differences on petty questions of local patronage, and partly by alleged want of fairness on the part of the Government in the distribution of provincial grants. Perhaps, after all, it is better that an upheaval should have been brought about by local issues of any kind than that the people should have continued to vote for local representatives on the singularly illogical ground of their views in regard to Sir John A. Macdonald and Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, respectively. We use the names of these leaders advisedly, for it is almost absurd to suppose that the two parties in Dominion politics are any longer separated by any great principles, so clearly defined and so pervasive in their influence as to deserve first consideration in the election of a Provincial Assembly. A question of considerable interest is how far this change in New Brunswick local politics is peculiar to that Province, and how far it represents a tendency common to all the Provinces. This question we know no present means of deciding, though indications are not wanting in favour of the latter view. If this be so it is of good omen for the future of both local and Dominion politics, for the loosening of the bondage of party fetters in provincial matters probably indicates, and almost surely foreshadows, a larger measure of independent action in Dominion affairs. Those who are acquainted with the political history of the Maritime Provinces have been accustomed to deplore the peculiar bitterness with which political battles have often been fought, a bitterness which, unhappily, has not always ceased with the close of the struggle which called it forth, but has been too often carried into private business and social life. Whether the cause of this tendency was cor-

rectly given by the Hon. Joseph Howe in his cynical quotation of the proverb, "The smaller the pit the more fiercely the rats fight," or not, whatever helps to bring about larger views and a better state of feeling between parties will be a great boon to those Provinces of the Dominion.

NO one who understands the situation could have expected anything else than that the anti-ballot candidates would be successful in the contest for the position of Separate School Trustees in Toronto; therefore, no such person can have been disappointed by the result. A disposition, natural, but illogical, has shown itself in certain quarters to accept the large majority gained by the opponents of the ballot as a proof that secret voting is not desired, and, therefore, not needed by the Catholic rate-payers. That it is not desired is, we dare say, to a certain extent, true. The voters have been taught by those to whom they, in too many cases, look for guidance in political as well as in religious matters, to regard the question as one involving loyalty to their Church and reverence for their spiritual advisers. But to those who take the slightest pains to look beneath the surface it must be evident that the very fact of the polling of so large a majority against the ballot may be in itself a proof that the ballot is needed. It cannot have been, certainly it ought not to have been the intention of those who created the system, that the Separate Schools should be carried on under the direct and almost absolute control of the clergy of the Catholic Church. Such a result would have been strongly deprecated by every patriotic student of political history and every true friend of religious liberty. And yet that the Separate Schools are in effect conducted and controlled, not by the Catholic laity, but by the Catholic clergy, few will, we think, attempt to deny. Surely it is not in the interests of the State, or in harmony with the spirit of our free institutions, that schools which form a part of the national system should be so conducted. It may be impossible wholly to prevent this perversion of the true idea of the school as a Provincial institution, so long as the Separate Schools exist in any form. But no one can doubt that the use of the ballot in the election of trustees would be one of the most effectual checks that could be devised against such perversion. As we have before said in substance, if the introduction of the ballot could in the slightest degree prejudice any right or any lawful privilege of the majority opposed to it, regard to constitutional principles would forbid that it should be introduced without their consent. But in a case in which a given enactment cannot possibly interfere with any right or privilege of any one interested, while it may and will protect a minority in the enjoyment of freedom of thought and action, justice surely demands that the interests of that minority should be considered and their liberty protected. If the prelates and clergy have the full confidence of the laity and bring only legitimate influence to bear upon them, they have nothing to fear from the concession of the secret vote to those who desire it. If otherwise, it is all the more the duty of the Government to take the same precautions, in this particular case, which have been found necessary in all other matters to protect voters against improper pressure.

SCHELDOM have Imperial honours been more fittingly bestowed than those of which Dr. Bourinot, Clerk of the House of Commons, and Mr. Joseph Hickson, General Manager of the Grand Trunk Railway, have been made the recipients. The compliment conveyed in the creation of Dr. Bourinot a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George is admitted on every hand to have been well deserved. Not only have Dr. Bourinot's attainments in the line of his chosen studies given him a recognized standing as a writer of scholarship and ability which amply merits the distinction now conferred, but his works on "Parliamentary Procedure in Canada" and the "Constitutional History of Canada," and his able and voluminous contributions to leading magazines and reviews on Canadian topics, have been of marked service in making the Dominion more widely known and its unique political structure more clearly understood. The honour of knighthood conferred on Mr. Hickson may also be taken as a recognition of the sound principle that the men who contribute either to the intellectual wealth or to the material prosperity of the country are as really its benefactors, and as worthy of the honours due to such, as are those who win distinction in legislative chambers or on fields of battle. The great services Mr. Hickson has rendered to Canadian trade and commerce by his able and energetic management of the Grand Trunk Railway, to which management that

railway is largely indebted for its present stability and progress, are too well known to require comment. Eschewing all questions as to the real value or abstract desirableness of Imperial titles of any kind in a democratic colony, it is certainly well that such honours, when bestowed, should fall upon those whom their fellow-citizens can recognize as having rendered conspicuous service of some kind to the country. That such is the feeling in the present instances the universal congratulations showered upon these two gentlemen happily show.

TO have predicted ten or twelve years ago that in 1889 the Canadian Pacific Railroad would be paying a dividend to its stockholders, would have caused the prophet to be laughed at as a visionary. And yet this is, we are told, the thing that has actually taken place. To be able to pay a dividend of even one per cent. on the enormous capital of \$65,000,000, shows that the road already possesses an earning capacity which few would have believed possible for fifteen or twenty years to come. When it is added, that besides the \$650,000 thus disposed of, nearly four times that sum has been set aside for exigencies or future dividends, astonishment grows in proportion. It is not at all likely, however, that these results have been, or could possibly be at present achieved by the Canadian Pacific as originally conceived of and projected, that is, as a transcontinental line on Canadian soil. It would be interesting to have an analysis of the earnings of the road, showing what proportion of the whole income is derived from transcontinental and purely Canadian traffic, though the latter would be difficult, we dare say, to determine. Meanwhile, both the Company and the country are to be congratulated on the fact that the doleful predictions of former days have not been verified; and that, as a dividend-paying road, the Canadian Pacific cannot again, with any show of reason, come before Parliament for further assistance in any shape. If any considerable part of the Company's earnings have been derived from the competitive rates, by means of which it is said to have got the better of the American roads, hampered as they are by the restrictions put upon them by the Interstate Commission, it is highly probable that it will soon be forced to abandon that means of profit. There seems little doubt that legislation will shortly be passed in the United States giving Canadian roads crossing the border a choice between complying with the Interstate regulations and ceasing to operate on American soil. The great political forces which are behind the American roads are being brought unceasingly to bear to secure this result, and can hardly fail of success. Nor would it be easy to show that there would be anything unfair in placing such an alternative before the Canadian companies which do business in the United States. Were the situation reversed, we do not suppose the Canadian companies would hesitate to press for a similar measure of protection.

INTELLIGENT Canadians cannot fail to be deeply interested observers of the proceedings before the Congressional Committee on Canadian affairs now sitting at Washington. If the sensational letter which has just been published, purporting to be written by a citizen of Detroit to a Member of Congress, should prove genuine, and its statements well founded, a good deal of just indignation will be aroused in Canada. Located as we are, and likely to be in all the future, beside the great Republic, it is inevitable that the commercial and other relations between the two countries must largely affect our national comfort and well-being. No Canadian can be oblivious to the fact that Canada has of late come to occupy an unwontedly large place in the eyes of American politicians. Nor is it to be wondered at, in view of the remarkable history and well-known characteristics of our neighbours, that they should believe that the magnetic attraction of their great country must be irresistible, and that sooner or later it must draw the northern half of the continent into the Union. American politicians do not understand, we suppose it would be impossible to make them understand or believe, that Canadians may actually prefer to retain their own institutions and work out their own destiny, apart altogether from any constraint placed upon them by Great Britain. It seems undeniable that just now the question how the annexation of Canada may be most easily and readily brought about is one which is costing certain Congressional politicians a good deal of anxiety. Under such circumstances, any man who, occupying an influential position in Canada, should encourage such politicians to suppose that an unfriendly trade policy might tend to create or foster an annexation sentiment in