

burst of applause which greeted his entrance but a magnificent ovation which stayed the proceeding of the meeting for several minutes. Owing to the rather extreme position which Mr. McCarthy has taken on the school question this ovation was a striking manifestation of the earnestness and unanimity of the feeling which animated the enormous gathering. We cannot think otherwise than that the audience regarded him as one who pre-eminently voiced its opinions, and wished to let him know the fact. A year ago, or even six months ago, Mr. McCarthy would not, perhaps, have been greeted in Toronto as he was greeted in the Massey Hall last Saturday. Recent officious and indiscreet utterances on the part of over-zealous Roman Catholic priests and bishops were evidently regarded by the audience as emphasizing the reasonableness of the position which Mr. McCarthy has taken, and to point to the need of a resolute and fearless opponent of "Roman pretensions" such as he has well proved himself to be. As for the other speakers at the meeting, both the great parties were well represented. Party differences were for the time laid aside, and Liberals and Conservatives joined together in one common protest against the coercion of the Prairie Province. A petition to the Government in accordance with the sentiments of the meeting was circulated amongst the auditors and received the signatures of the great majority of those present. But in a country like Canada it is abundantly evident that neither Protestants nor Roman Catholics, neither English nor French-speaking Canadians, can have everything their own way. Those holding extreme views can never succeed here. We may as well recognize the fact and make the best of it.

Father Lacombe's
Letter.

Father Lacombe's letter to Mr. Laurier is a very dangerous production. The reverend gentleman says he has the episcopal authority for his appeal and scarcely concealed threat. A great many Protestants have in their anxiety to do what is fair, yielded their dislike to Separate Schools, and have supported the Government in what they consider to be carrying out the law. But when they read this letter and see the cloven-hoof sticking out and feel the steel gauntlet through the silk glove, it makes them pause. If there is to be this ecclesiastical interference in politics it is time to know it. It is hereafter to be one of the elements to be dealt with. The only way in which it can be handled is by crushing it. The Anglo-Saxon race went through this conflict in the seventeenth century and settled it once for all. It is not going to allow the issue to be raised again. The episcopal authorities of the Romish Church should disavow this letter or it may cost them the existence of Separate Schools. No matter how moderate a Protestant may be, or how desirous of living in harmony with his Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, he cannot but see the grave dangers aroused by this unfortunate letter, and it makes him exceedingly anxious as to the outcome of the whole business.

Mr. Laurier's
Dilemma.

The letter places Mr. Laurier in a very awkward dilemma. If he waives any opposition to the gist of the Government's proposal he will appear to have been coerced by the priesthood into silence. If he takes the position that the demand for Separate Schools in Manitoba is unfounded he will rest under the imputation of having done so in order to shew his independence of clerical influence. Either way, his hands are tied. He cannot have now any freedom, no matter how he decides. This officious interference with his rights demands and will obtain much sympathy. In exactly the proportion that it exacts sympathy for Mr. Laurier it will

increase the difficulty of the Government. The very men who were trying to carry through what Father Lacombe desired will be impeded by his supposed attempt to assist them. Can it be that Father Lacombe is a Canadian Rev. Dr. Barchard? The Rev. Dr. Barchard lost Blaine his election by his unhappy allusion to Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion. Father Lacombe may go down to history as having wrecked the chances of Separate Schools in Manitoba by his letter to Mr. Laurier.

Rome Will
Win.

The Manitoba school nuisance is becoming more and more intolerable every day. The whole country is at a standstill awaiting the settlement of the wretched question. There can be little doubt as to which side will win. The greatest force in Canadian politics is the Roman Catholic Church. It always gets what it wants, for it will not allow the business of the country to proceed until its demands are granted. The Roman Catholic vote is about forty-two per cent. of the whole Dominion. It is practically a solid vote and under the control of the priests. The political party which obtains this vote can rule the Dominion, but the ruling party is ruled in its turn by the Roman Church. This is a great tribute to the unity and magnificent organization of that wonderful Church. Before its united front Canadian Protestants are utterly helpless. They never unite on anything. With respect to Separate schools or to religious education in the State schools they differ among themselves as radically as the members of Sir Mackenzie Bowell's Cabinet are reported to differ among themselves. But the Church of Rome is always solid, and in Canada always successful. Should any member of the Church differ from the hierarchy he is promptly regarded as hell-inspired and thrust without the pale. Whether the political supremacy of the Roman Church in Canada will long continue we cannot pretend to foretell. But that it will have its way sooner or later with respect to Manitoba there can be little doubt. From sheer weariness and despair on the part of its opponents the Church of Rome will be granted all it wishes. The Church can afford to wait; the country cannot.

A Possible
Premier.

It is now quite clear that the most decisive personal score made by any man in English public life since D'Israeli returned from Berlin in 1877 is that achieved by Mr. Chamberlain in the Colonial Office within the last few months. In that office he has found an opportunity to prove himself the strong man who knows his own mind—who knows the popular mind, and who has the courage and capacity to express clearly and decisively the will of a great nation. That is the kind of man whom nations watch and wait for, and whom they delight to honour. It is quite certain that Mr. Chamberlain has, at a bound, placed himself in the front rank of the few men who are possible British Premiers. The fact has an infinite variety of bearings on British politics, but none which more deserves attention than that the Colonial Office is made at once something different in the eyes of English statesmen from what it ever has been before. We may take it for granted that it is not likely hereafter to fall to any but first rate men. When the thunderbolts of the Empire have to be wielded from Downing Street the directing hand must be steady and strong, and strong men at the Colonial Office, pursuing lines of policy at once popular and national, will find there work worthy of their energies. We may yet see Downing Street looked upon as especially the training place for statesmen of the largest type.