

ity to the extent of seven and a half million frs. in the shape of indemnities; the populations, convinced Parisians intended to convert their regions into Saharas; proceeded to shoot the surveyors, and the latter had to execute their work under police escorts. The works employed 3,500 laborers, and three immense reservoirs constructed at St. Cloud, contain each 100,000 tons of water. A special "tubular" bridge conveys the water across the Seine.

Professor Charcot has almost definitely concluded, that hysteria is a mental malady. The Marquis de Vlaris has published a volume, wherein he claims to make known the various plans for deciphering the secrecy of telegrams. Diplomats will please note.

At last agriculturists have ceased to grumble; the "weather and the crops," are all they could desire. A good land-yield this year would do more for the out-of-joint times, than a train full of projects for reforming everything, but doing nothing. Parisians do not complain of the lovely spring of course; milliners and dress makers state, they never have received so many commands, but to obtain payment is difficult.

Z.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### SPEECH SOUNDS IN CANADA.

To the Editor of The Week:

Sir,—The Week for 10th Feb. has a contribution with the heading above written by Mr. Magoun on which allow me to remark.

(1.) Avoidance of Italian "a" (as in farm) appears common in America. For it is substituted open "o" (as in form, law). Thus we have Panamaw, Omahaw, Ottawaw, Arkansaw,—all made to rhyme with saw, like Warsaw. Unlike manner we hear Awibany, Bawltimore, Chicawgo, Montreawwl. Again we hear lager beer, the national beverage of the German, spoken of as lawger, though the vowel in law belongs not to German either standard or dialectic. With Mr. Magoun, I think this substitution should be avoided and repressed by careful speakers.

(2.) Pronunciation of advance, fast, dance, etc., with the vowel in fat should be allowable because it is not a recent substitution, but a survival of old speech. It is the sound given by Walker in his dictionary which from its publication is 1791 till later than the middle of the present century was considered good authority, though of late the la-de-da speech is trying to get to the fore. In this matter if we do not encourage use of a (as in fat) it at least should not be repressed as wrong, but should be held as allowable. The great new Dictionary of the Philologic Society does well in giving a sign for the pronunciation of the words in question which is "avowedly ambiguous," thus leaving the vowel optional—a commendable policy.

The truth is that that part of Ontario north of Lake Erie was first settled from New England by Loyalists expatriated by the events which terminated the American Revolution in 1783. They brought with them their New England speech which they had carried from Old England in the 17th century. They settled in the Niagara district and more especially along the great thoroughfare, the government road through St. Catharines to Dundas, from which it was (and is still) known as the "Governor's Road" through Paris, Woodstock, and London to Chatham. This is all well known in that district. Along with them came the Six Nation Indians from the Mohawk Valley to settle in that of the Grand River; as, too, Butler's Rangers and many adventurers who made no special claim to loyalty. They brought

with them the "York Shilling" (8 to the dollar) which was long the currency of the district and is still so regarded by the older and more conservative generation. The "Nova Scotia Road" through East Elgin and Norfolk and the Talbot settlement are mementoes of that period, some of the expatriated having first tarried in Nova Scotia.

From Dundas east through Toronto (our Dundas street) ran a road along the north shore of Ontario called the Don and Danforth or "Kingston Road" which was a line of migration for that part of Ontario north of Lake Ontario along which settled the expatriated New Englanders and part of the Six Nations in Thyendenaga. There "Halifax Currency" (5 shillings to the dollar) prevailed till recently.

From 1824 on, there poured over Ontario a flood of immigrants from all parts of the British Islands, English, Northern Irish, Southern Irish, Highland and Lowland Scotch and some Welsh. All this has produced an average or fused speech for Ontario which is of archaic type, but which does not necessarily for that deserve to be tabooed.

Fused speech is stronger and more durable than any la-de-da dialect can be. The fused speech of the Midland counties of England (which varies little from the much-praised speech of Dublin) is the standard or received speech. The speech of Ulster is a fused speech arising from causes analogous to the settlement of Ontario in "its settlement" under the early Stuart Kings.

The vowel sound in fat may be regularly traced from the Norman Conquest. Any enthusiasm for its suppression in the host of words in which it belongs historically does not deserve encouragement.

A. HAMILTON.

Toronto, 9th March, 1893.

### CURRENT COMMENTS.

To the Editor of the Week:

Sir,—The Dominion Parliament was prorogued yesterday by His Excellency the Governor General, who gave the Royal assent to ninety and nine acts, of which 93 apply to the whole Dominion or to a whole Province, and 63 are private or local. Before you get this you will have received H. E.'s speech and the list of the acts and will be able to judge of their importance respectively. I believe you receive copies of Bills when brought in. I enclose the list of those sanctioned on which I have distinguished by a mark in the margin those of a public, general nature. The ceremony passed off well, and was well attended; H. E. looked well and spoke very feelingly of his regret at leaving Canada, and the affection and interest he would always feel for her and in her welfare. The most important acts are those relating to Representation in the House of Commons, The Supreme and Exchequer Courts; Public Officers Civil Service Superannuation; Voters' Lists; The Patent Act; Civil Service Insurance; The Criminal Code Act; Subsidies for Railways, and for Ocean Steam Ships; Duties of Customs; House of Commons and Senate; Public Printing; Homestead Exemption; Merchant ship and load lines, and the Supply Act.

I have the pleasure of believing that my articles in The Week on Bi-metalism and currency have met with general approval. Mr. Dawson has not complained, and I was fortunate in your having published them before the concurrence of Mr. Gladstone and the British House of Commons in my views, was known in Canada. Our Southern neighbours may object to my saying that our currency is better than theirs, but they cannot deny the fact; and our Governors granted my prayer for plenty of our own silver and copper coins, before they heard it, by placing ninety thousand dollars of it in the hands of the Receiver General at Toronto.

The Manitoba School Law question has been well threshed out. Members of Parliament have talked about it. Newspapers of every shade of opinion have written about it; and you and I in The Week and the Editor of the Law Journal

in that excellent publication, have said more or less about it; and in your last number your clever correspondent LEX, has given us an elaborate and lawyer-like dissertation on it, by no means stinted in length or in well-turned phrases, though slightly failing in logic by not discriminating, and supposing that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council would not discriminate between a mere moral claim resting on a private agreement between religious denominations before the Union, and a legal right created by law, as soon as there was legislature to create it, and enjoyed under such law, from 1871 to 1890: or between an appeal to a court on a point of law, and an appeal for the redress of a grievance to the Parliament of the Dominion, expressly empowered to remove it by Act of the Parliament of the Empire; and so has brought the matter to the position of the apocryphal case in chancery, tempore Eldon.

When Mr. Parker  
Made that darker,  
Which was dark enough before:  
And the Chancellor said,—I doubt.

But now, our parliament is gone, our Premier is gone, and our Mr. Parker stat nominis umbra. What can we do but hope for the best, and pray that our darkness may be lightened, and that our sealers be protected by the ability of our Premier and the justice of the arbitrators. Would that we could hope that the lion of the Manitoba majority might be guided to lie down in peace with the lamb of the Manitoba minority, and the Province have rest as it had under the laws of 1871. Why not? Quid vetat?

Ottawa, 2nd April, 1893.

## PARLIAMENTARY AND CONGRESSIONAL GOVERNMENT.

The special advantages of the Canadian or English system of parliamentary government, compared with Congressional government, may be briefly summed up as follows:

(a) The governor-general, his cabinet, and the popular branch of the legislature are governed in Canada as in England by a system of rules, conventions, and understandings which enable them to work in harmony with one another. The crown, the cabinet, the legislature, and the people have respectively certain rights and powers which, when properly and constitutionally brought into operation, give strength and elasticity to our system of government. Dismissal of a ministry by the crown under conditions of gravity, or resignation of a ministry defeated in the popular house, bring into play the prerogatives of the crown. In all cases there must be a ministry to advise the crown, assume responsibility for its acts, and obtain the support of the people and their representatives in parliament. As a last resort to bring into harmony the people, the legislature and the crown, there is the exercise of the supreme prerogative of dissolution. A governor, acting always under the advice of responsible ministers may, at any time, generally speaking, grant an appeal to the people to test their opinion on vital public questions and bring the legislature into accord with the public mind. In short the fundamental principle of popular sovereignty lies at the very basis of the Canadian system.

On the other hand, in the United States the president and his cabinet may be in constant conflict with the two houses of congress during the four years of his term of office. His cabinet has no direct influence with the legislative bodies, inasmuch as they have no seats therein. The political