

been petty, became serious sources of irritation and friction; all the wheels of Church work move heavily, if they do not altogether stick in the mud, and ministers, unable to bear the strain, in distress if not despair, leave their congregations and their debts to men more sanguine, but who do not know the burden they are assuming. All the religious and benevolent schemes of the Church suffer. The penalty for their folly had to be paid by Christian churches, equally with those engaged in the most secular business.

This picture is not overdrawn, and the main object in drawing it will be served, if those members, ministers and office-bearers of churches, contemplating church building, who may read it, by studying and pondering over it, will take warning in time, will shrink from, shun and avoid huge church debts and a mortgage, almost or wholly as much as they would a plague. We do not say avoid going into any debt at all, though if that can be done it is by far the safest course. If this were done, it would, in many cases, be impossible to make any provision for religious ordinances, but be most wise and careful as to its amount, and be sure to see before beginning where the money to build with is to come from, not by being borrowed from some society, but by subscriptions of good men paid up, or so nearly paid up as to be secure, humanly speaking, against the possibility of serious hardship.

If a congregation cannot afford to build as it would wish, so as to compete and be equal with others, of often twenty times the wealth, why should not do as individuals who are honest have to do, when they cannot pay for what they would like to have, do without, or be content to cut their garment according to their cloth? There cannot be a doubt that many churches in Toronto and over the country to-day, of all the different bodies, have, in order to secure a fine building, assumed liabilities which, even the most sanguine calculations with respect to their means wherewith to pay, would not warrant. Then why should it be done? On what ground are common sense, and these sound principles which men apply in their ordinary secular business, to be thrown aside when it comes to church building? Such huge debts as some of our city churches all over the Province are staggering under, are all the more inexcusable, because they are due more to a spirit of pride, rivalry, and luxury in taste, than because they were at all necessary for comfortable, devout worship, or the promotion of the cause of true religion. Indeed they retard the spread of the gospel, for the power to do this is largely crippled by the constant struggle merely to keep afloat, to make up the amounts that must be made up to save churches from falling into the hands of the sheriff, which were at first built of a size and equipped in a style which were more a gratification to pride and vanity, than necessary for the edifying worship of God, and the maintenance and spread of true religion whether at home or abroad.

MANITOBA SCHOOLS.

THE discussion over this very vexed question still continues and so much the more as the day approaches for the assembling of the Dominion Parliament with the "remedial measure," the "united front" and the "stand or fall" attitude of the Federal ministry thereupon. Any number of "satisfactory solutions" have been ostentatiously set forth, some of them with an air of serene omniscience and pitying condescension towards those who cannot fully understand the reasonableness of the plans, or acknowledge the inerrancy of the planners. Hard words there have been not a few, much bluster in some quarters, and, let us add with thankfulness, in others not a little of sweet reasonableness. All seem agreed upon this at any rate, that the "remedial order" was a mistake, and that to attempt to carry it out in all its fulness will be worse than a blunder, will be a crime and that of no ordinary magnitude. "Coercion" is a delusion and a snare as those who may be tempted to try it will find out in due time. "The tyranny of the strong over the weak" has been harped on with an iteration which might even be characterized by a Shakespearian adjective. It is time to think a little of the tyranny of the weak over the strong, which in these days at any rate is quite as common and indefensible as the other thing. Not a doubt of it minorities have their rights, but have majorities none which they are not bound to surrender when any number, however small, proclaim, without

taking the trouble to prove, that their consciences are aggrieved, and their dearest and most indefensible privileges arbitrarily set aside and ruthlessly trampled upon? We rather think they have. We should be the very last to say a single word against conscience and its sacredness; at the same time it cannot be denied that, like "patriotism," as well as some other words, it has come to be looked upon as not quite so respectable since it has been so often and so openly prostituted for purposes neither honourable nor pure. In any case no man and no body of men can set themselves free from any enactment by simply pleading conscience. Society and law would on such terms be impossible. Government by, with and for the people is based upon conviction, and the conviction of the majority at that. The minority can obey actively by acquiescence, or passively by suffering the penalty, always, of course, being able to fall back, if so inclined, on the "sacred right of insurrection." But unless popular and constitutional government is a farce, when opinion has been crystallized into a law, the minority under that law can have it changed only by force, or by convincing the enacting majority that it was mistaken when it passed the measure objected to.

Well, the overwhelming majority of Manitoba was admittedly "greatly within its rights" when it passed the school law of 1890. Quite as much so as when it sanctioned a parish road or enacted a law about stray cattle.

The aggrieved minority in the one case as in the other had quite a right to protest, to argue, to cry out and use every legitimate means to have the wrong rectified. They could appeal to the majority's sense of fair play, to its neighbourliness, to its honour, its reason and its conscience, and if active obedience were incompatible with conscience, suffering for conscience sake would always be in order, and in the meantime their powers of argument and persuasion could be used for all they were worth. Instead of this what is proposed? What has been done? An outside force called in. A greater majority, and hostile, invited to over-ride the legitimate majority acting "well within its legal rights" and the proposition put boldly and bluntly forward, of making an unconvinced majority of ten to one, bow down before and be over-ridden by a minority of one to ten and that on the plea of conscience, though the ten had as sensitive and as enlightened consciences as had the one.

Is that the way to right the wrong and protect the weak? Is that the way to secure peace and promote the exercise of brotherly kindness? We trow not. And all the more when it is kept in view that this supposedly arrogant and unreasonable majority has not the first intimation of oppressing any one, but is only too anxious to "hear reason," supply what is wanting, and amend what is wrong. In fact to supply the wanting and amend the wrong were the great objects aimed at in the school legislation of 1890. Confessedly on all sides there was very much wanting, and very much even ludicrously wrong in the educational arrangements of Manitoba previous to that year. The best was then done which the majority knew. Changes might be necessary just as experience and greater light might dictate, and even an entire overturn of the new law might be made if the community or a majority of it changed its mind. That is one thing and one which is continually occurring in every land, where "freedom is broadening slowly down from precedent to precedent." But it is a very different affair when an outside force comes with its "coercive" "You shall;" and undoes all the educational improvements of a Province larger than England; and makes anything like a national system of education either an impossibility or a farce. Aye, not only that, but tells the people of that Province that after the old, antiquated system of shreds and patches has been restored at Ottawa, nothing short of rebellion and revolution will ever be able to effect a change, though sought and prayed for not by nine-tenths but by ninety-nine hundredths of a population ten or twenty times as great as it is to-day.

Let the people of Manitoba manage their own domestic matters in their own way. They have no wish to oppress any one. But they have equally little inclination to let any one oppress them, and if Sir John Macdonald was sound when he said, in January 1881, "We cannot check Manitoba," he would be as much inclined, if alive, to say the same thing, and with greatly deeper emphasis to-day, in the threatened hour of crises in January 1896.

Books and Magazines.

AMERICAN CATHOLICS AND THE AMERICAN PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION. By Patrick Henry Winston. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co. 1895.

The author of this pamphlet is a native-born American citizen of English descent, a Protestant in religion and in politics, a Republican of the school of Abraham Lincoln. The work itself purports to be a complete history of American Catholics in their relations to the Government of the United States, and a review of the meaning, methods and men of the American Protective Association and of all these it is an arraignment.

The *Missionary Review of the World* for December contains some very interesting and instructive articles on Palestine and the work for the evangelization of the Jews. H. H. Jessup, D.D., of Beirut, contributes an article on "The Jews in Palestine." Rev. Thos. Laurie, for many years a missionary in the East, writes on "The Beginnings of the Education of Women in Syria," a very readable chapter in the early history of missions. A. H. McKenney, Ph.D., describes the beliefs and worship of the Druses, an important but comparatively little known sect in Syria. Other articles of interest in this issue of the *Review* are an illustrated sketch of "John Nevius, the Modern Apostle to China," by the Editor-in-Chief; "The Founder's Week Convention of the London Missionary Society," by Rev. James Douglass, of London; "The Causes of the Riots in China," by Rev. H. M. Woods; and "The Mountain Whites of America," by Rev. W. T. Wilds. The various departments of the *Review* abound with interesting and valuable material respecting missionary life and labor in all parts of the world. [Funk & Wagnalls Co., 30 Lafayette Place, New York. \$2.50 a year.]

An almanac is not usually considered a very entertaining work, but the publishers of the *Canadian Almanac* (The Copp Clark Co., Ltd., Toronto) have levied on art and literature to make it something more than a dry compilation of bald facts. In addition to the usual useful and necessary information, such as appeared in previous issues, the Almanac for 1896 has a number of well-written articles on subjects of great public interest. Dr. J. G. Bourinot writes on "Forms of Government Throughout the World;" Mr. E. M. Chadwick on "The Canadian Flag;" Assistant Paymaster Collin Campbell, R. N., on "The North-west Mounted Police;" and there is also an interesting account of the Royal Military College at Kingston, with biographical sketches of some of the graduates. The work is highly creditable to the publishers, and one indeed of which the country may feel proud.

The *Homiletic Review* for December continues the valuable series of articles by Dr. Gregory on "The Preacher and the Preaching for the present Crisis." Following it is "Sir Thomas Browne, his place in a Minister's Library," by Professor Murray, D.D., of Princeton, N.J. A suggestive and able article is "A Study of The Raven," by Dr. Elliot Griffis, Ithaca. "Criticisms and Suggestions by laymen on Church Methods and Church Work," are given in this issue by Austin Abbott, LL.D., of New York City. Light on Scriptural texts from recent discoveries takes up Sennacherib and the Destruction of Nineveh. Sermons are given in full from Dean Farrar and Dr. Stalker. "Christmas Sermons and Themes" will be found helpful at this season. [Funk & Wagnalls Company, 30 Lafayette Place, New York.]

The December *Arena* is to a much larger extent than usual taken up with sketches and notices of some eminent personages, natives and foreigners. Lowell, Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Whittier and William Cullen Bryant are all brought before the reader. In addition to these we have part IV of Napoleon Bonaparte, by Hon. John Davis, and by the editor, "The Life of Sir Thomas Moore." Other subjects treated are "Municipal Lighting," "Equality of Opportunity," "How to Secure it," "Shall Women Vote," "Governmental Control of the Telegraph," "Opportunity of the Church in the Present Social Crisis;" these, with other articles and reviews of important books, make up an interesting number.

Scribner's Magazine for December is a special Christmas number, unusually rich in its literary and artistic features. A series of twelve full page illustrations for a fantastic story by Brander Matthews are printed in a delicate tint which is interwoven with the clear black of the text and flows out into the margins of the page producing an effect entirely novel in magazine illustration. An article of Alma-Tadema is embellished with twenty reproductions of the artist's pictures, chosen by himself for this purpose. The conclusion of George Meredith's serial, some choice poetry and a number of excellent short stories make a number of great variety and wide general interest. [Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York.]

Our readers will be pleased to learn that the publishers of that excellent and almost indispensable eclectic, *Littell's Living Age*, have announced a reduction in its price from eight dollars to six dollars a year; the change to take effect from the first of January next, and new subscribers remitting before that date will receive the intervening numbers of 1895, free. The *Living Age* is now nearing the close of its fifty-second year. It commends itself to readers generally but more especially to busy people of moderate means; and its usefulness must increase with the constant increase of periodical literature.

As usual the widely-known art publishers, Messrs. L. Prang & Co., Boston, Mass., have this season issued an immense assortment of beautifully executed calendars and tasty Christmas cards. In this class of work the firm mentioned is unexcelled.