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Comments on the Cartoons.



TWO OFFICIAL LANGUAGES.—
 "As useless as the fifth wheel of a coach" is a phrase which has long done duty as a synonym for the superfluous. The well-worn expression might now be superannuated in view of the debate on Mr. McCarthy's bill, and the equally apt and more timely simile, "as useless as two tongues on a North-West cart," substituted. And yet the vehicle in question requires two tongues just as much as the Governmental machine of the Territories does. Notwithstanding the absurdity of the idea, it is by no means

certain that Mr. McCarthy's bill which provides for the removal of the French official tongue will be allowed to pass. Room No. 8 is to be reckoned with, and any institution, however ridiculous and burdensome, which is calculated to serve the turn of the Hierarchy, may safely count upon the support of the French members at Ottawa. The dual language in the North-West is such an institution, for its effect is to keep the people apart, and prevent the growth of a sound public sentiment. The futile hope that in some miraculous way the Great Lone Land may be transformed into a second Quebec, is also present to the minds of these gentlemen, and will strengthen their opposition to the Bill. This means that the measure will be defeated, for such a thing as a patriotic union of Grits and Tories to carry it in the interests of economy and common sense is hardly to be hoped for.

MR. TEMPERANCE FOSTER & Co.—Dr. Landerkin's motion in favor of granting rebate of barley duties to the exporters of fat

cattle as well as to the exporters of strong drink, was brought up in the House last week and defeated by a majority of sixteen. Let not the casual reader conclude that this slim majority was due to a recognition by the House of the unassailable logic of the doctor's resolution. Logic has no weight with party sheep, as everybody ought to know by this time. It was simply due to the accidental absence of a large number of Government supporters, who, had they been present, would have joined their friends in recording their contempt for those unhappy dupes of the N.P.—the farmers. There was no attempt made to justify the position of the Government in extending a favor to the concoctors of drunkard-making liquids which is denied to the producers of honest beef. The only "argument" used was that the rebate "don't amount to much, anyhow," which might as well have been used in favor of as against the motion. The vote puts Temperance Minister Foster in an unenviable attitude before the country, but his feelings are apparently the last thing it occurs to his colleagues to consult.

READY TO HIS HAND.—The last number of *Bystander* contains some valuable hints for the Opposition at Ottawa—specifications of points upon which the policy of the Government can be successfully assailed. It remains to be seen whether Mr. Laurier will avail himself of the Professor's kindness in rolling these formidable balls for him.



THE Franchise Act was metaphorically torn to shreds and tatters in the House of Commons last week. Unfortunately, it was only metaphorically. Notwithstanding the entire reasonableness of all that was urged against it, and the utter weakness of the arguments by which some few ministerialists pretended to

defend it, the shameful measure still disgraces our statute book. We are speaking in no partizan spirit when we describe this measure as shameful, for surely no man of honest and independent judgment will deny that that term is applicable to an Act, the one and only object of which was to secure a party advantage at the general expense, and thus to set at naught the institution of responsible Government. While the Act remains in force it serves to mark the depth to which partizan villainy is capable of going.

PRINCE BISMARCK has been announcing once more his intencion of retiring from the Chancellorship, and "transferring Prussian affairs to younger shoulders." It is not stated that this chestnutty utterance was greeted with tinkling little bells, but we have no doubt it called forth the German equivalent thereof.

THE great subject which Mr. Thomas G. Shearman will deal with in his lecture on the 14th inst.—"The Menace of Plutocracy"—is one which ought to interest the people of Canada as much as their neighbors of the States, for the conditions are the same in both countries. It was this utterance of Shearman's, first made at Portland, Oregon, that gave rise to a debate throughout the Union, which is still raging in the leading newspapers and magazines. What the speaker claimed—and proved—was that the wealth of the United States is going with startling rapidity into the hands of a few plutocrats, and this by virtue of the system of indirect taxation. Mr. Shearman is one of the leading lawyers of New York, and one of the best known and most highly-respected citizens of that great city.

HIS Grace, the most Reverend Archbishop of Kingston, seems to be blessed with a lively imagination. By its subtle working, the matter-of-fact Mr. Meredith, the "pseudo-Conservative" leader of Ontario, who has in a rather halting manner declared for sound British doctrine