

Mr. VanHorne's contention covers even more than this for it implicitly denies the right of the Provincial Governments to trench upon this great domain, even for provincial purposes, though these governments exercise that right over the property of private owners. But there is another question of vital importance to the other provinces as well as to Manitoba which demands immediate solution, the question, viz., as to the meaning of clauses 306 and 307 of the Dominion Railway Act. If these clauses really mean, as they seem to mean, that any provincial line of railway which crosses a Dominion line, becomes by virtue of such crossing itself a Dominion line, it is time that all the provinces knew the fact. It is clearly a consequence to which no province will willingly assent, and if such is the meaning and intention of the act, the sooner the provinces insist upon its repeal or amendment the better for the future peace of the Confederation.

THERE is, perhaps, nothing in which the shortsightedness of our modern civilization is more apparent than in the comparative cheerfulness with which we pay for the maintenance of prisons and courts, and all the costly appliances of punitive justice, contrasted with our indifference or parsimony in the use of means for the prevention of crime. As an exception to the rule it is pleasing to note the initial success of the Mimico Industrial School, as shown by the reports read at its annual meeting the other day. Those who have begun and so far carried on this work are doing good service to the country and to humanity. The principle on which such schools are based is eminently in accord with common-sense philanthropy. They so manifestly begin at the right end of the sociological tangle that the wonder is they have not long since been established in every intelligent community on such a scale as to leave it no longer necessary for any boy or girl to be trained in the streets and gutters as a future public nuisance, or in the still more poisonous atmosphere of the purlieus of vice and crime, as a candidate for penitentiary honours. Industrial Schools of the Mimico stamp are already doing a great work, and are destined, we believe, to do a still greater work.

MAJOR-GENERAL LAURIE, M.P. for Shelburne, N.S., writes us complaining of a sentence in a paragraph on the first page of THE WEEK of Oct. 4. The sentence, referring to the unseating of General Laurie for bribery by agents, was as follows: "No one acquainted with the facts would, it is believed, deny that the promise of Government expenditures by and on behalf of the candidate thus unseated had more to do with securing his return than all the personal bribery that could be accomplished by a dozen agents." General Laurie says: "I was the member and was unseated by a decision of Judge Smith after a trial lasting eight days. Attempts were made to prove that promises of Government expenditures had been made by me and on my behalf. These attempts utterly failed. Not a vestige of proof was forthcoming. Assertions to the same effect were made by extreme partisans in the House of Commons. They were promptly and unhesitatingly contradicted by me."

GENERAL LAURIE's protest calls for a few remarks. The statement complained of was incidental, the main object of the paragraph being to condemn a misuse of Government influence in elections which we cannot but believe to be common and most prejudicial to the free and proper working of our representative institutions. We see no reason to suppose that it is peculiar to the Conservative party, or to the Dominion Government, although for obvious reasons its use in Dominion elections is more mischievous and dangerous, though not more reprehensible, than in Provincial elections. From the very nature of such influence it may not be cognizable or susceptible of easy proof in a court of law. It seldom takes so bold a form as in the recent election in Montreal East, during which, according to a statement openly made in the Montreal papers, and, so far as we are aware hitherto uncontradicted, a telegram from a Dominion Minister promising a post-office in a certain locality was read from the platform at a public meeting, and in the presence of one or more Dominion Ministers who occupied seats on that platform but uttered no protest. In regard to the election referred to in Shelburne, we of course accept unreservedly General Laurie's statement as to the absence of evidence in court. But he will scarcely, we think, deny that one of the considerations urged in favour of his nomination in the first instance, and one which had great weight with those members of the other party who supported him, was that it was desirable in the interests of the country to have a representative who would have influence with the Government in the matter of grants and patronage; that, pending the trial of the petition which resulted in the unseating of Mr. Robertson, it was stated by Ministers of the Crown in Parliament that certain public works had been undertaken in the country

owing to the representations of General Laurie; and that during the summer following General Laurie visited the different ports along the coast of Shelburne County in a Government steamer, on a tour of inspection, the object of which was understood to be to ascertain what public works, such as lighthouses, breakwaters, buoys, etc., were needed, with a view to having them constructed by the Dominion Government. The impression that would be made by such a statement in Parliament and such a use of a Government vessel may be readily inferred. Whether and how far they fall short in effect of promises made "by and on behalf of" the Conservative candidate must be left to the judgment of the reader.

APROPOS of the foregoing, it may not be amiss to quote a couple of extracts from articles in papers friendly to the Government, which have fallen under our notice since the receipt of General Laurie's letter. The first is from the *Halifax Herald*:

"Now every intelligent elector must see that if these public works are needed there can be nothing wrong in having them constructed. And if General Laurie is assisting in any way in inducing the authorities to construct them, he is doing the county a genuine service. But if the county, at the dictation of a clique of Grit wire pullers, turns him out for doing this, it must certainly be taken as an intimation that the county does not want any of these works constructed." The second is from the *Toronto Empire*:

"We have already spoken of the active part taken by the Government of Nova Scotia in the contest; one of the reasons for their activity is at least curious, if not unique. This Government had placed on the statute book a conditional provision to subsidize a railway in which the constituency was deeply interested. The condition was that the Dominion Government should also subsidize the enterprise. The Provincial Government were without money and did not wish to carry out their engagement. They reasoned that if Shelburne were to elect a candidate supporting the Dominion Government, his influence would secure the Dominion grant, whereas if the constituency would elect an unimportant opponent, such as Mr. Congdon would have proved, the Dominion grant would not be secured and the Provincial Government would not be called upon for theirs, with the Provincial treasury empty and the Legislature disinclined to authorize the debt that would have to be incurred."

That which THE WEEK was and is anxious to condemn is the subtle but potent form of bribery which is involved in the implication, whether conveyed by Ministers in Parliament or Legislature, or by canvassers and newspapers, that the outlay of public money in a given constituency will be affected by the politics of the representative chosen. It goes without saying that the expenditure of public funds should be absolutely independent of any partisan considerations. Each of the above quotations, which are picked up at random, either assumes the correctness of the belief that the Dominion Government does act on a principle which is undeniably unjust, and corrupt, or fails to resent an imputation which should be regarded as both insulting and libellous. It would be unfair, of course, to hold the Government responsible for the arguments of all its supporters; but it is tolerably clear that if the Government denied such charges and resented with proper warmth such imputations by its friends, a change would soon come over the spirit of the press which supports it.

It is pleasing to note the cordial unanimity with which the public and press, without regard to politics, have recognized the fitness and wisdom of the selections made in the recent judicial appointments. It would be hard to say whether the elevation of Mr. Justice Patterson to the Supreme Court Bench, or the appointment of Mr. James MacLennan, Q.C., to the judgeship thus made vacant, is the more warmly commended. It will redound to the lasting credit of Sir John A. Macdonald, that he has almost uniformly shown himself so well able to rise above partisan considerations in making such appointments. If in any case an exception has occurred it was the exception which proves the rule. The result is that the Dominion judiciary is, on the whole, one which will compare favourably with that of any other country, and, which is of still greater importance, one whose ability and integrity command the confidence of Canadians. It is comforting to know that there is at least one department of Government patronage into which the pernicious influence of political partizanship is rarely able to enter.

THE Secretary of the "Anti-Poverty" Society, in Toronto, mildly complains that the recent refusal of the Ministerial Association to receive a deputation from that society was based on a mis-apprehension, and courteously requests the Association to re-consider its decision against receiving the deputation. We are somewhat disposed to hope that the request may be acceded to. It would be interesting and could do no harm to hear what the more intelligent members of a society whose very name seems to suggest