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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

IF the Hon. T. M. Daly, the new Minister of the Interior, is correctly reported in the newspapers, his recent after-dinner speeches have not thrown a flood of light on the Manitoba school question. He is reported as having said that he did not think the question had been approached in the right way by either the Manitoban or the Canadian people, but we listen in vain for any clear indication of what that "right way" would have been. He thinks that the people mentioned do not appear to realize that this question is one of the greatest moment and significance, and fraught with the greatest dangers to the Dominion at large, but so far as we are able to judge it is the very fact that the people do realize these things which has created so intense an interest in the question. Mr. Daly is further quoted as saying that "when the Government went to the people of Europe and other lands and asked them to come to these shores it should be able to ask them to come to a land where they could exercise the same religious beliefs in the same way in which they did in the land they left. He (the speaker) wanted them to come to this land imbued with the idea that it was a land of free institutions and of liberty, a land where they could train their children according to their own beliefs, and a land in which they could become a part of a free and united people. He wanted to be able to offer homes to all law-abiding people, paying no regard to their creed, their belief, or their nationality." This is sufficiently non-committal, to be sure. If these words are really the substance of the Minister's remarks on the subject, they would not have done badly for a response of the Delphic Oracle, seeing that either party to the contest may, with almost equal facility, take comfort out of them. Whether Manitoba shall succeed or not in finally shaking off the incubus of the Separate School system, no one, so far as we have heard, proposes to interfere with anyone's "exercise of the same religious belief in the same way" in which he exercised it in the land from which he came, provided his way in that land was not to exercise it at the expense of his fellow-citizens, through the medium of some special aid or privi-

lege granted by the State. Apart from the ambiguous and somewhat suspicious clause just quoted, Mr. Daly's declaration in favour of equal rights and liberties, irrespective of creed or nationality, could not be objected to by the most ardent advocate of a uniform public school system.

OLD-FASHIONED Toryism in British politics is on its deathbed. Perhaps it would be more strictly correct to say that it is performing *felo de se* by euthanasia. The process has been going on for a long time. Its commencement dates back to the period when the Conservative leaders first "caught the Liberals bathing and stole their clothes." From that day to this there has been no real, unadulterated Toryism in British politics, though there have been many genuine Tories in the ranks of the Conservative party. But for many years past Conservatism in England, as in Canada, has been but another name for a cautious and more or less reluctant Liberalism. Its enemies would, we suppose, call it "opportunism," with a reproachful accent, though it does not necessarily follow that the term, or rather the policy it denotes, deserves reproach. That depends rather upon the spirit in which it is taken up and the mode in which it is carried out. Be that as it may, it is now evident that the new Conservatism in which the old Toryism was merged, is itself about to undergo a still more rapid transformation, to re-appear when Parliament opens, or before, as a modified Radicalism. How else are we to interpret the new programme adopted the other day by the Conference of the Conservative Associations held in Edinburgh? It would be unsafe, in the absence of fuller details than can be had by cable, to discuss the reported features of the policy. We are not told, for instance, whether or not the "electoral registration reform, with equalization of votes," involves the "one-man, one-vote" principle. If it does, it is a clear improvement upon the Liberal proposal, which lacks the equalization of representative values. The other reforms, according to the cabled list—the reduction of the period of occupancy required to qualify voters, the extension of the franchise to women rate-payers, the disfranchisement of illiterate voters, the principle of local option in the liquor-licensing business, State provision for old-age pensions, and for assisted land-purchase, etc., are some of them decidedly in advance of the Newcastle programme. Others, especially those looking to paternalism in regard to the working classes, are of more doubtful utility. It is not clear that the workmen themselves desire that kind of coddling. What the more enlightened of them ask is that privilege shall be taken away from those who have long had it at their expense, not that it should be transferred to themselves. They may be prepared to go a good way in the direction of socialism, but paternalism is a very different thing.

PROBABLY the most serious lack in the new Conservative, or, as we should perhaps say, Liberal-Unionist-Conservative, programme is the conspicuous absence of any hint at disestablishment. It is hardly possible that the cable correspondent would have omitted so important a matter had it been included. On the other hand, it is difficult to conceive this important conference of statesmen and political leaders as having failed to take into consideration that which is, probably, the most glaring instance of old-time privilege and unfit survival which will remain in Great Britain when the reforms now fairly on the *tapis* shall have been effected. The Conference seem to have gone some distance in the direction of decentralization in the proposal to transfer private bill procedure from Parliamentary committees to local bodies, and the leaders may be pretty safely relied on to go further when necessary towards the considerable instalment of federalism which is already looming on the far horizon. Meanwhile it is not unlikely that one of the first effects of this bold flank movement will be to spur the Liberals on to still more radical bids for popular favour. Where it will all end it is impossible to foresee. Rather let us say, "whereto it will lead," for nothing is more certain than that there will be no end to this kind of movement, short of the great winding up of all human affairs. It would be folly, how-

ever, for anyone, no matter with what dread he may look forward to the reign of triumphant democracy, to blame the Conservative party for thus competing with the Liberals in helping on the revolution. They have no alternative save political extinction. As we had occasion to observe not long since in another connection, the germ, of which all the changes already made and yet to be are but the flowering and the fruitage, was wrapped up in the first Reform Bill. Every step taken in the extension of the franchise makes the next step inevitable, and there can be no stepping backward.

THE Royal Commission appointed by the Gladstone Government to enquire into and report upon the Evicted Tenants question is meeting with the usual fate of Royal Commissions appointed for party purposes. Whether Justice Matthews' conduct of the investigation has been such as to justify the action of the landlords' legal representatives, in withdrawing from its sessions, and to give ground for the charges of favouritism which are being hurled against it, is a question upon which we have as yet no means of forming an opinion. It may be that the Government was really in need of information with reference to the past history and present condition of some of the evicted, and of the circumstances under which their eviction took place, which it had no readier means of obtaining. But it is pretty clear that the practice of putting up a royal commission as a buffer between the Government and either its opponents or its recalcitrant friends is one that is in great danger of becoming an abuse of privilege. Even when a special investigation is needed, it is questionable whether it is in the interests of good government that judges should be selected to conduct it, especially since they are not usually required to pronounce judgments in such matters, but only to collect and sift evidence. It is not easy to see why other men might not be found who could perform the duty quite as well. When judges are chosen for the purpose and, especially when they are taken, as is pretty sure to be the case, from those whose political leanings are known to be towards the side of the Party Government which appoints them, it is impossible to free the act from the suspicion of being an attempt to trade for party advantage upon the supposed impartiality of the Bench. The discovery which is pretty sure to be made that such impartiality can seldom be relied on in political matters can hardly fail to have the effect of shaking the popular confidence in the Bench's freedom from bias in those civil and criminal matters in which it is, as a rule, able to hold the balance even. It is in favour of Justice Matthews and his associates that they are being assailed from the Parnellite as well as from the Conservative side, but with the best intentions it seems doubtful whether, without the co-operation of all parties concerned, they can succeed in eliciting "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," from either reluctant or too ardent witnesses.

WHAT is the significance of the sweeping victory which has been achieved by the Democratic party in the United States? Is it a mere party triumph, a purely national affair, an indication of the love of change which is characteristic of a fickle democracy, which sometimes seems to delight in change for change's sake? Is it simply the product and proof of better organization and more vigorous leadership on the part of the victorious party than on that of its rival? Has it been brought about by some lucky concurrence of fortuitous events favourable to the winning side, or was it effected by the skilful use of some popular cry, raised at the last moment, and unscrupulously turned to partisan account when there was no longer time to rebut it and counteract its influence? No unprejudiced observer can have failed to see very clearly that it was due to none of these causes, or to any other cause of a transient and local kind. Never, we venture to affirm, in the history of a self-ruling people was the issue of a national election more clearly defined or more deliberately decided with reference to a single, overshadowing question. That question has in reality been before the nation for some years, but its discus-