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Technical Education. The New Brunswick Legislature has passed a Bill introduced by Premier Emmerson making provision on the part of the Province for the establishment of an agricultural and technical school for the Maritime Provinces. Under the proposed measure the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council is authorized and empowered to enter into arrangements with the Governments of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, or either of them, for the establishment of the proposed school at some suitable point to be chosen in the Maritime Provinces. Mr. Emmerson explained that while it is not the intention that the proposed institution shall come into competition with such institutions as the technical school connected with McGill University or the Massachusetts School of Technology, it is expected to afford a technical training in agriculture, mining and mechanical arts, and will have a farm and workshop with necessary equipments for experimental and practical training. The Province is to contribute a proportional share—but not to exceed \$25,000—of the cost, the expense of annual maintenance is to be borne by the Provinces according to such proportion as shall be agreed upon, and the management of the institution is also to be determined by agreement of the provinces interested. We believe that a bill of a similar character is before the Nova Scotia Legislature.

The Sovereignty of Parliament. A somewhat notable debate occurred in the Dominion House of Commons on Tuesday last upon a resolution offered by Mr. Bourassa of Labelle. Mr. Bourassa, it will be remembered, is the member who considered it necessary, as a protest against the Government's action in sending troops to South Africa without the authorization of Parliament, to resign his seat and was re-elected without opposition. The resolution alluded to was as follows:

"That this House insists on the principle of the sovereignty and the independence of Parliament as the basis of British institutions and the safeguard of the civil and political liberties of British citizens, and refuses consequently to consider the action of the Government in relation to the South African war as a precedent which should commit this country to any action in the future.

"That this House further declares that it opposes any change in the political and military relations which exist at present between Canada and Great Britain unless such change is initiated by the sovereign will of Parliament and sanctioned by the people of Canada."

It is rather difficult to see what there is in this resolution itself to which either Government or Parliament should object. The principle that Government should incur the responsibilities and the expense of engaging in war only on the authority of Parliament, is one which, as a general principle, no thinking man will seriously question, and the resolution embodies the principle in moderate terms. It seems therefore somewhat remarkable that the Premier should have vigorously opposed Mr. Bourassa's motion, that in doing so he should have been cheered enthusiastically on both sides of the House and that, out of 129 members present, 119 voted against the resolution. The explanation of the matter appears to be in part that Mr. Bourassa introduced his resolution under such circumstances that it could not, according to the rules of the House, be amended in any way, and must therefore be accepted or rejected as a whole, and as it stood the resolution, in fact and intention if not in form, censured the action of the Government. Moreover, Mr. Bourassa was known to hold opinions adverse to the contention and action of the Imperial Government in its controversy with the South African Republic, and those opinions he freely expressed in the speech in which he introduced his resolution. We take it, therefore, that in so emphatically rejecting the resolution, the House did not intend to

trample upon the principle which it sets forth, but rather to express its entire dissent from Mr. Bourassa's views as to the justice of Great Britain's contention with the Transvaal, and to affirm that the principle of the sovereignty of Parliament is not to be so interpreted as to forbid independent action by Government in case of emergency and when the public sentiment of the country is seen to be strongly in favor of such action. There is no reason, however, to impugn the loyalty and patriotism of Mr. Bourassa and the nine men, all French Canadians—five Liberals and four Conservatives—who voted with him, because—like the Hon. John Morley, the Hon. James Bryce and many other more or less distinguished Englishmen—they are not persuaded of the justice of the British cause in this war. That French Canadians are not so enthusiastic in their attachment to the British Crown and Empire as their fellow colonists of British descent is a fact which we regret. But we believe that it would be a slander upon our fellow citizens of French origin to say that they are not loyal and not patriotic, and we shall best promote the cause of Imperial unity by treating their racial feelings and their ideals with that measure of respect and hospitality which they deserve.

The Queen's Visit to Ireland. Among the notable events of the present year is to be numbered the Queen's approaching visit to Ireland. Instead of the trip to the Riviera which Her Majesty had contemplated, she will cross the Irish channel and permit her Irish subjects to behold her gracious face. The visit is the more remarkable because it is forty years since the royal feet last pressed the soil of the Emerald Isle, and Her Majesty is an octogenarian now. Victoria has always been one of the wisest among women, but in her old age, and particularly amid these stormy days of war, her spirit seems moved with a profounder wisdom and her heart stirred with a feeling of great kindness toward all her subjects. This projected visit to Ireland, if the Queen's strength is equal to it, is doubtless a dictate of wisdom, and we may confidently hope that the reception she will receive at the hands of her Irish subjects will be more grateful to her than the genial airs of the Mediterranean, while this demonstration of the Queen's sympathy with the Irish people will do more to heal old wounds and promote national unity than could be effected by any number of reluctant concessions to the demands of Irish politicians. No doubt the proper psychological moment is being chosen for the royal visit, for while the Irish Nationalist leaders have been declaiming bitterly, in Parliament and out of Parliament, against the war and the Government, Irish soldiers have been shedding their blood freely for the cause of the Empire, and Irish Generals have been leading the Queen's armies to victory. It is remarkable how many of the ablest British Generals are of Irish birth. There is Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, Sir George White, Generals French, Kelly-Kenny, Clery, and we know not how many more. Great Britain owes to the Irish generals and the Irish soldiers a debt which will be fittingly recognized by the visit which the aged and beloved sovereign is about to pay to that part of her dominions. No one of course will be so foolish to expect that the long inheritance of trouble connected with the Irish question will vanish at the presence of the Queen in Ireland. Still much good may come from the visit by what it will do to break down old prejudices and create new sympathies between the people on both sides of the Channel. The worst enemies of Ireland today are, without doubt, those Irishmen who are doing their utmost to keep the old hatreds alive and active.

The War and the Poets. The war-like spirit of the times has so stirred the hearts of the poets that some of them are executing magnificent manœuvres upon their winged steeds. Mr. William Watson, having conceived the poetic thought that Nature is fighting for the Boers in the present war, gave expression to his thought in the Westminster Review as follows:

"When lofty Spain came towering up the seas,
This little stubborn land to daunt and quell,
The winds of heaven were our auxiliaries,
And smote her, that she fell

"Ah, not today is Nature on our side!
The mountains and the rivers are our foe,
And Nature, with the heart of man allied,
Is hard to overthrow."

This to Sir Edwin Arnold seemed almost a reasonable utterance, and that doughty knight forthwith gallops into the arena and cries:

"Imputes he mortal passions to the mountains?
And, for a party stroke,
Feigns he that waterways and river-fountains
Fight for the Boer's ill yoke?

"Enough to answer England's slanderous son,
And brand his calumny,
I bore her files to battle, every one—
Her Lover—Ocean—I!"

Then comes a great unknown and anonymous poet who utters words of lofty rebuke, as follows:

"Two poets, in two graceless periods born,
With verse two penny papers did adorn.
One said, 'Dame Nature means to back the Boer,'
The other, 'It's a slander, sir, I'm sure!'
As poesy is clearly gone to pot,
I merely wish to say to both, 'Wot wrot!'"

How Pretoria is Fortified. The Boers of the Transvaal are stubborn fighters, and bitterly opposed to British rule, but they have also a shrewd eye to their own interests, which we are inclined to think will prevent them carrying their hatred of the British to the point of self-annihilation. But if President Kruger and his counsellors resolved to resist to the bitter end, they can perhaps prolong the war for some months, and make it expensive in blood and treasure both to themselves and to the British. The country in which they will operate is highly favorable to their methods of fighting, and according to all accounts their capital city, by reason of its natural position and its fortifications, is a stronghold capable of prolonged resistance. It is said that the seven hills which hem in Pretoria on all sides, are crowned with seven forts of great strength, all built under the expert advice and direction of European engineers. Two of these forts were completed between 1894 and 1896, and five of them have been built since the Jameson raid. They command every approach to the city. It may perhaps be unfortunate for the Boers if the British are acquainted with the details of these forts, and it is said that complete plans of them were in the possession of the British War Office before the war began. There was a great deal of mystery about the work, but, according to British authority, two English engineering officers worked as navvies in order to get an opportunity thoroughly to acquaint themselves with the construction and plan of the forts; and information was also obtained from other sources. However this may be, the British have no doubt that the forts were elaborately and strongly constructed. They are all alike in their chief external features. They were built of masonry, with earthworks on the outer faces, and their armament includes much heavy ordnance and all the fifteen centimetre Creusot and rapid-fire guns that the Boers desired to place in position. The London Daily Mail, in some recent appreciative remarks on these fortifications, said: The forts are certainly elaborately furnished with all the requirements of modern warfare. Piles of sandbags are stacked up to the level of the enclosing walls. A powerful searchlight in each fort is capable of sweeping the surrounding country for many miles. Telephones are laid between the forts and the government buildings in Pretoria. There are large stocks of mealies (maize) ready for the eventuality of a siege. There is said to be communication by means of underground passages between the forts and the ammunition stores and magazines. Lastly, it is presumed that the approaches to the fort are mined in various directions.