

REMEDIAL
LEGISLATION.

It seems more than probable that the coming Dominion elections will be fought out on the lines of Remedial Legislation—at least that question will be a leading issue in the contest that is to come, no matter to what extent our statesmen may strive to remove it from the political arena beforehand.

Without discussing the pros or cons of the issue, or expressing an opinion this way or that, for it is not in our province to do so, we cannot refrain from drawing attention, as an independent journal, to the harm being done Canada by the introduction of religio-racial questions, like the present one, into the field of politics.

There can be no disputing the fact that the raising of such cries is doing much towards keeping this country back. This is exemplified in a dozen different ways. By the discontent which such questions engender; by the interruption and unsettling of business; by the animosity and strife that is created, and by the want of faith in ourselves and in Canada which they cause. In these and in many other ways too numerous to mention are seen the disastrous consequences which follow the impolitic introduction of such issues.

The past history of these questions shows that, by appealing to our worst impulses, individuals are pushed into prominence who would otherwise have no weight or standing in the community whatsoever. The hypocrisy of their professions is borne out by the fact that the moment such men acquire the object for which they have been striving their ardor cools, and they grow faint in the support of a cause which they have made use of as a stepping stone to the object of their ambition, or else they suddenly find new light which requires them to renounce that cause altogether.

The fostering of discontent and the promotion of discord between two bodies of the community is something which in many countries would be looked upon as high treason, and the individual who adopted such a means for obtaining votes would be immediately imprisoned as an anarchist of some kind or other, and an arch enemy to the country; but judging

by our reception of such matters it would seem that we in Canada had got well beyond any little weakness of that kind. Within the past decade there has been a multiplicity of race and religious issues flaunted in the face of the electorate of this country, and the individuals who have been responsible for their creation have in turn been lauded up to the skies by the cajoled community on whom they have imposed.

These questions of race and creed have no fitting place in politics, and the history of the world shows them to be most dangerous factors with which to tamper. It was the attempt to govern the state by the church which led indirectly to the Reformation; it was the raising of a religious cry among the numerous castes of India which led to the Sepoy mutiny of 1857; and to-day it is religious fanaticism which is prompting the terrible massacres at present taking place in Armenia.

While we in Canada may not be on the verge of either a mutiny or a massacre, yet the immediate result of the course we are at present pursuing may prove ultimately more disastrous. By constantly arraying the Protestant Provinces against the Catholic ones; by continually opposing English Ontario to French Quebec; by perpetually antagonizing one religious denomination with another, the natural outcome must be, that each will become so thoroughly disgusted with the hope of ever getting along peaceably with the other, that it will cast about for a means of escape from the supposed grievances, which exist only in the minds of those unscrupulous politicians whose imaginative faculties are certainly better developed than their knowledge of truth and veracity. The escape, and the only escape, which will then present itself, will be assuredly annexation to the United States—a step that no Canadian in the possession of his normal faculties would think twice of advocating at the present day.

It therefore behoves every true Canadian, who has the interest of the country at heart, to discountenance all race and religious cries, and discredit the narrow politicians who advance them.