

THE SHAREHOLDER.

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CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

English in Our Schools.	Canada's Export Trade.
The Influence of Divorces	Answers to Correspondents.
Pernicious Literature.	The Behring's Sea Seizure
Was it a Gambling Debt.	The Post Office Savings Bank.
An Insurance Suit.	The Stock Market.
Boulanger on the Wane.	Editorial Notes.
A Canadian Cable.	Miscellaneous.
The Royal Grants.	Contemporary Press.
Matters in Egypt.	
The Tourists' Guide.	

ENGLISH IN OUR SCHOOLS.

WE have contended that in all public schools receiving government aid, it should be a *sine qua non* that the English language should be taught to all scholars no matter what their origin, the reason being that English is the language of the country and that it is in the interest of the child of to-day that he should be taught the language of his country in order to prepare him to compete successfully hereafter with his fellow citizens in the race for life. Were French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, or any other language the predominant one, as English now is, we would deem it our duty to advance the same claims for instruction in that language that we now put forth on behalf of the English tongue. In this matter we are not actuated by a matter of mere sentiment but one of policy, and the sooner discussion on this subject is reduced to this independent basis the sooner will the conviction of its justice and advisability present itself to the minds of those who, blinded by prejudice, can see no good result from anything which proposes to remove the racial barriers which some narrow-minded people would perpetuate. It is, we contend, in the interest of all the future men of this country, that they should speak the English language fluently, and not only speak it fluently, but think in English while speaking, as does the Hon. Sir HECTOR Langevin who, in this respect, is the best emphasis which our argument can have. We have also the Hon. Sir A. P. Caron and the Hon. J. A. Chapleau, all ministers of the crown, whose speeches in English would be highly creditable to those whose native tongue it was, and where, we ask, would these men be to-day if they had succumbed to the prejudice of those who object to having the English language taught in all our schools? Under these circumstances we appeal to Cardinal Taschereau, whom we acknowledge as a man of education and great ability, a clever man, in the highest application of the expression, we appeal to him, we say, not to put his fellow countrymen at a disadvantage by excluding the teaching of English from his schools. If French Canadians are to aspire to the highest offices of the State—and which of them with proper education, aye, and may we not add without it, does not do so?—to say nothing of all the minor

positions which are opening up from time to time to aspirants for Government positions, it is absolutely necessary that the English language *must be taught*, and that thoroughly and by competent teachers. A mere smattering of the language will not do, they must read, write and speak it fluently if they wish to compete with their fellow-citizens of other origins. Without such a knowledge of it they must be content to take a back seat, and to recognize the fact that their inferiority is due, not to want of ability, absence of intelligence, or mental incapacity, but simply and solely to the trammels of ignorance put upon them by those who preferred the despotism of prejudice to the liberty of knowledge. The sooner the opponents to teaching English in all our schools realize this fact, the sooner will they strive to put the youth of the country on the highway that leads to that success which has made Sir HECTOR, Sir ADOLPHE and Hon Mr. CHAPLEAU what they are.

THE INFLUENCE OF DIVORCES.

THE recent publication of statistics respecting the granting of divorces in the United States show that from 1866 to 1886 no less than 328,716 divorces were granted. A steady increase from year to year of that period is shown, beginning with 9,937 in 1866 and ending with 25,535 in 1886. While the population of the country increased 60 per cent., the percentage of divorces increased 157 per cent. Of the total divorces granted 112,639 were to wives, and 216,077 to husbands. The grounds on which these were granted were:—Scriptural reasons in 67,636 cases, of which 29,480 were against the husband, and 38,156 against the wife; Cruelty in 51,520 cases, of which 45,419 were against husbands and 6,101 against wives; desertion in 126,556 cases, of which 75,118 were against the husbands and 51,438 against the wives; drunkenness in 13,843 cases, of which 12,411 were against the husbands and 1,432 against the wives; neglect to provide in 7,948 cases, all against the husband. Statistics such as these indicate a relaxation in morality which are saddening to reflect upon. Their influence is far reaching and one may well shudder at the contemplation of it. As a contrast to this let us now cast a glance at similar statistics furnished to the British House of Commons a few months ago. The return then given shewed that during the thirty years from 1858 to the end of 1887 there were 2,784 petitions for judicial separation and 10,561 for divorce. Of the former rather more than one-third were successful and about one-eighth were dismissed, the remainder, that is to say more than one-half, were arranged privately. A much larger part of the divorce cases resulted successfully, the number of decrees pronounced being 7,321, an average of 266 per year, and nearly three-quarters of the number of petitions. About 2,428 cases never came to a hearing, but of those which were brought into court

only 812, or one-thirteenth of the total, were dismissed. The contrast between the statistics of the two countries is very striking and shews the desirability of limiting the ground of divorces entirely to scriptural reasons. Free divorce is a curse to a country. Some there are who argue that the American statistics of divorces should operate against any movement to change the law of divorce which now exists in this country. Our law recognizes divorce, but limits the ground to one cause. The movement to bring about a change is not one to enlarge the list of causes, but to transfer the trial from the senators, whose judgments have not received judicial training, to a court, or courts, presided over by impartial and skilled judges who know how to sift evidence and value it solely according to its merit. The movement aims at removing the restrictions which now exist, whereby divorce for genuine cause is limited to the wealthy while the poor man is excluded. The movement has for its object the granting of equal justice to rich and poor alike. It does not aim at opening the doors to a flood of divorces such as covers the land in the United States. Those who allege it does state that which they know to be untrue.

PERNICIOUS LITERATURE.

THAT the youth of Canada is being tainted by contact with the pernicious literature which has become so accessible to the boys of the present generation, is becoming more and more painfully evident from the disclosures which are being daily made before our police courts. The literature we refer to is not, strictly speaking, of the immoral class, but it is more insidious, for it excites in the youths an ambition to imitate the fictitious criminals of whom they read, and a desire to become such as they have been. The minds of those who would in probability become useful and active citizens if properly directed, instead of being fed with nourishing pabulum are crammed with fascinating descriptions of criminal adventures and imaginary heroes which poison the purity which should prevail. The list of boy criminals is swelling rapidly and the question, What should be done? becomes one of general public interest. The answer is simply an appeal to parents to do their duty. There is not that interest taken in training the boys that there should be. They are left too much to themselves and allowed that liberty of action which is *injurious to them*. Parents must look after their boys, aye and their girls too, more than they do, by ascertaining what books they read, what company they keep and *how and where* their leisure hours are passed. They should supply them with good interesting books and train them to read them. They should also see that improper books are kept from them. If parents will do their duty and train up their children as they should do the race of boy burglars will soon disappear.