

been extended to them; but this brings forward a question which would raise a discussion quite as fanatical as that at present raging in our midst. If Sunday cars are not voted a majority on this occasion, it is not improbable that next time they will be given a start if merely for the sake of peace.

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The Sunday-car question raises an issue, however, which is more interesting from a collegiate standpoint, than whether on wet Sundays or hot Sundays we shall walk or ride our wheels. The shifting of the onus of the responsibility of deciding the Sunday-car question from the City Council to the people is a move open to debate, but when we consider this *referendum* as a possible solution of the deadlock which occasionally occurs in second chambers—the deadlock in the House of Lords recently will serve as an instance in point—we have opened up a question worthy of consideration. The referendum is by no means a new expedient, for we have a very fair sample of it during the Commonwealth, and at the present day it may be seen working successfully under the Federal Government of Switzerland and in many states of the American Union. The Swiss use of this referendum presents the example more interesting to us from the nature of the Swiss Confederation. With them the referendum is employed whenever there is under consideration "any Federal law of general application not by its nature demanding instant application in the interest of the state." It "must be referred to a poll of the people, 'Yes' or 'No,' if either 30,000 voters or eight Cantons speaking by their governments demand such reference." The opportunity thus afforded of having any particular law referred to the people for final decision is, within proper limits, almost invaluable. We have seen occasions when the majority behind the government of the day did not by any means represent a majority of the sum total of the votes of the country. To cite a concrete case, we may suppose that the In's have a majority in the House capable of carrying any measure the party may chose to introduce, while at the same time on summing the votes cast in the election we find that the number of votes cast for all the candidates of the Out's exceeds the total of those cast for all the candidates of the In's by several tens of thousands. Again, it may happen that the party in power holds a small majority in the House but not sufficient to meet the coalition of several factions and the opposition. The governing party by an exchange of support gains over a sufficient number of factions to have a majority against all comers, and it does it in this way: A has a bill not entirely favoured by B and much disliked by C, but by promising to support similar bills of B and C for which A has no liking all three measures are carried. To deal with this problem other than suggestively neither space nor our ability will permit, but, to sum up shortly, some of the advantages claimed for the referendum will serve to suggest a line for further consideration of an important political problem which the Sunday-car question has brought into prominence. Some of the advantages claimed for the referendum are these:—(1) It reposes a right to veto in hands strong enough to wield it. (2) It declares the real will of the country, whereas a mere majority vote of the representatives may not represent it. (3) It prevents legislation by a majority of a majority. (4) It prevents legislation by log-rolling bargains. (5) It gives a final decision one way or the other on contentious schemes of legislation.

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The strongest objection that can be raised to the referendum is that it would deal a death blow to our system of Cabinet Administration, for, were the government measure defeated on the referendum, the Administration must needs resign. Nor necessarily, we think, for by precedent established the want of confidence vote in the House could still be kept the controlling force, for it is not

difficult to imagine a case in which the general policy of the government would have the entire confidence of the country and in which some particular measure would be distasteful. Moreover with our second chamber and proper restrictions as to its application we need not have too frequent resort to this final and all powerful veto, lest we fall inextricably into the quagmire which has been pointed out, that of having many governors and yet being not governed.

THE EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL.

Again a change has been made, by statute of the Legislature of the Province, in the constitution of the Educational Council, but, unfortunately, so far as has been learned, none has been made in the duties to be discharged by the Council. The only functions performed by it at present are to appoint examiners (including associate examiners), and to receive reports from the examiners it appoints.

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The Central Committee, of which the various latter-day creations have been the successors, whether known under the name of Joint Board, or of Educational Council, used to exercise advisory, if not legislative, powers in the matter of making up programmes of study for the Common and the High Schools. Since its abolition, about 1890, the advisory functions have been performed mainly by persons unknown and irresponsible, while the legislative functions have, by the apparently tacit consent of all parties concerned, been allowed to devolve chiefly upon the Senate of the University of Toronto. The latter is the case, at any rate, with regard to High Schools and Collegiate Institutes, for since 1890 the examinations for first-class and second-class teachers' certificates have been practically identical with the examinations for pass and honour matriculation.

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For two or three years previous to 1890 Queen's, Trinity, and Victoria, which was then independent, had held a joint examination for matriculation and had had a common curriculum for that examination. The plan worked well, but the University of Toronto, which had held aloof, made an agreement on its own account with the Education Department by which the examinations for its matriculation and the Department's examinations for teachers' certificates should be held together in the High Schools throughout the country. Victoria, being about to federate with Toronto, as a matter of course, parted company with her old allies in the matriculation scheme, while the latter, beguiled possibly by the federation sentiment that was in the air, gave up their own plan and accepted that proposed by the University of Toronto and the Education Department. At the time, the understanding was that Trinity and Queen's should have a share, not only in conducting the new examinations, but in drawing up future curricula. This understanding has not been lived up to as it ought to have been by either the Department or the University of Toronto.

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When the first Joint Board was appointed, it was found to consist of four members appointed directly by the Senate of the University of Toronto and four nominated by the Minister of Education. The latter could hardly have made his selection on a worse principle than he did, three of his men being officers of his own Department—the Deputy Minister and the two High School Inspectors!

The ordinary papers were headed University Matriculation instead of Matriculation into the Universities, or something of that kind, and in the first year the scholarship papers went a step further, in that they were called University of Toronto scholarship papers. Justice requires it