

further affirmed, is now the American practice. The fact that, a few years ago, an English delegation of thirteen men, all prominent in public life, presented to the President and Congress of the United States a memorial signed by 233 members of the British House of Commons, and that, only two years ago, the House of Commons unanimously expressed its approval of the action of the International American Conference, declaring the adoption of arbitration as a principle of international law in the settlement of controversies between these republics, are cited, with others, in support of the opinion that the present time is ripe for a forward movement for the formal adoption of an act making arbitration henceforth the rule of national life. We may refer to the subject again when we have before us a full report of the proceedings. Meanwhile it is to be deplored that, by its naval policy, the United States seems to have committed the nation to a step in the opposite direction.

A Crying Evil.

While we have not much sympathy with those who would tie the hands of the Government too closely in the matter of such expenditures as those for the funerals of distinguished men who have given their time and energies to the service of their country, we cannot but think that one remark made by the Minister of Public Works, in the course of the debate which recently took place in consequence of the inordinately large expenses incurred in connection with the obsequies of the late Sir John Thompson, is worthy of serious attention. That remark was to the effect that the shortness of the interval within which the needed supplies had to be purchased made it impossible for his Department to exercise the care which is necessary in order to avoid extortionate charges. That means, we suppose, that practically everyone with whom the Government had to deal, including even the large and respectable firms from which they made their most extensive purchases, took a mean advantage of the circumstances to compel the Government to pay extortionate rates for the things needed. One would have expected that such firms, and every honourable man with whom the Government had to deal on the occasion, would have poured in indignant protests against such an imputation. Yet who does not know that it is almost the rule for dealers and employees of every kind to exact, or attempt to exact, larger prices for services rendered, from the Government, which is steward of the people's money, than from private individuals. The rule seems to hold good even in regard to the sermons and lectures of clergymen. Why is it? Are we all rogues when the chance tempts us?

True and False Economy.

From recent reports and discussions in the Toronto City Council it appears that there are certain sections of the City in which the number of children of school age far exceeds the accommodation provided in the public school buildings. An attempt is made to supply this grave deficiency in part by the use of rented rooms, illy adapted for the purpose, as they are sure to be, and in many instances, as is almost equally certain to be the case, in consequence of the want of adaptation for the purpose, falling far below any respectable sanitary standard for school-rooms. These deficiencies should be supplied with the least possible delay. The parents of the children who are crowded into unsanitary rooms, as well as of those children for whom, even with makeshift, places cannot be found in the schools, should accept no half-way measures in so vital a matter. One of the things which the City cannot afford to do, no matter what its business condition—and we are glad to note the signs of returning pros-

perity on every hand—is to fail to make suitable provision for the elementary education of every child of school age within its boundaries, and to see to it that every child gets the benefit of such provision. The council which fails to affect this with all reasonable speed fails in one of its chief duties. Nothing less can justify the existing system of taxation for the support of schools, conserve the equal rights of its citizens, or save the City and the Province from the disgrace and the danger, not only of illiteracy itself, but of the vicious characters which are sure to be developed in large numbers of those children who are permitted to run at large on the streets because there is no room for them in the schools.

Teaching Thrift in Schools.

The "cursed greed of gold" is unquestionably one of the most degrading vices of the day, and no one wishes to see either his own children or those of other people trained up to miserliness, or even to parsimoniousness. Yet, if the question were asked whether do individuals and communities in this Western world suffer more from avarice or from the lack of reasonable thrift, there can be little doubt that the verdict of a Commission of inquiry would sustain the claims of the latter to the bad distinction. The fact is that tens of thousands of lives are made miserable because of neglect to instil right views into the minds of children and to train them to right habits in this respect. As a rule it would probably be found that not the wealthy parents, or those who are in comfortable circumstances, but those who themselves live from hand to mouth, are the greatest sinners against their children in this respect. One is often startled to see with what reckless improvidence these who live perpetually on the "ragged edge" of want will often spend any small sum of money which may come into their possession through charity or otherwise. How often will they, without a moment's hesitation, make an expenditure which the average family in much better circumstances would at once decide they could not afford. We will not spend time in speculating on the true relations of cause and effect in such cases. But setting out from the simple facts of observation, it is very easy to reach the conclusion that, seeing that so many parents know nothing of thrift themselves and are consequently incapable of teaching in to their children, it becomes the duty of the State, in self-defence, as well as on the broader principle which charges it with the duty of promoting the greatest good of the greatest number, and at the same time doing its best to develop the highest type of citizenship, to undertake the task. In no other way can this be so readily done as through the public schools, by the savings-bank method. We need not remind our readers of the great success which has attended this method in Great Britain, France, and other European countries, or with what hopeful results it is being tried in some parts of the United States. A little reflection must suffice to convince any reasonable mind that, by the establishment under proper safeguards of savings banks in connection with the public schools, tens of thousands of children of both poor and rich may be trained to frugal habits, and at the same time given an insight into the value of money and the business methods of dealing with it, which will be of inestimable value to them, and by natural sequence, to the country, through all their lives. We venture to urge the matter upon the attention of the Education Department, and to hope that no time may be lost in establishing a simple but efficient system of savings banks for the children in connection with all the public schools.