

culous without knowing it. Like other able men he has a "fad," but it is one that adds to his fitness for membership in a body that has to do with municipal affairs. He is the chief promoter, if not the originator, of the "good roads" movement, and it was wise on the part of the North Oxford electors to put him in a position to make so important a propaganda more successful.

#### Municipal Defalcations

The confusion into which the Treasurer of Guelph city has allowed his accounts to fall is only one more in a long series of most instructive incidents in our municipal history. Counties, cities, towns, villages, townships, all suffer alike from the want of a proper audit of their accounts. The treasurer begins by mixing up the municipal funds with his own, and where the latter run short he very naturally borrows from the former, fully expecting to repay the loan before an audit takes place. Unable to do this, he devises some plan of "cooking" the accounts so as to cover up the deficiency until he has had time to make it good. A perfunctory audit fails to reveal the wrong-doing, and the treasurer quite naturally continues it until he has become so deeply involved that neither concealment nor restitution is any longer possible. Sometimes the confusion in municipal accounts is found to be due to incompetent book-keeping, but whatever its cause the fact should be brought out by the auditor if he knows what to do and has the courage to do it. As we have a Provincial inspector of insurance companies' accounts, whose salary is paid by the companies, why not have a Provincial inspector of municipal accounts, whose salary might be paid by small contributions from each municipality? The mere existence of such an officer would serve as a deterrent against deliberate defalcation, and he might do much useful work by educating municipal councils and their officers up to greater efficiency in the discharge of their duties.

#### The Anglican Synod of Canada.

For the first time in its history the Anglican Synod, which represents the whole of the Dominion, has met outside of the older Provinces. Following the example set some time ago by the Presbyterian General Assembly it has held its session this year in Winnipeg. Which of the other great religious denominations will follow suit? The General Conference of the Methodist Church meets quadrennially; would it be expecting too much of it to resolve at its next meeting to hold the one following it in the North west? The missionary needs of that vast region are very great, and nothing is better adapted to impress this fact on any large body of Christians than a meeting of its Supreme Court on the ground, even if it be barely within the gateway. Moreover, these great meetings help to promote the solidarity of the Dominion by making our clergy of all denominations educators of their own people as to the greatness of the heritage of which they are part proprietors.

#### An Envoy to Rome.

The allegation has been publicly made that Mr. Laurier is about to send a messenger to Rome to lay before His Holiness Leo. XIII. his scheme for the settlement of the Manitoba School difficulty. Mr. Laurier's equally public denial of any such intention must be regarded as made in good faith. The proposal, as published, seemed in the last degree improbable, partly because the sending of such an accredited envoy is unnecessary, and partly because it would be unpopular with Mr. Laurier's Protestant supporters. There are other ways of securing what is in itself legitimate and desirable—that

the Pope, who is the admitted and undoubted Head of the Roman Catholic Church, should be made fully aware of the side of the Manitoba case which Archbishop Langevin would not voluntarily present to him. Some of the Quebec bishops have gone of their own accord, or have been summoned to Rome. It may turn out that their going has something to do with the school question. It would be very unlike the great ecclesiastical statesman who presides in the Vatican to sanction or repudiate any proposed solution of the difficulty without hearing all sides to the controversy, and surely Mr. Laurier represents one of those sides. The French revolution which has taken place in Quebec must be known even in Rome, and it is not at all unlikely that its lessons have been taken to heart.

#### The Wheat and Flour Duties.

The Dominion Millers' Association at its meeting a few days ago in Toronto passed, without a dissenting voice, a resolution protesting against any change being made in the present import duties on wheat and flour. These will, of course, pass under review in a few weeks, when the whole customs tariff is considered by the Ministry, but at this stage attention may well be called to the fact that those who passed the resolution do not seem to have taken into account the chances of obtaining a reciprocity treaty with the United States. Under such an arrangement free wheat and flour would no doubt be a necessity, and the millers should be prepared to say what they are going to do about it when the policy of reciprocity comes up for discussion.

#### Li Hung Chang.

The great Chinese Envoy has passed through Toronto and taken the Canadian Pacific Railway *en route* to Vancouver, where he will embark on one of the steamers of that line. With a good deal of *naïveté* he made public, while he was in the United States, his reasons for preferring the Canadian route. One was that he disliked transfers, and the other that he disliked the anti-Chinese law. As Canada imposes an import duty on Chinese coming into the country, Li Hung Chang must have accepted what, from his point of view, was the least of two insults to his race. Time will soon tell whether his occidental tour is going to enable the great Oriental to accomplish anything for the advancement of his race. It can safely be said, at all events, that he has left behind him everywhere kindly feelings toward himself, and that his inquisitiveness, sense of humour, shrewdness, and *savoir faire* have agreeably surprised all with whom he came in contact for the first time.

#### Prince Khilkoff.

More significant for the world than the tour of Li Hung Chang is that of the Minister who has charge of the ways of communication throughout the Russian Empire. Prince Khilkoff, who was a skilled engineer before he rose to the position of a public administrator, has charge of all ordinary highways and railways, as well as the whole system of internal navigation. He has started from St. Petersburg for the Pacific coast by way of the Siberian railway. Crossing to San Francisco, he will be taken through the United States by routes that will enable him to make to the most advantage a study of the means by which the transportation problems have there been solved, so far as they have been solved at all. If a visit to Canada is not in his plans already, the Canadian Government should make an effort to induce him to include it, and Mr. Blair should give him an opportunity, in concert with representatives of the United States, to comprehend the great possibilities of the St. Lawrence deep waterway project.