

ligence, the actual opinions and wishes of the majority of the electors, in regard to great matters of public policy, that our faith in the beauty and certainty of our methods sometimes receives a shock. The defects of those methods could hardly be more strikingly shown than in the present political situation. But a few weeks ago we were congratulating our readers that for once the electors of Canada were to have, at the approaching general election, a single, well-defined and over-shadowing issue before them—that of the tariff. It seemed then about as certain as anything yet to come in the political world could be that the great battle about to be fought at the polls would turn on the question of perpetuating or abolishing the “National Policy.” Here was a question appealing so directly to the sense of justice and the patriotism, as well as to the enlightened self-interest, of every intelligent citizen, that it was worth while fighting in such a contest. To-day the battle is being fought in miniature in several constituencies and the word tariff is scarcely mentioned. Another question has been, either accidentally or adroitly, substituted for the former—one of no small importance in itself, it is true, and in the principles involved, yet one which appeals so powerfully to the prejudices of creed and race that it would be folly to hope to see it decided on any broad general principle, dispassionately reached.

Leaving out of sight for a moment the larger question which is so completely obscured, what is the probability that the decision reached at the ballot boxes—which will be known by the time this paper reaches its subscribers—will represent at all truly the real opinions of the majority even upon the question at issue. The battle is being fought largely on party grounds, yet neither party is announcing clearly and unambiguously the policy on which it makes its appeal. On the part of the Government the people are being told in one locality that it by no means follows as a result of the triumph of its candidates that Manitoba is to be coerced by the Dominion. All that the Government has done is to pass on to the Manitoba Government the decision or mandate received from the Lords of the Judicial Committee. In another locality the people are being assured, on the authority of a member of the Cabinet, that if the Manitoba Legislature refuses to restore the Separate Schools, Parliament will be promptly called on to take the matter into its own hands. Turning to the Opposition, we find the situation equally confusing. The voice of the party in Quebec, as spoken by Mr. Tarte, is as strongly in favour of the compulsory restoration of the Separate School System as that uttered through the *Globe* and other organs in Ontario and the other Provinces, is against interference with Provincial rights in the matter. Doubtless many a voter in Ontario will adhere to his old party allegiance and support the Government, in view of the mild policy which he believes it to be about to adopt, who could not have been constrained, even by his allegiance to party, to support a policy of coercion. Doubtless many a Liberal in Quebec will support his party on the strength of Mr. Tarte's advocacy of what he considers justice to the Catholic minority, who could never have been induced to vote even for the party on the basis of the policy declared by the *Globe*. And yet the result of these bye-elections will be held to represent the voice of the people in favour of or against the compulsory restoration of Separate Schools in Manitoba.

Let us take a wider view. Suppose, for the sake of illustration, that Parliament should, at the approaching session, refuse to pass the remedial legislation to which it stands pledged, if the Quebec interpretation of its action may be accepted, and that the Government should dissolve Parliament in consequence. The general election would almost surely be fought on the Manitoba issue. Should the Government be successful in obtaining a majority in the new House, its vic-

tory would count in favour of protection, and be the means probably, of continuing that system for years to come, perhaps in perpetuity, while it is quite possible that a large majority of the voters would have preferred the adoption of a freer trade policy, and would have voted accordingly. That is to say, the verdict pronounced by the electorate on one question would settle for years to come the policy of the country in regard to another and a very different one. The conclusion is, in a word, that, whenever, as is almost always the case, two or more distinct issues are placed before the people in an election, the result cannot be relied on as a sure indication of the views and wishes of the majority in regard to any one of those issues. Thus Parliamentary legislation and responsible government become, on the whole, little better than names, and the country or the nation is not governed according to the will of the people, but the public policy is determined by the unpredictable outcome of a combination, we had almost said, a medley of discordant issues.

\* \* \*

### Pew and Pulpit in Toronto.—IX.\*

AT THE CHURCH OF S. SIMON THE APOSTLE.

THE visitor to the church of S. Simon the Apostle, on Howard St., cannot doubt that as a church it suits the requirements of a good many people. If you are up in that neighbourhood near church time you see coming from all quarters the members of a large congregation. There does not seem to be any need for advertising the services of the church or for taking any special means to secure a large attendance. There are no “attractions, for this night only, secured at a great expense.” I suppose people go there because they find suitable pabulum for their spiritual hunger; because the church affords a bright spot in “the common round; the daily task,” and because the services of the church strengthen them and hearten them for their daily duties. Externally, the church can scarcely be said to be overpoweringly attractive. It is a comparatively plain brick building with a shingled roof and but little decoration. The walls are not very massive, nor do substantial piers or deeply-recessed windows give that play of light and shade which the architectural eye loveth. But you are of opinion as you look at it that its architect knew what he meant to do and did it as well as the means at disposal allowed. He did not spend his money and his strength on the outside of the church but within. Going inside you find the interior beautiful, spacious and dignified. The light comes through tinted glass; the brick walls are left of their natural hue, and without plaster; the colour and general construction of the roof are very satisfactory. The architect has left his mark in these particulars and many others; has boldly used cast-iron pillars and spandrels where the strength of the material promised advantage, and has bent the material to the requirements of a subdued taste; has been unconventional and yet delicate; so that nobody of taste going into the building has his sense of fitness offended, or feels otherwise than much obliged to the architect that he made this building so true and downright, and full of nice feeling, albeit so plain, and in some respects so frugal. It is not an expensive monument of millionaire munificence, but everything about it is refined and tasteful, and such as may minister to the comfort of people educated to the feeling that expensiveness after all is not everything. I am feeling my way towards some description of this church, and am doubtful whether I shall be able to convey my opinion about it. It is a great length, and the light oak pews which are of fine workmanship, though not ornate, contrast well with the dark red of the brick walls. Above, the roof shows a harmony of drabs and browns and plaster left deliciously rough, and of its natural colour—there

\* The articles which have already appeared in this series are:— I. Sherbourne Street Methodist Church, Feb. 22nd. II. The Jews' Synagogue, March 1st. III. A proposed visit that was stopped by fire, March 8th. IV. The Roman Catholic Cathedral, March 15th. V. St. James' Cathedral, March 22nd. VI. The Bond Street Congregational Church, March 29th. VII. Jarvis Street Baptist Church, April 5th. VIII. St. James' Square Presbyterian Church, April 12th.