

## MONTREAL LETTER.

drive men apart, except in the case of men of unusual breadth and depth who may unite all the three tendencies. Nor must we forget that, in our present condition of imperfect knowledge and incomplete life, these very divisions which we mourn over may be made a means of good which, in our actual circumstances, could not otherwise be obtained.

It is hardly necessary to refer to one episode in the proceedings of the Synod which might seem to militate against the opinion which we have expressed. We refer, of course, to the somewhat heated discussion on the Sunday School leaflets, and the teaching which they contain. The curious thing that came out was, that the leaflets proceeded from the very school whose representatives made objection to them, so that the whole discussion originated in a mistake. We do not, for a moment, suggest that those who raised the question intended to disturb the harmony of the Synod. If they did so, the attempt was a conspicuous failure. In any case, the termination of the incident must have been gratifying to the Bishop and to those members of the Synod who "labour for peace."

One subject which was debated with some warmth was the resolution to deprive endowed Churches and Clergymen of that portion of their "commutation grant" which was represented in their endowment. Undoubtedly, the principle of the resolution was sound, and it was carried. But it may entail hardships upon individuals; and some of those who will suffer evidently feel keenly what they consider the injustice of the decision. They say that they will be none the better off because of the Rectory surplus. It is no business of ours to advise the Synod; but it does seem that some plan should be adopted which should, at once, make the disposition of the funds of the Church available in the widest manner without doing injustice to those who are doing the work of the Church with very inadequate remuneration. It is not quite easy for us to go further into this matter; and besides, the remarks here offered will be sufficient for those who are interested in the subject.

There is one other point of general interest upon which we would venture to make some remarks. We have heard many complaints of the irregularity of the debates, and the newspaper reports fully bear out the complainants in their contention. It is difficult to count up the number of times that some of the more loquacious members of the Synod must have spoken during its recent sessions; but this is not the worst. A frequent speaker may be a nuisance or a bore, but still he may be within his legal rights. This is not what we are thinking of; but the case of those who speak three or four times to the same resolution or motion, and that not merely in explanation of their meaning or in protesting against a violation of order, or the like, but actually making set speeches, and in some cases a good many times. This is really intolerable and should be put a stop to.

We are not criticizing the conduct of the President. The Bishop made (and we believe always does make) an excellent chairman. He is fair, courteous, patient, as well as firm. Sometimes he puts his foot down very decidedly, and refused to move from his position, with the evident acquiescence of the great majority of the Synod. But the rule of the Synod seems to be that no member is to speak to the same motion more than twice, and it is needless to say that such a rule defeats itself. A man who has spoken twice easily forgets that he has spoken more than once. In all assemblies of a consultative and legislative character that ever we have heard of in civilized times, the only person allowed a second speech is the mover of a resolution, and it is extremely difficult to see what good end can be served by departing from such a rule. The consequence of the present rule in the Anglican Synod is that hardly any one pays the least attention to it, and so it comes to pass that the bores with which such assemblies are always afflicted exercise a quite unlimited power of wearying the patience of their long suffering neighbours.

This is bad enough; but a worse consequence results from this licence. When a man knows that he can speak but once on a subject in which he is interested, he will think twice before he gets upon his feet, and will carefully put his thoughts together that he may not throw away his opportunity of enforcing his opinion. In the other case, when people can speak, and do speak, any number of times, they will jump up without thinking once, in obedience to any passing emotion, and so waste the time of the meeting in a way that would to themselves seem utterly unjustifiable, if others were the offenders, and they the spectators.

We hear that a motion will be brought forward at the next meeting of the Synod to put an end to this nuisance. We understand that it is quite unknown in English diocesan conferences, and no reason is assigned for its toleration here. Apart from these irregularities the proceedings of the Anglican Synod seems to have been worthy of the great communion which it represents.

M. A.

THE English language, strong, delicate, elastic, simple in its grammar, varied in its vocabulary, rich in its literature, spoken by over 100,000,000 people in two of the leading nations of the earth, would seem to be just the language that should become universal.

RESERVE is the secret of Matthew Arnold's art. Keenly sensitive to all that was fair in Nature, he looked at Nature with the eyes of one who was, first of all, a man interested in the pursuits and struggles of humanity. The artist rarely absorbed the man, but the man, it must be added, never forgot that he was an artist. He looked at the world lovingly, but with trained eyes. He saw the blots as clearly as the beauties, and he noted both. A student, who could not confine himself to books: an enthusiast, whose disciplined intelligence forbade him to rhapsodize: a moralist, who saw more in society than its problems: a melodist, who valued verse not for the music's sake alone: he passed on his way indifferent—too coldly indifferent, perhaps—whether or not, he caught the fancy of the multitude.

WHETHER it lead to anything or not, we always experience a certain satisfaction on hearing that our good fellow-citizens have met together to help the wronged through all the town. At Thursday's spirited meeting a proposition was made recommending local assessments for local improvements. The city shall be divided into sections, in which those proprietors desiring the widening of streets may, provided they form a majority, make and maintain such improvements under control of the city surveyor. Their exemption from other taxation for similar purposes during the progress of this work is naturally understood. Toronto, we were told, followed the proposed scheme with eminent success. That people should object to those often most arbitrary limitations set down by the Council at an unreasonable distance from the spot under repair must be readily understood, but that the community, or rather the city, shall eventually gain in carrying out this new system remains dark. There certainly exist some methods by which our town might be improved with greater celerity than at present. We trust we have a right to hope the palatial gentlemen of the West End would, once matters had been placed in their own hands, set to work and pave Sherbrooke Street, the loveliest of drives, but whose roadway, alas! a backwoods path could hardly surpass. It is the East End that troubles us, and the East End needs the principal reparations. With all due respect to him who proclaimed the English-speaking residents of Montreal the most obtuse and disunited people on the continent, and the French an eminently creditable community, we doubt whether in the pretty rivalry some utopian-minded individual predicted as likely to follow the adoption of the new system when street beautifying should begin, the east would not sacrifice admiration to barley loaves.

The meeting was adjourned till next week, the citizens having come to the always more or less suggestive decision that "they would think about it."

On the first Monday of every month His Grace the Archbishop holds a reception in the square brick palace standing behind St. Peter's Cathedral. Simple and unpretending enough this archiepiscopal residence, so that one might easily mistake it for some school. The ante-rooms are bare to austerity, and the servant who answered us of becomingly grace and unlackey like appearance. We were ushered into a huge saloon where sat along the wall solemn-faced gentlemen who looked disconcerting memories of older conclaves dissimilar but with regard to dress. Such memories, however, Monseigneur's genial manner and countenance quickly dispelled for the nonce. He rose from his throne, and coming forward, received us with charming cordiality. Monseigneur Fabre is rather short, stout, with a priestly physiognomy—strongly marked features, eyes that see all, yet nothing—and furthermore, *homme du monde* (I wonder if the clergy of other churches realize how strong a card this latter quality may be). His Grace leaves shortly for Paris and Rome. Every ten years, it appears, such a trip he must take in order to visit the different *mother houses* of the various orders, and also to see and converse with the Pope. Monseigneur's sojourn at French, not French Canadian, colleges his accent betrays pleasantly. After most of the solemn gentlemen had retired, not, however, without having kneeled and kissed the archiepiscopal ring while His Grace addressed some friendly words to each, Monseigneur left the throne—a beautiful piece of Canadian workmanship, designed for the cathedral, and presented by the priests whom the Archbishop has ordained—and showed and explained to us the paintings lining the walls. There was a dingy portrait of the last of the Recollects, and here that of the founder of the Oblates. Pius IX. looked down with his usual imperturbable benignity, and Gregory's dark countenance showed well against a crimson background. But I cannot begin to tell you the names of all the other dignitaries, among whom by the way, figured shyly Prince Arthur's face with an autograph beneath.

"*Enfin*, this is I. As you see, the resemblance is not striking."

"Fortunately, Monsigneur, we are as yet very far from having any need of such a portrait."

Directly under *Notre Dame's* sentinel towers, in the green square before the parish church, a huge tent has been erected, where all day long the *Kermesse* attracts sundry and diverse creeds and classes. This fair is given in aid of the *Notre Dame* hospital, a thoroughly Catholic (we use the word *un-etymologically*) institution, which does not, however, disdain foreign charity. The French element contributed very generously to the general hospital bazaar, and rightly, inasmuch as the Catholics in this house amount to a large percentage. The English reciprocate now by supplying and serving at three tables—the American, the Scotch and the English. It is a fair like all others, pretty enough with bits of bright colour, and fresh-faced young girls in the uniform of hospital nurses. I cannot tell what you and other men think of "fancy work," but there are those who would prefer cane-seated chairs and honest deal tables to the tawdry frippery with which modern drawing-rooms are hung, as if it were washing-day. Since women must stitch, why don't they broider like those well disciplined maidens of old, or like Eastern artists of the needle?

As the news has just reached us, I cannot tell you the general opinion on Dr. Wilson's refusal to be knighted. It must not, however, prove other than favourable. That commercial men should feel their position uncertain until stamped with the letters K.C.B. we understand, but that a man who has devoted his whole life to study, receives with pride, nay, welcomed with unscholarly glee any title outside what a university can bestow, a title coveted by successful English brewers and cotton manufacturers, is not only incomprehensible, but a tacit insult to learning. Though we have not the good fortune to boast of Dr. Wilson as a Montrealer, we are at least proud of him as a Canadian.

LOUIS LLOYD.