

party system, it is a foregone conclusion that in the great majority of cases, probably in almost every case, the officer appointed will be a partisan of the Government which appoints him, and we cast no aspersion upon the officer so appointed, but simply ascribe to him the ordinary weakness of human nature, when we assume that the instances will be rare in which he will be able to divest himself wholly of party predilections and prejudices. For the same reasons his subordinate officers will, as a rule, be appointed from the ranks of the Government supporters, with the chances of their judgments being more or less influenced by party feeling still greater, in proportion as they are likely to be men whose minds have been less disciplined to impartiality by education and a sense of responsibility. But passing by all such considerations and assuming the perfect impartiality of the Government officials who have the manipulation of the complicated machinery of the Franchise Act, let us glance at the mode of procedure, as described by our correspondent. To make the assessment rolls the basis of their lists is of course unobjectionable. Then comes a scramble. The preliminary lists are sent to the local party "bosses" with what is equivalent to an invitation to "stuff" them with as many names of those who may be relied on to support their respective candidates as possible. It will be said that no name can thus be added to the list without some declaration of qualification, or of somebody's belief in the qualification of the person whose name is thus added. But how does it work in practice? Let the facts in the famous London case answer. Here no less than 540 names on the list were challenged by the Liberals, and a large number, we do not know how many, by the Conservatives. To say nothing of the "appealed" votes, most of which are tacitly admitted to be worthless even by the Conservative lawyers, considerably more than half of the 540 were proved to be "bogus" and stricken off the list. What could be more suggestive? Now be it remembered that no one of these names once placed on the list, could be removed without a process of protest and notification, followed by trial before the revising officer. By Judge Elliot's decision in the case just referred to, from which there is no appeal, it appears that these notices, in order to be valid, must specify in each individual case the exact ground on which the qualification of the person is challenged. What an expenditure of time and money is involved in all this, and what a temptation to partisans to have as many spurious names as possible added to the lists in the hope that some of them may remain, as is pretty sure to be the case, in spite of the utmost vigilance and energy of opponents. Could any system be devised better calculated to give the advantage to the party which has the appointment of the officials and the most money to spend in ferreting out the names of those who are without qualification, and securing their removal from the rolls. We say nothing of the fact that the lists as finally revised are printed in an office which is under Government control and managed, it may safely be assumed, by strong Government partisans. It is not necessary to assume the truth of the frequent charges made by the Opposition, of errors in the printing by means of which names which have been found good disappear from the lists and worthless names reappear on them as they emerge from the office after the final revision, but surely a scrupulous Government should avoid the methods which provoke such suspicions.

WE have thus far dealt with the facilities afforded for getting worthless names on the voters' lists and the difficulty and expense of getting them off again. Let us turn for a moment to the other side, to which "S." mainly directs his attention. He says: "If the assessment roll, the party heeler, and the duly qualified voter himself have all failed to find him (the qualified voter) out, I do not see what more could be asked to be done in his behalf. If a man prizes his vote and goes in and out of his post-office daily for weeks, brushing past the posted list each time, and never looks to see if his name appears there, he cannot reasonably raise much of a row if other people are not more vigilant in his behalf than he is himself." But what of the thousands who are busy on their farms or in their shops or offices and do not personally enter a post-office once a month? What of those other thousands who have not yet got accustomed to the idea that it is necessary for them to look sharp or they may lose their hitherto unquestioned right to the franchise? Simple fact is the best argument here, and that fact is beyond all question that it is far from uncommon for those who have an undoubted right to vote to find when it is too late, with indignation

and dismay, that their names are not on the lists! As to the argument that the revisors will be sure to make good lists to save the Act from falling into disrepute and being repealed, with consequent loss of their occupation, it is pretty obvious that, so far as such a motive operates, the revisor knows that his tenure of office depends much more upon the retention of his party in power than upon the impartial discharge of his duties. Hence the motive presses much more strongly in the direction of having a list that will secure the return of the Government candidate than in that of having one of a thoroughly impartial character. To sum up, the Act is very complicated and enormously expensive in operation, it affords facilities for "stuffed lists," it tempts strongly to perjury, it works wholly in favour of the wealthier party, and in practical operation it undoubtedly results in the omission from the lists of many good citizens whose right to vote is beyond question, and in placing and retaining on the lists many who are without a shadow of qualification. In private life a man of honourable feeling would scorn to enter into a competition or contest in which every official was appointed by himself and even the umpires were of his own choosing. Why should the Government leaders of a party be less scrupulous in giving their rivals an equal chance for fair play? Can anyone who has observed the working of the present Act doubt that its educative influence is in the direction of sharp practices, unfair advantages, and success through miserable technicalities, rather than in that of British fair play and scorn of inequitable advantages. If the Government is truly anxious to purify Canadian politics, and raise the smirched reputation of the country to a level with that of Great Britain, one of their first steps should be to repeal the Franchise Act and put a non partisan method of registration in its place.

POSSIBLY the point made by "J. C.," in his brief letter, is well taken. THE WEEK certainly strives to be independent in its criticisms and scrupulously fair to both parties. We have, therefore, no objection to re-write the sentence of which "J. C." complains and make it read: "In so far as the Opposition, etc.," which would quite as correctly express our thought. In writing as we did, we did not forget all that the Opposition has done to show its detestation of the Franchise Act. Nor have we the slightest doubt that its leaders and members have been quite honest and sincere in all their efforts; first, to prevent its enactment, and second, to obtain its modification or repeal. They would have been very short-sighted indeed had they failed to oppose by every fair means in their power an act which was so obviously adapted and intended to give their opponents an advantage and do themselves a corresponding injury. For the same reason we have no doubt whatever that if they could cause the obnoxious Act to be wiped from the statute book during the present session, or during any other session while their opponents are in power, they would rejoice to do so. But we cannot conceal from ourselves the fact that had the hopes of the Liberals been realized at the last general election, or in the bye-elections, and the Government fallen into their hands, they would have been exposed to a very strong temptation to leave the Act untouched. It would indeed have required not a little self-denial, and an adherence to principle which is less common in Canadian politics than we could wish, for them to have destroyed, the moment it came into their hands by lawful capture, the weapon which had been forged against them and which had proved so efficient in the hands of the enemy—instead of turning it against the latter. For that reason we should have liked to hear of some more emphatic pledge being given by the Liberal leaders than we remember to have heard, that one of their first acts on coming into power would be the repeal of this most objectionable statute.

THE question of the appropriation, or misappropriation, of \$100,000 of the funds of the Provincial University, to the equipment of Upper Canada College, without the sanction of the Legislature, is an important one, and involves principles of administration which the Opposition do well to look after. Meanwhile it may not be amiss to consider for a moment the force of the arguments by which the "Old Boys" of the College, as they with commendable loyalty delight to call themselves, seek to justify the appropriation on the ground of the public interest. The defence presented at a recent meeting of a number of these alumni was based upon the following grounds: The College is a necessity in the interests (1) of that one-half the population of Ontario, who are not within reach of any of the

120 high schools. (2) Of those who "are so much absorbed in business and public duties that it is impossible for them to look after the home-training of their children." (3) Of those who "are unable to attend to the home-training of their children by reason of family affliction." (4) Of those who "considered the residential school training the best." Perhaps it would not be easy to find in the records of scholarly argument a better sample of the logical mistake of proving too much. If, for instance, the first consideration urged is good in behalf of Upper Canada College, it must be equally good on behalf of perhaps a dozen similar institutions which would be needed to supply the wants of the one-half of the population who are not within reach of a high school or collegiate institute. In like manner the implication of the second is that it is the duty of the Government to come to the aid of all those who choose to plunge themselves so deeply into business or politics that they have no time to look after the home-training of their children, and to reward their neglect of parental duty by providing institutions to impart such training, largely at the public expense. Having gone so far, it would of course be a small matter for so obliging a Government to make provision for the children of the sick, and then to extend its generosity with a bound to all those, whether within reach of a high school or not, who prefer the residential training for their sons. By the time all this is accomplished the Government and the taxpayers who supply them with funds will certainly have gone into the boarding school business pretty heavily. If it be said that the patrons of the College really pay the greater part of the fees charged, and ask for but a small per centage of them from the public chest, the argument is again self-refuting, as confirming the view that the school is really the school of a class—and that the comparatively small class who can afford to pay the heavy fees charged—and is therefore of no advantage to the great body of the people. All this goes to show, not by any means that the school has not a right to exist, or that it is not doing a good work in its sphere, but that it is such a school as should be provided and supported by those who patronize it, and who may be supposed to be abundantly able to supply their children with all the superior advantages it affords. For our own part, we should be glad to see a dozen such colleges in operation in the Province, provided always that the Province is not called on to pay for their maintenance. Nay, more, we fully believe that amongst the educational developments of the future will be a great increase in the number of voluntary schools and colleges of all grades, doing a work for the education and training of the coming Canadians such as no Government schools can possibly accomplish, by reason of their necessary limitations.

IF the Dominion Government has seriously contemplated the permanent adoption of the bounty system for the encouragement of the manufacture of beet-root sugar in Canada, it will hardly adhere to that policy after studying the able and elaborate report which has been submitted by Professor Saunders, of the Ottawa Experimental Farm. This report is a mine of valuable information with regard to the results and prospects of the business under the bounty systems of other countries, especially France, Germany and the United States. It would be hard to find anything in the history of the operation of the bounty system in any one of these countries to encourage similar experiments in our own land. Perhaps the one argument in favour of the artificial stimulation of the business which has the greatest semblance of soundness is that based upon the supposed encouragement to agriculture which would result from the demand for the large quantities of roots necessary to the carrying on of the manufacture on any large scale. But the fact that all the stimulus afforded under the bounty system has failed to induce farmers to continue the cultivation of the beet for the purpose makes it clear that it is not a profitable business for the farmer and can hardly be made such by any bounties which can be bestowed. That this is true of Germany is sufficiently evident from the fact that in 1888, the last year for which returns are to be had, more than sixty per cent. of the total quantity of beets used was grown by owners of the factories and less than forty per cent. by the farmers. A similar state of things exists in the other countries named. The explanation given for Germany is that farmers have learnt that the conversion of their sugar-beet crops into beef by feeding them to cattle is a much more profitable transaction than selling them for sugar purposes at prevailing prices. "But," someone may answer, "the culti-