

for redress really represents the minds of the minority, as a body of free and independent citizens? We wish to cast no slur upon the religious system of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, who have a right to suit themselves in that matter. But this is a political question, and when the whole agitation is worked up and the whole business of appeal from court to court managed by the hierarchy, and when, in addition to that, spiritual intimidation is openly made use of to coerce reluctant laymen, who are denounced as bad Catholics and virtually threatened with excommunication, if they do not follow the lead of the clergy in this matter, does not a very important question of fact arise? In view of such coercion, which on its very face suggests that there are differences of opinion and that such coercion if found necessary—a suggestion further emphasized by the fact that one Catholic of some prominence came of his own accord to Ottawa to declare that he and many of his compatriots were satisfied with the existing public school system and did not desire a change—is it not, to say the least, exceedingly doubtful whether the Government of the day has any right to accept the hierarchy as empowered to speak for the Catholic people, and to interfere with the liberties of a Province on that assumption?

Was It
Justified?

There is nothing to find fault with in the University Commission except its existence. It was decidedly a strong Commission, individually and collectively. Every member was well chosen and the proceedings of the Commission were unexceptionable in all respects, conducted with ability and dignity. But the holding of such a Commission was an absurdity. Again we are careful to note that this remark casts no reflections upon the members of the Commission. We may quite understand why men like Professor Goldwin Smith, who have large experience of university life and work, should decline to sit upon such a Commission without in the least blaming those who did so. They knew that a Commission would be held, and probably thought it their duty to do their best for the University. But surely the occasion was very far from justifying such a proceeding. In the first place, the complaints of the students savoured of the ludicrous and the ridiculous. One professor had not been a specialist in the department to which he was appointed. Another was rather offhand in his dealings with the superfinely courteous young men whom he instructed. A third was accused of being irregular and unpunctual in his lectures. Of course only one of these charges was tangible, and that one, which the Commissioners were ready to entertain, was dropped! There can be no question that the students behaved badly, in the matter of the College review, in the matter of the lectures, in the whole conduct of their case. On this point there seems to be no difference of opinion among outsiders and those who consider the case dispassionably. But this is not the whole question.

Something
Amiss

As we have already remarked, a whole body of men seldom break out into rebellion without some cause which is not merely imaginary. Granting that there were self-interested and disaffected men, round them and beside them, stirring up the students to sedition, granting that there were cabals of various kinds among the students themselves, ever ready to hatch mischief, there was evidently something amiss, or something lacking, with the governing body or bodies—a want of intelligence and of clear decision without which authority ceases to be

respected or to be respectable. The authorities did either too much or too little. If they were right in suspending Mr. Tucker, they ought to have gone further. They gave to the public the impression that they had not faith in their own action. In all such emergencies, two things are necessary: a calm consideration of the whole circumstances and the responsibilities of all concerned, and prompt, unhesitating, and decisive action upon the resolutions taken. The University authorities seem to have failed in both of these respects. One is compelled to think that they began with something of precipitation, since they failed to give effect to their first decisions. That an undisguised rebellion should have broken out among the students without an ultimatum being placed before them of submission or expulsion was something like a confession of weakness. It would not be quite fair, however, to throw all the blame upon the authorities of the College or the University. There can be no doubt at all that their action was rendered uncertain by the fact that an appeal had been made to the Government; and they could not be sure to what extent the Minister of Education or other members of the Government would have the power or the disposition to interfere.

Eliminate
Politics

It is generally believed that the unfortunate dependence of the University upon the Government has a great deal to do with the recent disturbances. So long as the department of education is run as a part of the political machinery of the Province, so long its influence upon education must be mischievous. It is no secret that Professor Goldwin Smith, although not a member of the Commission, was called in for consultation; and that he gave his opinion as being strongly opposed to the present relations of the University to the Government. We cannot be so sure, but it is extremely probable that the Commissioners will report in this sense. If this should be the case, then good will come out of evil; and these events, which, in themselves, are discreditable to almost all concerned, may be remembered as the occasion for greatly needed reforms. It is to be hoped that the relations between the University and the Medical School may be reconsidered, and we have no doubt that something will be done. We do not like to use strong language; but we are under the impression that very strong language indeed might be used, without any departure from truth, in the manner in which the Toronto School of Medicine was made a part of the University. We are pleased to think that there is a prospect of this junction being reconsidered, and we shall probably turn to the subject again.

Superannuation
of Teachers.

We are not enamoured of the superannuation or pension system for civil servants of any grade. It is not easy to discover any sufficient reason why those who are engaged in serving the public under Government control should not be left to their own wisdom and resources in the matter of providing for the wants of themselves and families in old age just as other citizens. But if there is any one class of public servants for whom the Government ought to make some special provision, it is surely the elementary school teachers. Probably no other class, whose work demands equal educational qualifications, receives so small an average salary, and as a consequence, finds it so difficult to make provision against a coming rainy day. Be that as it may, a special committee, which was appointed some time since by the Education Department of England, with Sir George Kekewich as its chairman, has, after full deliberation, made an elaborate re-