

established, for Catholic and Protestant to work together. The working of the High School system of Ontario teaches the same lesson. A headmaster in a recent letter to the *Mail* says that during many years' connection with High School work he has found the proportion of Catholic to Protestant pupils to be about the same as that of the Catholic to the Protestant population in the community, and yet no serious dissatisfaction has been expressed, and no demand made for Separate High Schools. The *Globe* virtually admits that in the communities to which it refers the dissatisfaction and creed-strifes are mainly due to the priests, "who are under a professional obligation to establish Roman Catholic Schools wherever they can." Putting these facts together may we not pretty safely infer that the creed-strifes arise mainly in cases in which the system is not finally settled, and the hierarchical authorities see, or think they see, reason to hope that agitation may result in securing aid "in some shape to Catholic Schools?"

IT would be unfair to forget that the *Globe's* article above referred to is based upon the assumption that the main purpose of those who wish to abolish Separate Schools in Ontario is the production of harmony between Protestants and Catholics, and its conclusion that one settlement is about as good as another is modified by the phrase, "in this regard." But is this really the only, or the chief reason why political and religious reformers should desire to see sectarianism in education abolished? Surely not! The true political reformer recognizes the injustice of compelling—as must be done not only under every sectarian system, but under every system which makes any form of religious instruction compulsory—citizens to pay taxes for the teaching of tenets which they do not believe, which they regard, it may be, as false and misleading. The religious reformers, or many of them, in their turn condemn all taxation for the teaching of religion as a violation of the voluntary principle which lies at the very basis of the Christian system, and an unjustifiable trenching by the State on the sphere which should be sacred to the Church. The general arguments against denominational schools and in favour of complete secularization seem to us unanswerable. If the churches cannot, through their various agencies in the home, the Sunday School, and the Sabbath worship, teach the great truths of religion to the children, the State certainly cannot do so, and its unauthorized and unspiritual attempts to do so are sure to result in evil rather than in good. On this point the address recently issued by the Provincial Council of the Equal Rights Association seems palpably wrong when it asserts not only that a purely secular system would not secure the approval of this Province, but that it cannot be shown "that a due regard for religious liberty, or a proper conception of the relations of Church and State, makes such a system necessary." Much of the difference of opinion on this point arises, it seems to us, from failing to distinguish clearly between moral training and religious training. Moral training, that is the cultivation of the moral nature or conscience, the development of that "moral thoughtfulness" to which the elder Arnold rightly attached so much importance—in a word, the cultivation of the power and the habit of distinguishing between right and wrong, and of acting accordingly, is the great want of the age. To supply this want should be regarded as the first and highest work of the schools. But this work, however it may be reinforced and made more easy and fruitful by the religious truths elsewhere impressed upon the child's mind, is distinct from such religious teaching, and, so long as the creeds of Christendom differ so widely, must be kept distinct in the schools. On the other hand we are so glad to note that the Equal Rights representatives plant themselves firmly upon the ground of the right of each province, under our Federal system, to decide for itself in regard to all matters coming within its own prescribed and proper sphere, that we shall not ungraciously remind the leaders of that society how very different was their position in the matter of the Jesuits Estates Acts.

THE public meeting held in the Horticultural Gardens Pavilion on the 4th inst., at the instance of the newly organized Ontario Public Places Association, called forth some very interesting addresses. As was to be expected in view of the objects of the meeting and of the Association, the proceedings were marked by unanimity and enthusiasm. Every one interested in the future well-being of the city will hope that the Association may succeed in saving the Upper Canada College grounds and the Parliament Buildings Square, or, to use the more historic

names, Russell Square and Simcoe Place, from the desecrating hand of commercial speculation, and preserving them for the higher uses to which they were originally set apart, for all time to come. Directly in line with the noble objects of the Association, and specially opportune for a first demonstration of its usefulness, is the proposal contained in the resolution moved by Sir Adam Wilson, recommending the formation of a Centenary Committee with a view to the appropriate celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791. Few events in colonial, or even in British, history are better worth holding in perpetual remembrance. The passing of that Act marked an era in the development of constitutional freedom. It was a grand new departure in statesmanship, the first application to colonial life of the great principle which underlies and upholds the glorious structure of the British Empire to-day, with its chain of self-governing colonies encircling the globe. As Sir Adam Wilson intimated, that Act made Canada memorable as the first colony to obtain a Constitution which enfolded within itself the germ of full, responsible government. The centennial should be made an occasion of great educational value to all young Canadians.

THE subject briefly discussed in the Dominion Parliament the other day, in connection with Dr. Roome's motion for the establishment of a Canadian Health Department, is one of great interest and importance. We have no doubt that the opinion in which the Premier and Mr. Laurier concurred, viz., that the matter properly comes under the cognizance of the Provincial authorities, and should be left to them, is sound and wise. Nevertheless, the mover and his supporters did a public service in calling attention to the matter. The importance of the careful collection of vital statistics, and of educating the people, as far as possible, in regard to sanitary matters, can hardly be over-estimated. Such statements as that made by Dr. Sproule, that the death rate from diphtheria might be reduced fifty per cent. by proper precautions, and those made by Dr. Platt, that 14,000 deaths from preventable diseases take place every year in Canada, and that out of 18,000 deaths 9,400 are of children under five years of age, are astounding. Such facts as these surely demand above most others the best attention and action of all intelligent citizens. From the private point of view what a comment do they make upon the illogical custom, which is that of ninety-nine out of every hundred, of employing physicians only in case of actual sickness. This custom, as any one can see on a moment's reflection, puts a heavy premium upon medical indifference to sanitary precautions, seeing that not only the prosperity but the very living of most medical practitioners depends upon the prevalence of disease. In so saying we imply no reproach to the members of the profession. On the contrary, we think that in very many cases they deserve the gratitude of the whole people for the interest they take in promoting sanitary reform, in direct opposition to their own interests. But medical doctors are but human. To expect them to take as much interest in preserving the public health as they would do did their personal interest lie in that direction instead of the opposite, is to expect them to rise above the weakness and selfishness of ordinary humanity. Were all householders to adopt the simple method which was, we think, recommended not long since by a prominent doctor, of agreeing with their family physician on the basis of so much a year, irrespective of the sickness or health of the members of the family; or were some system agreed on for the joint employment of a physician by a number of families, on a comfortable salary, it is obvious that the interests as well as the sympathies and consciences of the members of the profession would at once be enlisted on the side of promoting in every way the public health. By this means a most efficient corps of professional sanitarians would be constantly on the alert to protect their fellow-citizens against everything injurious to the health of the community. How true it is that, in spite of our boasted civilization and intelligence, many of our practices are but costly and stupid exemplifications of how not to do the very thing we want to do.

PERHAPS no more pleasing fact is brought out in the voluminous Report of the Minister of Education, which has just come to hand, than the progress shown to have been made since 1883 by Mechanics' Institutes and Free Libraries. The ninety-three institutes reported in 1883 have increased to 187 in 1889; the number of members and readers in the same period from 13,672, to 38,819; the number of volumes possessed from 154,093 to 339,225, and the number issued from 251,920 to 820,701.

In connection with the Public Schools proper some facts brought out are not so encouraging. In respect to attendance, for instance, it appears that the average attendance of rural pupils was only forty-six per cent. of the number registered; in towns fifty-nine per cent., and in cities sixty-two per cent. These can hardly be considered satisfactory averages. But the records of non-attendance are worse. From these it appears that the clause of the School Act which empowers trustees to compel the attendance at school of all children between seven and thirteen years of age, for a period of not less than one hundred days in the year, has not been enforced in the case of 87,874 absentees. Further analysis of the returns from the rural districts in which this non-attendance was most marked indicates that in those districts twenty-two per cent. of the school population attended school less than one hundred days in the year. If the theory which underlies the system of free schools and compulsory education is sound, and the well-being of the State demands that none of its population be permitted to grow up in absolute ignorance, it is clear that some vigorous action should be taken for the enforcement of the law. Another fact worthy of note is that while there were in 1888 but 7,796 Public School teachers in the Province, there were in the same year no less than 7,776 pupils in the High Schools preparing for teachers' examinations. In view of these astonishing figures, which seem to show that every year almost as many teachers must leave the profession as remain in it, we are less surprised though none the less sorry to find in another table that the average salary to male teachers in the Public Schools during the year in question was \$424, and to female teachers, who are nearly twice as numerous, \$292. It would be more than absurd to expect any high degree of efficiency or excellence in the schools whose teachers are thus remunerated, and, as a consequence, thus quitting the profession almost before they have had time to learn its rudiments. Evidently our vaunted school system, whatever its comparative rank, still falls very far short of any lofty ideal.

AS was long since foreshadowed, Irish affairs seem likely to consume, as usual, the lion's share of the time of the British Parliament during the coming session. The first great debate took place on Mr. Parnell's Amendment to the Address; the second, now in progress, has to do with the terms in which the House shall accept the Report of the Commissioners. It is not a little curious that one of the chief points in dispute, perhaps the chief one so far as the course of the Administration is concerned, is in regard to the cause of the admitted improvement in the state of feeling in Ireland. Both parties claim the credit. The Government and its supporters never tire of pointing to it as a practical demonstration of the salutary working of the Coercion Act under Mr. Balfour's vigorous administration. The Parnellites and Gladstonites are equally positive that the marked change for the better is due simply and solely to the good feeling and renewed hope of success by constitutional methods inspired by the friendly attitude of the English Radicals, and their advocacy of Home Rule. Another notable fact is the constant tendency of the controversy towards increasing fierceness. This is largely due, no doubt, to the bitterness of feeling evoked by the charges of the *Times*, and the sitting of the Commission. It would be hard to say which party carries off the honours for extravagance and vituperation. It would be difficult to find any flowers of rhetoric in even Mr. O'Brien's furious onslaughts, that could outdo the more prosy hyperbole of a Colonel Sanderson, when he declares that "he never in his life met an Irishman who would do work at his own expense when he could find any one else to take the pecuniary burden off his shoulders." We have heard a good deal of late about the race war in Canada, but in view of such interchange of compliments as is from day to day heard in the British Parliament, Canadians may feel proud of the dignity with which one of the most delicate of racial questions was recently discussed in our Commons. The threatened defection from the Government ranks in the present debate seems to indicate that the sense of British fair play is scarcely satisfied with the verdict of the Commissioners, in so far as, while distinctly censuring the one party to the full extent warranted by the evidence of wrong-doing, it has no word of condemnation for the other, which, in its over-eagerness to prove its accusation, suffered itself to become, almost with open eyes, the victim of an odious forgery. It is not improbable that the Government may yet accept, in some modified form, the amendment offered by one of its own supporters, and thus prevent a serious diminution of its accustomed majority.