

partiality or sectarian prejudice, may close our church or exclude our newspaper; but we do not thereby feel our right annulled. We only feel that an act of oppression and wrong has been committed.

We observe by the current city newspapers that an attempt has recently been made in l'Institut-Canadien to exclude from its reading room certain specified newspapers, on the ground of their connection with polemical theology. But polemical theology is a matter of high interest to a large proportion of our citizens. It is discussed in Protestant newspapers and pulpits. It is discussed in Catholic newspapers and pulpits. The largest congregation we have ever seen assembled in Montreal, was in the parish church of Notre Dame during the season of Lent, and on the occasion of a sort of semi-dramatic discussion of the Protestant controversy. Two ecclesiastics took part in it, standing face to face in separate pulpits, one of them tamely stating some of the Protestant points, and graciously acting as a foil for the Catholic champion, whose arguments were accepted as triumphant by the large and intensely interested audience. These facts serve to show us how general the interest is which polemical theology excites. And every man of philosophic apprehension will see that theology must pass through the stage *polemic*, before it can arrive at the state *irenic*. Now if this be the actual condition of the sentiment of our general community, it ought to be reflected in our general reading rooms. An ignorance of the opinions of our neighbors quite commonly leads to suspicion, misconception, alienation. An intelligent and candid person, who wishes to stand free from petty sectional and sectarian prejudices, can only do so by looking for himself at the actual state of opinion, as it prevails around him, and elsewhere. And it ought to be the aim of l'Institut-Canadien considering its basis and original design, to minister to such intelligent curiosity, and to promote that candor of spirit and largeness of thought, without which