

demand for their fine line of steamers, and with perfect justice, a portion of the encouragement bestowed by the British Government, for carrying the mails. The quick passages of these noble vessels, prove that the mails can be disseminated through all the western part of the American continent by that route, during the summer months, with as great facility as by the New York and Boston steamers; and if it is of essential importance for Great Britain to establish a quick communication with her noble Province of Canada, hardly second to the United States in the ability to supply her with the overplus of agricultural commodities, necessary for her sustenance, she cannot too soon encourage those efforts which are being made to increase business and emigration facilities, and which must lead to much greater efforts being extended along the whole course of the Lower Provinces. Nova Scotia ought to feel as much interested in the success of the Quebec line of steamers as the Canadians themselves.—The Cunard line has been of little service in developing any public interest among us, owing to circumstances which make Halifax at present a touching Port only—and the commercial importance of the country being of so little moment that it has not been able to promote in the least degree the extension of any benefit which that line is so well calculated to bestow, were the country opened and a free communication in existence between the several Provinces. The Line of Steamers to Quebec is a very different thing. It will react advantageously upon our own Railroad prospects. It will tend to the opening eastward of the Railroad that is to connect Halifax harbour with the great West. The commerce of that country is a giant force that will spread in all directions, and must at all seasons have a natural escape. We believe with the paragraph in question, that the St. Lawrence "is the shortest and most convenient, as it is the natural highway" to the ocean, through all the vast countries that skirt its banks, and that all that is wanted to make it permanently so, is such an outlet, that in winter as well as summer will allow of their productions being sent to Europe, and European productions being returned. That winter outlet, which in addition will open an immense territory to commerce, sooner or later must be Halifax harbour. It will easily be perceived then of what importance it is that all enterprise conducive to this end should be encouraged. Nor can the Government any longer be blind to a positive duty. If they consider it imperative to sustain the mail conveyance to the United States at an enormous outlay, by the Boston and New York line, they are at the same time more particularly interested in encouraging any project that will place them more nearly in communication with the rapidly growing Canadian country, which has a natural claim upon so many grounds of preference, to their best consideration.

CIVIC AFFAIRS.

We observe that a good deal of excitement prevails with reference to the Civic elections. There is nothing like keeping cool upon these occasions.—When people get heated, either with respect to persons, or parties, they generally go wrong, and are sometimes sorry afterwards for what they have done in a state of excitement. There is likely to be a contest for the Mayoralty, and the candidates are understood to be the present Mayor and one of the board of Aldermen. Let it be well remembered that the intelligence and character of the city will be estimated by the character and qualifications of the party who is placed in the position of Chief Magistrate. This is the legitimate application of the principle of popular elections. Let every citizen lay this to heart, and there will no doubt be a good choice out of the material at his disposal. The chief civic officer above all things ought to have a proper sense of the dignity of his office—and suffer no disparagement of it, either in his own person, or from those who sit in council around him. He should be a gentleman in manners and education, firm in the discharge of his various duties, and conciliatory without—for all these qualities are likely to be in request during his short term of office. The want of them—abusive propensities—overbearing behaviour—should be a sufficient disqualification for civic employment in the eyes of the citizens. Having both the Recorder and City Clerk at his elbow, there is no good reason why he should be, or pretend to be, anything of a lawyer; but he ought to possess shrewdness, quickness of comprehension, ability to grasp the truth of matters that he may have to decide upon, and a sense of justice that will award a just punishment to offenders, with a leaning to mercy. The whole wants of the city should be constantly in his mind, and his great care should be to get them supplied, without additional fiscal burthens.

Halifax is growing fast, but the taxes seem to be growing faster. Its growth and prosperity depend much upon the Mayor, and may be promoted or retarded by the measures of the Corporation, over which he will always, if a man of prompt decision, have a controlling power, to advise, direct, to execute. Its citizens do not half realize the importance of these truths, or they would take a great and surpassing interest in the appointments of all their officers. They would attend all summonses of the meetings of the City Council, and watch carefully, that all the officers whom they have chosen for that purpose, attended likewise. In this way they would be much better able to judge of the proper material to promote the welfare of the City, than by a contemplation of the specimens that may be occasionally brought to the hustings for their approval, and when it is too late to make a proper choice. Of Mayors we have had good, bad and indifferent—of Aldermen likewise—and with some few exceptions they have been in general the officials of accident, without much question as to their real ability,—they have in fact been chosen because they think themselves competent. This ought no longer to be the case, for great interests are at their disposal, and in the way in which they may be dealt with require the vigilant watchfulness of the citizens. We must not be construed by these observations, to mean any reflection upon the present Incorporated body, which is neither better nor worse than its predecessors—if any reflection is conveyed in them it is upon the citizens in general, who by neglecting public interests do not perform the duty they owe to themselves and to the community at large.

During the past week, a series of lectures upon Syria, have been delivered in the Temperance Hall, by Mr. G. Wortabet, a native of Beirut.—They must have been very instructive to those who had not read much about that country, and to those who had they were strikingly corroborative of the statements of recent travellers, and brought very vividly to the mind the difference in manners and customs between the oriental and the European members of the human family. Mr. Wortabet bore testimony to the influence of the Bible in ameliorating the condition of the Syrian people, and the happy effects that had followed the labours of the missionaries at Beirut and elsewhere, in the spread of Christianity. He seemed to be quite at home upon all matters relative to the political and religious condition of Palestine, and particularly alluded to the impulse which freedom had received in that land, by the proclamation of the Sultan in favor of the religious liberty of his Christian subjects. In what we suppose we must call a Syrian accent, but with a volubility that showed an intimate acquaintance with the English language, Mr. Wortabet chained the attention of his audience for several hours, and left them at last well pleased with his illustrations, and instructed by his facts, and by delineations of the Syrian character.

THE ELECTIONS.—By telegraph we learn that Adams G. Archibald, Esq., and Wm. A. Henry, Esq., have been returned as members of the House of Assembly. The former to represent the county of Colchester, and the latter the county of Sydney. No opposition being offered in either case.

We copy from the Colonist the proceedings at the nomination and election of the Hon. Joseph Howe for Windsor. The sentiments contained in the speech we have published, if generally acted upon, would soon be felt in Nova Scotia, in a grand impulse to every Provincial interest.

A meeting to take into consideration the propriety of getting up a Regatta to come off the present month was held in the hall of the Province Building on Thursday evening. His Worship the Mayor in the Chair. It was resolved that the Regatta should take place, and Committees were appointed for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions.

Correspondence.

The Editors of "The Church Times" do not hold themselves responsible for the opinions of their correspondents.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHURCH TIMES.

MR. EDITOR,—Another letter has appeared in the Church Witness, signed Clericus, who by the way must be nearly related to Cura, who formerly filled so many columns of the same Paper with his long and obscure compositions. You will probably not think it worth while to take any further notice of one who is evidently afflicted with the "ecclesiæ scriberis", and will probably write about something, or nothing, so long as any Editor will publish for him. But I am induced to beg a small space, in order to notice the positive manner in which he lays down the

law as to the interpretation of the oath of Canonical obedience, and talks of "doing violence to the sense, the arrangement and the integrity of the words" of the oath. The reference to the arrangement has led me to notice it more particularly, and having had some experience in the interpretation of formulas, I venture to suggest that the arrangement raises a strong presumption against his accuracy.

If the words had been "all things canonical and lawful and honest," his view might have been correct, but now the word canonical, if we are to attend to "the arrangement," must be taken with true, and the meaning will then be, true obedience such as is required by the Canon Law, and so far as my reading goes I imagine this term will strengthen, rather than weaken, the force of the obligation, for the complete subordination of every Priest to his Bishop is one of the fundamental maxims of that law. I have consulted Burns, who says that the Canons of 1603 are only a small portion of our Canon Law, the greater portion being the old laws and customs, which were confirmed by Act of Henry VIII., so far as they are not contrary to the civil law or to the prerogative, and to these the oath must refer, being, as I am informed, much older than the Reformation. If this is correct the limitation of this entire obedience, required by the Canons, to "things lawful and honest," is natural and proper; but take it in the other way and see what a strange conclusion we arrive at. If obedience is only promised in what is ordered by the Canons, the last words are worse than useless; for the introduction of these would imply that some things ordered by the Canons are not lawful and honest; a sentence of self condemnation which even Clericus will scarcely suspect the Church of the olden time of passing upon itself.

Clericus has quoted a passage from the Bishop's letter, in which his Lordship claims the right to decide whether he will enforce any regulation of the Assembly in unrepresented Parishes; but, as before, he stops in the middle of the sentence, for the Bishop adds, "he will have the same power to enforce it, as he would have, supposing the Assembly did not exist, and no more." Clericus denies that the Bishops have any such discretion, and says, "If any course of action is legal and canonical, they are bound to use every practical means to enforce it." What would the Editor of the Witness say, if our Bishop were to enforce strictly all the rubrics and canons? and yet according to Clericus he is bound to do so.

He ends with an alarming list of three practical results, on which I cannot refrain from saying a word. The most alarming is No. 1: "The equipage of our present system must inevitably be destroyed!" "This system," he says, "recognizes a certain degree of power or authority vested in the Bishop, assigns professional privileges and positions to the clergy, and accords to the Laity peculiar immunities as connected with faithful membership." That the Bishop is destroying this equipage by admitting the laity to a share in the administration of Ecclesiastical affairs, they will not be very likely to allow, not: notwithstanding the arguments formerly urged by Curz against their admission to the Synod. That he interferes with the rights of the clergy, is an assertion that has not been proved, and in short, I cannot understand how the equipage is to be destroyed. In one sentence only can I agree with Clericus, where he allows that the Parishioners of St. Paul, when insisting upon electing their own chairman, were offering violence to our system of discipline and order.

His second result is, that an imputation is thrown on the integrity of those clergymen who oppose the Synod. His logic is here so peculiar that his conclusion contradicts his premises, for he first states that the meeting is not lawful, and then that if the clergy are bound to obey in all things lawful, they must be guilty of perjury in not attending. Why the weakest understanding could perceive that, even according to the most stringent interpretation of his oath, any clergyman conscientiously believing the Synod to be neither lawful nor honest, would not be bound to attend it.

The falsehood of No. 3 is so apparent that, notwithstanding my respect for the cloth, I must believe either that Clericus has willfully endeavored to lead careless readers astray, or that his brain is so muddled that he does not perceive his own blunders. He is seized with a sudden feeling of concern for the Clergy supporting the Synod, who, as he pretends, may be required by the Bishop to take some action in reference to the temporalities of their Parishes contrary to Law, and will therefore have to violate their obligations as Members of the Parochial Corporations, or be charged with perjury. In other words he pretends that a Clergyman, who admits that he is bound by his oath to obey his Bishop in all things lawful, must feel guilty of perjury if he does not obey in what is manifestly unlawful. If this is a fair specimen of the reasoning powers of our Clergy, we are not likely to learn much from them.

I am not standing up for the oath, which might, well, according to my mind, be abolished by authority; but whilst it is retained the Clergy who have voluntarily taken it should not set the example of explaining it away, and forcing its language to bear a meaning contrary to its "literal and grammatical sense." If they evade their obligations in this way, we may expect soon to have them teaching the Popish doctrines of mental reservation, and affixing a peculiar sense to the words of an oath when swearing. To a looker on it is amusing, although painful and humiliating, to observe how good men are often blinded by prejudice, and allow their judgments to be warped by their inclinations.

SPECTATOR.