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THE people of Canada are to be congratulated on the measures which have thus far been taken to vindicate the dignity and reputation of Parliament in the Rykert matter. In the main the spirit manifested on both sides of the House has been admirable. There is, indeed, much room to question the wisdom and good taste displayed by the mover of the original resolution, in the speech with which he introduced his motion. It is to be profoundly regretted that any member or members of the House of Commons can entertain such opinions of the character and policy of the Administration and its supporters as those so forcibly avowed by Sir Richard Cartwright on that occasion. Almost all members of the House seem agreed that Mr. Rykert's offence, as described in his own letters, is "rank and smells to heaven," and that it renders it impossible for the House to retain its self-respect and at the same time permit one guilty of such conduct, or even capable of writing such letters, to remain one of its members. If the crime of selling his influence as a Member of Parliament for a monetary consideration, which Mr. Rykert's letters seem to prove so clearly against himself, is but a single peak in a mountain chain of undeveloped rascalities, it is certainly time that something were being done about it. Surely there must, in such a case, be some available proof of the existence of the lower peaks, or some one of them. If so, Sir Richard's course is clear. Let him proceed against the next culprit, as he has against Mr. Rykert, or let him demand a Committee before which the matter can be investigated and the facts made clear. But surely it was contrary to the canons of Parliamentary propriety to seize upon such an occasion, as an opportunity for wholesale and indiscriminate charges against political opponents. Such extravagant diatribes generally defeat their own object. We may be constrained to believe in the possible corrupt action of this, that and the other member of the Government or of Parliament, but we cannot, unless ready to despair of our country and of human virtue, believe that the members of either political party are, in the mass, utterly destitute of honour and principle. No fair-minded man can doubt, as Dr. Weldon aid, that there are men on the Conservative side of the

House as high-minded and conscientious as any on the Liberal Benches. It is well that Sir Richard's invective failed to force the Government party into an attempt to shield the culprit by way of defending themselves. Sir Richard's speech was happily in marked contrast, not indeed in its whole extent, for so far as it dealt with Mr. Rykert it was fair enough, but in the passages referred to, to the judicial tone which marked the speeches of nearly all the members on both sides of the House. If the offence was great and the call for action urgent, the gravity of the action proposed was also very serious. It is no light matter to expel a member from the House of Commons, and send him forth branded for life as one unfit to sit with honest men and gentlemen. Parliament therefore did well to avoid hasty action. It could well afford, even in such a case, to give the accused every opportunity for defence. The final action, when it comes, will be all the more weighty and effective, both as a punishment and as a warning, for having been taken with the utmost deliberation, and studiously freed from every suspicion of being in the slightest degree arbitrary or vindictive.

A PLEASING incident in connection with the first debate on Sir Richard Cartwright's motion touching the Rykert affair, was the independent and manly stand taken by Dr. Weldon, the member for Albert, and by two or three other supporters of the Government, in opposition to the Government's proposal to adjourn the debate. The lofty tone of Dr. Weldon's speech, in particular, augurs well for his future career as a representative of the people. The presence of even a few such men among the younger Members of Parliament, and it is to be hoped that at least a few such are to be found on both sides of the House, would go far to rekindle hope in the minds of those who may sometimes have been ready to despair of the future of Canadian statesmanship. A curious instance of the power of local and personal feeling to sway the judgments, even of men of broad and lofty views, was afforded by another incident in a subsequent debate. Mr. Blake's sarcasm has a keen edge, and is sometimes, especially when pointed with one of those bitter sneers which spring all too readily to his lips, wielded rather mercilessly. This was perhaps the case in his speech in answer to the harangue in which Mr. Baird, of Queen's, New Brunswick, pleaded for a liberal subsidy to a steamboat company of which he himself is President. It is but fair to remark, in passing, that the tone and spirit of Mr. Baird's subsequent speech went a good way towards atoning for the bad taste of his championship of a cause in which his personal interests were involved. But it is undeniable that Mr. Blake's speech, even when he turned the batteries of his ridicule upon the personality of the advocate, dealt most trenchantly with the subject before the House, viz., the merits of the subsidy in question. If exception be taken to that part of his address in which he glanced at the circumstances under which Mr. Baird first appeared in the House, the reply is suggested that the relation of the Member for Queen's to the subsidy in question was such as to provoke, if not to make legitimate, the personal reference. It is, moreover, highly salutary, and in the interests of public morality, that those who stoop to unworthy measures to gain entrance to Parliament should not cease to smart under the scorn which such conduct evokes until they have at least made a profession of repentance. The strange feature of the incident was that the same member, who had but a little before taken so independent a stand on the side of the strictest justice, should have now arisen, not to deal with the merits of the question before the House, but to give the discussion a purely personal turn by indulging in a tirade which was obviously the outcome of wounded personal feeling, sedulously cherished through several sessions. Dr. Weldon in his calmer moments could not fail to see that the principle underlying his plaint would, if acted on, be subversive of the true ends of Parliamentary debate, and that the charge of cowardice which he insinuated against Mr. Blake would lie rather against those who pleaded for mercy for their arguments on the ground of personal weakness in debate. As Mr. Blake clearly showed, it is the high duty of a representative of the people in Parliament to criticise the measures and the arguments by which they are supported solely on their

merits. To hesitate to expose a sophistry or to lay bare an indefensible proposition, through tenderness for their advocates, would be recreancy to public duty, and connivance at improper legislation. In the Canadian Commons, at least, all members are free and equal. Nor is the validity of an argument in any wise affected by the eloquence or want of eloquence with which it is presented.

TWO questions of considerable importance touching the use of the ballot have been under debate in the Ontario Legislature. In regard to both, the members of the Opposition have had, we are inclined to think, the best of the argument, though the Government majority has, of course, prevailed. We refer to the discussions concerning the numbering of the ballots used in elections to the Legislature, and to the proposed use of the ballot in the election of Trustees of Separate Schools. There is much to be said in favour of open voting as in the abstract the more manly mode of expressing one's opinions on public questions, but, taking all things into consideration, the preponderance of practical advantage is unquestionably and immensely on the side of the ballot. This verdict of reason has been amply upheld by the test of experience wherever the two methods have been fairly tried. First and chief among the many ends which commend the ballot, both in theory and in practice, is the prevention of intimidation and other forms of unfair personal influence. That which alone can make this mode of voting effective to this end is, clearly, its secrecy. Just in proportion as it becomes possible for those selfishly interested to discover by any process how a certain elector marked his ballot, just in that proportion does this mode of voting lose its chief value. Even the suspicion or fear of possible violation of secrecy tends, almost in equal degree, to deprive the ballot of its chief usefulness. Now, it was pretty clearly established by the testimony of several members of the Opposition that the fact of this numbering, with a view to possible identification, may be and is effectively used for purposes of intimidation. It matters not whether the possibility of the agent of the other party being able to remember the numbers of the ballots deposited by individual voters is so infinitesimal as is claimed by the advocates of the present system, or not; the simple fact that the numbering gives so much plausibility to the assertions of would-be intimidators in this regard, tells conclusively against the system, unless it can be shown on the other hand that the omission of the numbers would open the door for other and still greater abuses. The numbers are no doubt useful as a check to personation, but personation involves so many risks and is liable to detection in so many other ways that the danger from this source can hardly be seriously regarded as an offset to the danger of intimidation. The original intention of the ballot should surely guide in the matter, and that it was primarily designed as a safeguard against intimidation, not against personation, is beyond question. This simple principle, which underlies the ballot, viz., that it is the duty of the Legislature to secure voters as far as possible against danger of intimidation, of whatever kind, constitutes, it seems to us, also a sufficient reason why the use of the ballot should have been made compulsory in the election of School Trustees, both of Public or of Separate Schools, but especially of the latter, since it is almost universally believed that the electors of Separate School Boards are particularly subject to a species of intimidation. But even should this be a mistake or a slander, the substitution of the ballot could do no harm, would take away the rights of no one, and would be useful in other respects.

ONTARIO bids fair to acquire an undesirable notoriety as the scene of strange and inexplicable murders—murders committed in cold blood and with deliberate purpose, but without any discoverable motive sufficiently overmastering to account on ordinary principles for their perpetration. That a man of ungovernable temper should take the life of another in a momentary frenzy; that a man of the baser sort, in whom avarice or jealousy or some other sinister motive has through long indulgence become the ruling passion, should plot against the life of another; that men steeped in vice and crime, and dead to all the higher sentiments of humanity, should shoot or stab upon slight provocations—such things as these we can in a measure