

ment and general welfare, of five millions of people, accused to think and speak of themselves as a self-governing community, *i.e.*, as a nation. Is there any doubt as to what would be the decision with respect to the establishment of sectarian Separate Schools in Manitoba were the Manitoba School Act now being drawn up?

It may be said that to reason thus is to ignore the moral obligations of a solemn compact. This raises what we readily admit are fundamental questions in national ethics. To what extent can a people be morally bound by the agreement of a former generation? Is the moral obligation irrevocable and eternal, under all changes of conditions? If not, what are its limitations in regard to time and circumstance? It is obvious that if the obligation is unlimited and perpetual, or, in any case, so long as it lasts, there can be no such thing as freedom or self-government.

But, it may be said, to deny the binding force of such an obligation is to take away the possibility of any guarantee or safeguard for the rights of a minority, and to subject such rights to the whims of a fickle majority. There is force in the objection. But it may be replied that the security provided by the written article is of value only in proportion to the justice and sense of honour of that majority, in any event, and that, if that sense of honour and that sentiment of right, reinforced, as they are certain to be mightily under our party system of government, by the political combinations and influences which even a small compact minority can bring to bear, cannot be relied on, the stability that can be given by a paper bond will prove of little avail in the end. Institutions which are not in accord with the sentiments and convictions of the majority cannot be long upheld by the decrees of a handful of predecessors, legislating under very different conditions.

* * *

Racing.

TO conduct a five-days' race meeting, with all the complicated details that such a meeting entails, and to conduct it without a hitch, and apparently to the satisfaction of all concerned, is no small matter. Accordingly the Ontario Jockey Club, its president, Mr. Hendrie, and its secretary, Mr. Lyndhurst Ogden, deserve warm commendation for the manner in which they contributed to the pleasure of all lovers of horses and horsemanship last week. The time when the annual meeting at the Woodbine was a thing of interest only to a few, when the competitors for the stakes and plates were anything but numerous, and the sum total of those stakes and plates was all but paltry, is probably within the recollection of our youngest reader. To-day all three conditions are changed, as the attendance this year abundantly proved.

The details of the racing are by this time, of course, ancient history. But it is interesting to analyse the springs of motive which draw such throngs to a horse race. There is something, surely, first of all, in the fact that a horse race is seen out in the open, on the green turf, under the blue sky. All Greek games, even the Greek drama, took place out in the open; and both, we know, were thronged from early dawn. Little as we may regard it, there is probably, even to the most urban of populaces, a potent influence exercised by the spacious earth and the lofty atmosphere of the country. They contribute to buoyancy of spirits, to relief from toil and care. But after all, the primary source of interest is no doubt the excitement aroused by the struggle for vic-

between the noblest of animals trained and chosen by the most scrupulous and scientific care. Strife for pre-eminence is perhaps the mainspring of all human action. It

is an inherent fact of all nature. Every sport attests it; every drawing-room game attests it. In its more serious aspects it is a creed, a religion. Were there no strife, there would be no progress; there would be immobility. In this strife, too, is that element of danger, requiring nerve, courage, and audacity, the exhibition of which always has, and perhaps always will, evoke the intensest enthusiasm. In horse racing, perhaps, this element is seen in its most legitimate form, for here it can in no way be called degrading, a tendency it is sometimes apt to involve. Beneath this, again, there is the interest attaching to humanity in bulk. What is it causes the exaltation of feeling engendered by a crowd? What brings about that heightening and reverberating of sentiment when masses of men and women are moved by a common impulse? Sympathy is probably at the bottom of it; but the word sympathy does not explain much. The fact remains that to be one in a concourse of our fellows is to most of us a source of enjoyment. Lastly there is, of course, the gambling element. This, no doubt, is the weak point of the turf. But there are hundreds who go to a race without risking a coin, as there are hundreds who risk coins on many things besides racing. Racing may not be an unmixed good, but that its good points are many is hard to gainsay. One of our daily contemporaries the other day astutely pointed out that nothing tended more to the production of good breeds of horses than racing. And naturally. There is no severer test of a horse's powers. And they are tested in public, in an open field, and the results are recorded and acted upon. The nation that is celebrated for its horses is the nation that is celebrated for its horse races. When all vehicles go by electricity; when every man, woman, and child rides a "wheel;" when cavalry gives place to the bicycle corps; and when the magnificent animal which now we ride and drive is useful only for leather and sausage meat, then the Anglo-Saxon may give up horse-racing. Perhaps not even then.

* * *

The Manitoba School Case.—II.

THE School Act of 1890 having been held constitutional, and therefore obligatory, a second attempt was made to get rid of it and to recover the right by law to establish and maintain Separate Schools at the public expense, and get quit of the obligation to contribute to the support of the common school system. This attempt was made by way of appeal to the Governor-General in Council from the Act as a binding enactment, and the petitions prayed for a complete restoration of the Separate School System.

It is worthy of remark here, that the appeal given lies on behalf of the Roman Catholic minority, and though it is a pure question of fact whether a certain number of persons desire a certain thing, no steps seem to have been taken to ascertain whether the Roman Catholic minority were really in favour of the retrogressive step. Analogous proceedings occur in municipal affairs when a local improvement or drainage work is desired by the ratepayers, and what is equivalent to a polling of those affected always takes place. It seems to have been assumed that the petition of a few Roman Catholics and the allegations of their clergy were sufficient proof of this serious question of fact. It could not for a moment be contended that the representations of the clergy in a purely temporal and political matter would be sufficient. They do not represent the people at the polls or in any other political movement. In fact their overpowering influence over the electors of their own faith has been held to be undue influence sufficient to avoid an election brought about by its exercise. And there is good ground for believing that if the sense of the people were taken on the question, apart from this influence, it would at least leave the matter in doubt, if, indeed, it would not result in a negative answer. And it is a most remarkable thing that affidavits of facts, thought by Counsel for the minority to be necessary