

incidents occurred on the eve of the recent election. Dr. Carson writes:

"In a large Methodist Church, at the close of the Sunday evening service, the pastor gave a talk in favor of the Union Government. One of the leading men of the congregation expressed his dissent by rising in his seat and starting to go out. Another man hissed the dissentient as he passed his pew. This added fuel to the indignation of the protestor and he turned and with all his force threw his hymn-book at the head of the man who had hissed him. This did not end the disturbance, for a lady in the audience expressed her opinion audibly, whereupon her neighbor in the pew in front of her turned about and slapped her in the face. The people in some parts of Nova Scotia sometimes get excited over politics, but a scene such as this in one of our churches on Sunday evening would be regarded as something of a scandal."

Perhaps sufficient time has elapsed since the election to allow the formation of a calm judgment on events such as the Halifax editor describes. While in this particular case the trouble seems to have taken an exceptionally violent form, it is a fact that, in various parts of the Dominion, clerical interference in the election was exhibited to a degree that can hardly be justified.

The clergyman does not cease to be a citizen when he takes up the duties of his profession. He has all the rights of a citizen, and if, in his capacity of citizen, he takes up the cause of one or other of the political parties of the time nobody has much if any right to complain. Whether even as a citizen he is wise in going beyond the free exercise of his franchise, and taking a very active part in support of any political party, whether in so doing he increases his influence for good in the community, may be a question of doubt; but these are matters for his own decision; his right to speak and act as a citizen cannot be called in question. It is when he is not content to speak and act as a citizen, when he puts his sacred office in the scale in support of a party, when he speaks or writes with the authority of his office, and particularly when he uses his pulpit for the advocacy of the interest of a party, that he raises justifiable questions as to the propriety of his course. Many clergymen became the champions of a party in the recent electoral contest. Their motives, of course, were good. Many of us are in sympathy with the views thus expressed. Nevertheless, there will be grave doubts whether such use of the ministerial office amidst the conflict of parties promotes the peace, order and good government of the country.

Clerical interference is hardly a new thing in Canada. There was a time, not very long ago, when there was much complaint concerning it. Then it was almost invariably the interference of the Roman Catholic bishops and priests that was complained of, and those who tolerated it were not infrequently described as "priest-ridden." Now the tables have been turned. So far as can be learned from the public press the Roman Catholic pulpits were silent as respects political matters in the recent electoral contest. There has been no report of any appeal in the Roman Catholic churches in favor of or against any candidate. It was from Protestant clergymen, and in many cases from Protestant pulpits, that the appeals to support one of the parties came. An impulsive Irish Catholic bishop, in a public letter, spoke on the same lines as his Protestant brethren, but he did not use his pulpits for the purpose, as Protestants did. Perhaps for the moment

those who were in sympathy with the views expressed by these clergymen were glad to welcome the assistance thus given to their cause. But we doubt if, on reflection, these will not see that this use of the pulpits and ministerial authority in the interests of any political party is unseemly. Priest-ridden Protestants are as much to be pitied as Priest-ridden Roman Catholics.

An Extraordinary Proposal

SOME persons who, doubtless, have reasons satisfactory to themselves for their action have given notice that in the consideration of proposed legislation relating to the City of Montreal, now pending before the Legislative Assembly of Quebec, a motion will be made to include in it provisions for annexing the several municipalities on the Island of Montreal to the City of Montreal. The extraordinary thing is that this proposal is being taken so seriously that meetings of citizens and municipal bodies in several of the smaller cities are deemed necessary to protest against the enactment of the measure.

For some reasons a union of all these municipalities under one city government may be desirable. But surely the first thing to be done, if anything is to be done, to bring about such a union is to have the question freely and frankly discussed and the opinion of the electors invited. There has been practically no such discussion, and nobody can claim with truth that the people of the several municipalities desire the change. Maisonneuve, perhaps, may view the scheme with approval, for Maisonneuve has not been prudent in its financial affairs and a union with the big city might bring some relief to the inhabitants of the smaller one. But Westmount, Montreal West, Outremont and Verdun are all, apparently, strongly opposed to the annexation movement. If Montreal, by a better management of its business, could make itself more desirable as a partner, we might all rejoice. As the situation present itself, these smaller municipalities are distinctly hostile to the movement. Why then should the proposed legislation be seriously considered? Why should it be deemed necessary to call public meetings of protest? One would expect that there would be such a disposition in the Government and Legislature at Quebec as to give assurance at the outset that no measure designed to annex the smaller municipalities without the clear consent of their citizens would be considered for a moment. It is a case in which the Quebec Government should take a stand promptly. If any of these smaller municipalities wishes to join Montreal and the latter is willing to form the union — evidence of such mutual desire being produced after full public discussion — the Legislature would naturally be ready to enact the necessary law. But any proposals of the kind sprung upon the Legislature, and not backed by any request from the people concerned, should not be tolerated for a moment. To treat the proposal seriously is to admit a doubt which ought not to exist as to the sanity of the people's representatives at Quebec.

The German Psychologists

IN ACADEMIC circles the Germans are regarded as the world's greatest psychologists. As a matter of fact experimental psychology had been reduced to a very practical and scientific basis by the thorough-going Germans. To-day they are using their knowledge of psychology to confuse and thwart the efforts of

the Allied nations. This could perhaps be best described by a term which has come into use since the outbreak of hostilities, namely, the word "camouflage." Germany has been advertising for the past few weeks that she is about to attempt a great offensive on the Western front, an offensive which will carry her to Paris through the French lines and to Calais through the British lines. While it is impossible to say just what is in the minds of the German supreme staff it is a very safe guess to assume that these boasts are being issued either for the purpose of cheering up the German people or of so frightening and intimidating the Allies that they will cry for peace.

The greatest drive the Germans ever made on the Western front took place in the first few weeks of the war, and was stopped at the Marne. That drive took place when France was unprepared and when England had a "contemptible little army" of a few score thousands. To-day the English force is twenty times greater than it was in those early days, while its equipment of machine guns, heavy artillery, and all the other paraphernalia of war is a hundred times superior. In the early days the British stopped the Germans at the first and second battle of Ypres when they had practically nothing to oppose the German equipment in guns but the flesh and blood of their soldiers. Germany failed in the various drives she made on the Western front when the English and French were not nearly as well prepared as they are to-day, so there should not be any fear of the result if she should make an attempt to break through under present conditions.

In this much advertised Western offensive the Germans are making use of their knowledge of psychology and are putting into force the value of suggestion. They hope by representing over and over their tremendous preparations and reiterating again and again the terrible things they are going to do to the Allies to so frighten them that they will not throw down their arms and cry for peace before the threatened blow will fall.

A favorite trick practised by college men is that of suggestion. A dozen or twenty men will all agree to tell a certain individual that he is looking poorly. On the day in question man after man meets the innocent victim and remarks on his apparent ill-health. To the first man who comments on his appearance the man is apt to return an indignant answer and declare he is perfectly well, but after a half dozen have told him that he looks under the weather he begins to wonder if he is not a bit sick, and after a dozen have told him of his ill appearance the man is apt to go home and take to his bed, although an hour before he was in perfect health. The Germans are trying some such experiment on the Allies in the West, but it is not going to succeed. They, however, have succeeded in causing an almost world-wide depression among the Allied nations, and in so far as this is done will weaken the morale of the people. There is no doubt that the Allied countries have been very pessimistic during the past few weeks. Part of this feeling is due to the chaotic condition of Russia, part to the Italian reverse, but a considerable portion is due to the announcements of the Germans that they are going to smash up the Allies on the Western front. There is no real reason for pessimism on the part of the Allies. If the nations behind will support their armies as they should be supported the German boastings will be in vain. The Germans, however, are good psychologists and are proving it by their methods of the past few weeks.