

Protestant churches must do the same. If the Laymen's Missionary Movement will prevent overlapping and foolish competition among Protestant bodies in these newer districts, much will have been accomplished. If, however, the movement is stampeded at the last moment on behalf of foreign missions, the Protestant churches of the future will have much to regret. There are those who believe that already Canada has directed too much of her effort in behalf of foreign missions, to the detriment of home missions, and there is much to be said for this point of view. Even if it is incorrect, the needs and necessities of the home field should be fully investigated and carefully considered by all the co-operating committees.

ELECTION AFTERMATH

SOME curious happenings form the aftermath of the general elections. A few foolish Liberals are trying to induce the public to believe that in British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario, the Conservative governments used their authority unfairly against the Liberal candidates. There does not seem to be any evidence to support the contention. As individuals, the Conservative cabinet ministers and members of the legislatures used all legitimate means to assist the Conservative cause. That this is quite justifiable is amply proven by the active interference of the Dominion Liberals when any provincial election is in progress. What is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander. Moreover, the success of the Liberals in the two constituencies in Northern Ontario where the provincial government might have exercised most influence, Thunder Bay and Nipissing, shows that the pressure could not have been very great. At one polling booth in Nipissing where the voters were wholly employees of the Ontario Government railway, the Liberal candidate received a majority of the votes. In New Brunswick, the Liberals swept the province, though it is but a few months since the Conservative provincial party enjoyed a similar triumph.

The general charge of provincial interference would be equally foolish if made by Conservatives against the Liberal governments in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island. No doubt, these Liberal governments did what they could on behalf of Liberal candidates. That they went too far, according to Canadian practices, is no more to be believed than that the Conservatives went too far.

Equally foolish is the despatch sent by the Hon. Clifford Sifton from Brandon in which he explains that the reduction of his majority in Brandon from 821 to 60, and the great turnover in Winnipeg, is due to "stuffed voters' lists." Those who know Mr. Sifton's genius for organisation will take this statement with considerable salt. If the lists were not in good condition, that was the fault of the Liberal organisation. The probable truth is that Mr. Sifton and his lieutenants are not nearly so popular as they once were. They have been getting wealthy and, rightly or wrongly, the people have voted against them as, in other constituencies, they voted against Conservatives who were suspected of using their parliamentary positions for private aggrandisement.

Another foolish charge is that the Liberal victory throughout Canada was partially due to a "corruption" fund. It is probably true that the Liberals had twice as large a campaign fund as the Conservatives. That this gave them an advantage is quite true. Their corps of paid organisers and their supply of literature were larger, and no doubt affected the result to some extent. That the campaign funds were used illegitimately to any considerable extent is improbable. Even with a smaller campaign fund, Sir Wilfrid Laurier would probably have won with a fairly large majority. Everywhere the Liberals were well organised and fairly enthusiastic, mainly because of the magnetism of the great man who led them. In the second place, the Roman Catholic vote throughout the provinces, other than Quebec, seems to have gone as solidly for Sir Wilfrid as the Orange vote went solidly for the Conservatives. The celebrated pamphlet issued by the "Orange Sentinel" of Toronto was used to advantage by the Liberals among the Catholic voters and probably emphasised the tendency which had already manifested itself. So far as Ontario is concerned, Mr. Borden might pray to be saved from his friends.

If there were malpractices by either Liberals or Conservatives in any constituency, the best citizens on both sides should unite to expose it. A political wrong-doer should be punished as fully and as relentlessly as any other criminal. This idea, that a man who does wrong on behalf of a political candidate should be protected and rewarded by him, is most vicious. If its incipient appearance is not met with severe measures, it may become malignant. The Maritime

Province people are making an earnest attempt in this direction, and their efforts seem to be meeting with considerable success. The central and western provinces should follow this lead, which means much for the high character of our political life. Eternal vigilance is the price we must pay for political purity and an uncorrupted electorate.

WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED?

FOR weeks the whole country has been in a state of mental excitement over the question as to whether we have been well governed or not, and a decision has been reached. Does that decision mean anything? Will the members of the new parliament be any more independent than the members of the old parliament? Will shrewd and scheming men cease to get plums in the shape of "fat" contracts from the various departments? Will the Government buy only from those on the patronage lists, and thus debar themselves from getting quotations from one-half of the dealers in any particular line? Will the Government grant post office buildings and armouries to the members on its own side and to a favoured few on the Opposition side? Will the newly-elected members cease to discuss every public question from the party point of view or will they forget all about the campaign-fund and the next election and do what seems best in the interest of the nation as a whole? Will the practices which have prevailed for forty years at Ottawa disappear now and a political millennium be inaugurated?

Not a bit of it. Change of government or no change of government, there will not be much difference. Political reforms like other reforms must come slowly. Until the people learn to encourage the self-sacrificing, honest member and to spurn the man who bribes them with wharves, harbour improvements, and other public expenditures, irrespective of the party to which they belong, there cannot be much improvement. The average member of parliament has about as lofty ideals as his supporters in the constituency. He knows how the people who have helped in his election will "bleed" him for subscriptions, for special concessions, for government positions and other favours whenever opportunity arises. He knows how much money was spent to create "the great success." He knows, especially if he represents a city constituency, how little sacrifice the best class of citizens have made in behalf of a clean and honest election. He knows his public and he can estimate pretty accurately how much conscience it possesses.

Until the people change, there will be little improvement in political methods. The people have been changing slowly. There are signs of higher ideals. The Railway Commission and the Civil Service Commission are the result of our desire to get to a higher plane in political administration. That there is talk of the "evils of patronage," of the unbusinesslike method of undertaking public works solely because they will help certain members in their next election, of the lack of business common-sense in the whole conduct of parliamentary affairs from the discussions in committee to the debates in the House—that this talk is common is a sign of coming reform.

So long as the cry "My party, right or wrong," prevails, so long will daring and unscrupulous men perform outrageous political acts for the sake of remaining in office and making life easier for themselves and their friends. The dangerous politician is the man who believes that the public forgets and forgives. An impotent public is one which does what the dangerous politician expects of it. The game is one in which there should be no quarter.

If we believe parliament is not ideal and if our parliamentarians are not quite so fair, so high-minded and so public-spirited as we would like to see them, let us remember that our business life is also far from being ideal, that our theatres are pretty bad, that respectable citizens buy the Calgary *Eye-Opener* to see what new filth it has gathered up, that human passions are still filling the asylums, jails and penitentiaries, and that church choirs and church members are not always living in that Christian harmony which thinketh and speaketh no evil. Private life, business life, social life and parliamentary life—all these bear somewhat the same characteristics. In Great Britain, parliamentary life has probably reached a higher relative position than it has in this country, but there are reasons for that. This need not discourage us, but rather should it encourage us to talk and work for that high standard of public conduct which has made and is keeping Great Britain in the fore-front of the world's great nations.