

the choice of their own teacher, and, while he should not be permitted to teach denominational tenets during school hours, or as a part of the school course, there could be little difficulty in arranging the matter of religious instruction in such a case. But the Manitoba Legislature is surely bound to legislate for the future, that great future to which we all look forward, when the country shall be the home of millions instead of the thousands who are now scattered over its vast and fertile expanses. It is not surely to be supposed that the North-West Provinces are to be settled on sectarian lines in that good time coming. Mr. Ewart would, unless we sadly misapprehend his views, be one of the first to deplore such a state of things, and to agree with us that it would be a strong condemnation of the separate school system should it tend to favour and perpetuate a division of the whole population on narrow creed lines.

THE result of the election of County Councillors in London seems to have been as great a surprise for the Moderates as that of the recent bye-elections in Canada was for the Liberals. The papers now to hand show that the completeness of the triumph of the Progressives was not exaggerated, as one was inclined to suspect, by the cable reports. In 1889 the Progressives won sixty-nine seats, the Moderates forty-nine. In the late struggle the former won eighty-four, the latter only thirty-four, giving a Progressive majority of fifty. If the nineteen aldermen to be "co-opted" are all chosen from the Progressives, as is not unlikely to be the case, the majority of the latter will be simply overwhelming. The contest was remarkable by reason of the manner in which the churches, especially the Nonconformists, threw themselves into the struggle. It seems to have been quite as much a religious as a civic contest. The result will no doubt be a vigorous overturning of old abuses and a new era of radical reforms in the management of the affairs of this great corporation. Whatever may be the degree of wisdom shown in making the changes, there can be no doubt that there is a crying need of radical reforms in many directions. The tyrannical rule of the water and gas companies will probably be brought to the speediest possible end. The renovation of the rookeries will no doubt be accelerated. The experiment of radical rule, largely in the interests of the labouring classes—for that is what is evidently coming—will be watched with great interest. Aristocracy and monopoly have had a long period of ascendancy. The commonalty are apparently about to have their turn, though there is no lack of titles on the new Council Board. It will be well if the intoxication of so great a success does not tempt the victors to rashness. Probably there is still enough of Conservative ballast on the Board to cause it to exemplify the wisdom of making haste slowly.

NEW YORK has just now a pulpit crusader who is summoning the people to battle with the forces of civic misrule in a truly heroic fashion. Some weeks ago Rev. Dr. Parkhurst of that city preached a sermon in which he accused the municipal authorities of showing but a languid interest in the conviction of criminals. His charge was in effect that the officers appointed to administer the civic laws for the suppression of vice and crime, from the District Attorney down to the humblest policeman, winked at the grossest violations of those laws. His severe denunciations produced no effect beyond a farcical investigation by a grand jury and a general verdict of acquittal. In return Dr. Parkhurst was made the object of the severest censure. He was accused of having slandered the officers of the law, and of having dealt in general accusations where he dare not make specific charges. On Sunday, the 13th inst., the eloquent preacher returned to the attack, this time in a very different fashion. He had taken the Tammany authorities at their word. If they wanted specific charges, he said in effect, they should have them. During the intervening weeks he had been at work collecting his facts. He had employed detectives to visit saloons, gambling hells, houses of prostitution, etc. Not content with this he had himself, in company with two trusty friends, visited many such places and found the laws of the city set at naught in the most open and shameless manner. Instead of enforcing the civic laws for the suppression of vice and crime, he found policemen standing before the very doors of dens and palaces which were consecrated to the most abominable purposes, utterly and no doubt purposely blind to what was going on within. The figures in a single instance will suffice to give our readers some conception of the way

in which this brave preacher did his work and the results of his search for specific evidence of wrong-doing. The city has a law for Sunday closing of saloons, and it is, of course, one of the duties of the municipal officers and an instruction to the police to enforce that law. On the Sunday which Dr. Parkhurst chose for his investigation of the way in which this law is enforced, and within the small part of the city which he was able to cover with his detectives, no less than 254 saloons were found in full blast, with 2,438 people present in them. In regard to each of these he has had affidavits prepared in due form and his witnesses are ready to testify to the facts. As may well be imagined, the saloons, bad as they are, do not by any means represent the worst agencies of pollution which were found at work in every direction. And yet even with a most formidable array of specific evidence in his possession Dr. Parkhurst was, at the last account, finding it very difficult to set the laws in operation. He was driven from pillar to post, from one hall of justice to another, in a vain attempt to get at the right mode of procedure. The forces of obstruction were doing their worst to balk his efforts to destroy that which is no doubt a prolific source of dishonest gain to the officers who know how and when to shut their eyes. But the moral forces of the city have become so thoroughly aroused by the heroic action of this quiet, scholarly man, who is sacrificing his own tastes, ease and peace to his sense of public duty, that there is little doubt that the result must be a great reform in the methods of civic administration in that great and foul metropolis.

#### OTTAWA LETTER.

IT certainly must be disheartening to Mr. Laurier and his followers when they look upon the apparent results of their political labours for the past year. This time twelve months ago Parliament had not assembled; the majority placed to the credit of the Government was comparatively small. Ontario and Quebec had pronounced against the Conservative policy, and, to quote Sir Richard Cartwright who is more caustic than politic, Sir John Macdonald found himself retained in power by the fidelity of the "shreds and patches"—in other words, the Maritime Provinces. When Parliament did assemble, or very soon after it met, the long deferred day for the triumph of Canadian Liberalism seemed nigh, even at hand. Leading men on both sides knew of an impending storm, and those of the Opposition fervidly believed that the old ship "Tory" would be unequal to the task of making port. Then, on a sudden, the old and trusted pilot was called away. For the moment party differences were sunk over the national loss, only to be revived more bitterly than ever. Political doctors affirmed on their professional reputation that the Government was in sure and rapid decline. At this stage came the Mercier exposé, a blessing in disguise to the Conservatives.

The Langevin-McGreevy scandal was bad, but the Mercier-Pacaud scandal was worse, and after a wearisome and wearying session the Government came out stronger than when it entered. Since then it has gained steadily, and one seriously wonders what the Opposition are going to do about it. They can sympathize now with Mr. Meredith and his followers in the Ontario Legislature, who may well lay claim to the title of "the everlasting Opposition." But if the Liberals are comparatively few, they are keen and critical. Mr. Laurier is as quick as a steel-trap; Sir Richard Cartwright is an adept at finances and statistics; Mr. Mills is constitutional and profound, while Mr. Davies, who has just arrived from his island home, is remarkably bright at repartee and retort. He brings to the Opposition side what they sadly need, genealogy.

When Lord Dufferin was about leaving this country he made a speech in which he took advantage of a privilege accorded the Moribund, and bade the people of Canada beware lest they became entitled to the curse which Jacob pronounced upon his eldest son Reuben. This advice was inspired, no doubt, by the conflicting expressions of opinion by the electorate during that celebrated man's tenure of office. If he still takes an interest in public matters in Canada, as he is credited with doing, he must either conclude that his advice was either well taken or else not needed.

Conservatism has reigned supreme since he left the country, and now boasts of a larger majority than ever. Yet there is always this consolation to the minority, that the populace is fickle and that majorities sometimes dwindle as rapidly as they accumulate. The great trouble with Mr. Laurier and his following is that they have never hit upon a cry which takes. It is not impossible that they may yet strike a chord which appeals to popular sentiment, though it looks very improbable just now.

A month has gone by almost since Parliament assembled, and we have had really very little work. On Friday the estimates were taken up. Mr. McMullen, whom some wag wittily named "Retail McMullen," had the desire of his heart fulfilled when the Auditor-General's report was presented. However it may be about "retail," this honourable gentleman is a master of detail, and the

country need have no fear that any Bill for contingencies, sundries, etc., will be hastily passed as long as he has a seat in the House. He is aggressive and fearless, and while the heavy guns are fired by Sir Richard, quite as much effect is made by the small arms which he discharges with telling effect on the Government. The High Commissioner and his office is the pet abomination of Mr. McMullen. The expense to which the country is put in maintaining Sir Charles and his staff in London is, in his opinion, an utter waste of the people's money.

However, after some severe strictures upon the High Commissioner's conduct in taking an active part in the late general elections, in which Mr. Laurier, Mr. Patterson and Mr. Davies supported the member for North Wellington, the various items in connection with this department were passed and Mr. Foster breathed a sigh of relief. Forty-seven items were disposed of, being a very considerable amount of work for one day.

Mr. McCarthy, the *bête noir* of Roman Catholics in general and of French Canadians in particular, is not going to allow the grass to grow under his feet this session. He is a terrible nuisance in the opinion of the straight party man. On Thursday he moved for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the North-West Territories Act. His object is to forever settle the question of separate schools in the Territories by giving them the entire control of educational matters.

Mr. McCarthy made a short speech simply outlining his proposed policy and promised to deal more thoroughly with the question on the second reading of the Bill. M. La Rivière, who has but little love for the member of North Simcoe and constitutes himself the defender of the rights of his French-Canadian confreres in the North-West, replied in a spirited manner to Mr. McCarthy. He would not give that gentleman credit for any sincerity of motive, and caused some amusement when he concluded his speech by saying that "certain gentlemen because they have nothing else by which to raise themselves above the level of the common people adopt the ways of the demagogue in the hope of making themselves appear of some consequence." This was a severe cut at Mr. McCarthy, or meant to be such, and he with the rest of the House heartily laughed when the irate Frenchman sat down.

An interesting debate arose over the second reading of a Bill introduced by Mr. Taylor, intended to prohibit the importation and immigration of foreigners and aliens under contract or agreement to perform labour in Canada. The motion met with the opposition of leading men on both sides. Sir John Thompson spoke forcibly against it, urging that if such a law were placed on the statute book, it would be found to work injuriously for Canada. Even allowing that the American Act, of which that proposed was more or less a copy, did protect labour interests in the United States, a condition of affairs such as existed there had no place in Canada. Mr. Mills, Mr. Edgar and others also opposed the Bill, and finally a compromise was effected whereby, on motion of Mr. Ingram, the debate was adjourned.

Mr. McCarthy has given notice of the following motion: "That in the opinion of this House, in view of the vast commercial interests existing between the United States of America and Canada, and of the political questions from time to time requiring adjustment between the Dominion and the neighbouring republic, it would tend to the advancement of those interests and the promotion of a better understanding between the two countries were a representative of the Dominion, subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Imperial advisers, attached to the staff of Her Majesty's Ministers at Washington, specially charged to watch, guard and represent the interests of Canada."

No doubt discussion will arise over this motion. The Liberals as a party will possibly be found to support it, since it is, to a certain extent, in the line which they have advocated in the past. Whether the French members approve of the Bill or not, they will feel in duty bound to oppose, on account of the—to them—objectionable source whence it arises.

Mr. Foster delivered his budget speech this (Tuesday) afternoon. Almost every member was in his place, while the galleries were filled with ladies and the ordinary spectators. The Minister of Finance made a clear and concise statement of the financial condition of the country, and was loudly applauded when he announced that there was a surplus of over \$2,000,000.

Sir Richard Cartwright followed, severely criticizing the policy of the Government. T. C. L. K.

#### PRESENT INTEREST IN THE LIVES OF LITTERATEURS.

PERHAPS at no time in the past has there been shown an interest in the every-day life of the man of letters equal to the interest that attaches to the members of that guild to-day. More and more it is becoming a passion with the readers of books to know all that can be known of the makers of books. Sometimes this is a harmless appetite; frequently it is impudent and intrusive. The curiosity that intrudes itself unasked on a busy man's privacy, with no other warrant than its desire to report the great man's conversation, describe his surroundings and sketch the cut of his jib; the cruel, inconsiderate love of gossip that is admitted as a friend into the home-circle and repeat what has occurred there, are but too common and much to be deplored. But there is a healthy and