

of mind and the success of the library, they will divest themselves as far as possible of responsibility for the management, as is done in most places. The "London Times" in a recent article on Municipal Socialism says: "While an ordinary employee would think it quite enough to master the details and superintend the management of a tramway system, a gas works, or an electric lighting system, the town or county councilman of to-day is supposed to be capable of controlling any number of such concerns and to look after a score or a hundred of other public interests besides." As the management of a library really calls for exceptional qualifications it would be well for the council to seek expert advice at an early stage of the proceedings. The control from the beginning should be entrusted to a board of library commissioners, upon which the City Council would be represented, as it is upon the School Boards.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The 31st October, 1902, will be ever a marked day in the annals of the Empire, indeed of the world, for on that day a cable message was sent which encircled the globe. The Pacific cable is now in operation. One of the first messages that passed through its entire length was sent by Mr. Seddon, Premier of New Zealand, to Sir Sandford Fleming, K.C.M.G., whose fertile brain gave birth to the idea of a cable between Canada and Australia to be wholly under imperial control. The cable just completed touches no foreign territory. As there is direct telegraphic connection between it and the Atlantic cable, a message from Australia to England goes through, practically, without a break, the land line being a link in the electric chain that binds Great Britain, Canada and Australasia.

Neither the magnificence nor significance of the Pacific cable are fully realized in this age of wonders. When the first message was sent to England through the Atlantic cable, over forty years ago, the event was announced from thousands of pulpits in the old land, so great was the sensation it created. Last week, when a greater triumph was consummated, it excited only momentary interest and was announced as though it were an ordinary, every day event. Yet, if thoughtfully considered, the linking of Great Britain with her Australasian colonies by electric wires which enable the old land and the antipodes to exchange communications in a few hours, must be regarded as an historic event of incomparably greater interest than many which the muse of history describes in most eloquent language.

A Pacific cable was suggested in 1894 at the Intercolonial Conference held at Ottawa. In a few years arrangements were made for raising the requisite capital, apportioning the share of the Mother Country, Canada and the Australian colonies, and deciding upon its management and control. Within three years this splendid scheme was initiated and completed.

The City Council has decided to accept Mr. Carnegie's munificent and most unselfish offer of \$150,000 for the erection of a public library building in this city. The gift is contingent upon the city granting the comparatively small sum of \$15,000 yearly for the maintenance of the library. Much smaller cities spend a far larger amount annually on their civic library. The question now is, where will the building be placed? A site now owned by the city will be selected, which narrows the choice. In all fairness the library ought to be placed in a central position, easily accessible to all citizens. If the aldermen wish to learn how such an institution should be furnished with books, and managed so as to reach the highest practical efficiency, they should study the history, constitution and management of the Toronto Free Library. They could acquire valuable pointers from libraries in American cities.

The elections carried on in 42 American States have resulted in a Republican victory, so the control of Congress will not be changed.

A case of considerable interest to the agents of insurance companies, more especially those who have the highly laudable ambition to share in public duties, was decided recently in the Superior Court of this Province. In the suit, "John Pinder vs. F. W. Evans," the question to be decided was whether the fact that a municipal corporation insures property belonging to it, with an insurance company whereof one of the councillors is agent, paid by commissions on the premiums on risks taken, disqualifies such councillor from continuing to hold office as such. It is contended that it does because under such circumstances the councillor "has an interest in a contract with the corporation," within the meaning of Article 4215, R. S. Q. Mr. Evans, who conducts a large insurance business in this city, is a member of the Council of the town of Westmount, so that, if the Court had decided in favour of the above contention, he would have been deprived of his seat. Judge Doherty, however, said:

"This contention is, in my opinion, unfounded.