

elections are to be held next February, hastened to veto the increase and put the water-tax back to its old rate which was, in itself, much higher than the rate in other cities in Canada and the United States. At a meeting of the Finance Committee, held a day or so ago, an hour was given up to a search for victims of further taxation, and among the propositions made was one to tax corporations and religious property. The usefulness of the former, as good milch cows, has long since been established by the Provincial Government, but no public man has ever hitherto had the courage to put a tax on religious property. As this could not be done without the consent of the Legislature there is no probability of it being adopted even were the council to approve the suggestion. A strong case can be made out against ecclesiastical exemptions from taxation in this Province, but no one expects, during the present generation at any rate, to see them amended.

The Chambre de Commerce of this city is trying to improve the education imparted to young men in the Roman Catholic commercial educational institutions throughout the Province, and has indicated a number of the weak points in the present teaching. One of these is the failure to teach English thoroughly. The methods of teaching geography are also condemned. It seems, says the report, to be so much neglected that many young men upon entering some commercial house are ignorant of the lay of their own country, of its products, of its ways of transportation and also of its relations with foreign countries. The Chambre de Commerce had arranged to have a congress of the superiors of these institutions to discuss this question, but Archbishop Fabre thought the present an inopportune time for holding it. In view of the agitation now going on over Roman Catholic schools in Manitoba, he did not consider it wise to hold a public congress, during which the discussion might drift into unforseen channels. And in deference to his wishes nothing of this nature will be done at present. Archbishop Fabre is a very shrewd man.

At Street Corners.

A MOIST and clammy heat pervades the air at the street corners; the sun shines through a steamy haze, and one's clothing sticks to one's back. There is nothing bracing about this moist, hot breeze. It stops repartee, takes the snap out of journalism, and prevents even young Mr. Coburn from getting up properly spiced denunciatory perorations. Ah well, the proverb about the ill wind blowing nobody any good was, perhaps, true.

There seems some chance that a branch of the Navy League may be started in Toronto to give us an interest in maritime defence, and to make us feel that we are of the family of Britons who rule the waves. Those seasoned old salts, Mr. H. J. Wickham and Commander Law, are naturally looked to by their fellow-Torontonians to take the lead in such a matter, and to show how a successful branch of the League can be not only begun but continued here. The Navy League is, in the Old Country, an important association, and it is to be hoped that the matter will be well taken up. My friends and I at the street corners are developing a sea roll, and Commander Postlethwaite is teaching us to give the proper nautical hitch-up to our trousers.

Mr. Daniel Hull, B.A., of Upper Canada College, did a graceful thing the other night at the meeting of the Technical School Board called for the purpose of electing a new principal in place of Mr. E. B. Merrill, resigned. Mr. Hull and Dr. McMaster had been chosen from the list of applicants by the School Management Committee, and their testimonials were read to the board at full length, the documents relating to both candidates, who were present, being extraordinarily creditable to their character and attainments. Dr. McMaster had, however, taught in the Technical School for four years, and a strong point was made of this by his proposer. It evidently made an impression on Mr. Hull, who, though his chances were good, at once rose and signified his intention of dropping out of the running.

I am pleased to see Alderman Thos. Davies riding about the city on a bicycle. To the wisdom of age "Tom" Davies unites the alert optimism of youth. He has a fund of common sense that is usefully employed in the City Council,

and while not in the least overbearing, he is able to hold his own. I hope he will occasionally ride his bicycle over those streets the pavement of which needs attending to, and we wheelists will ever pray for him if he will look after our interests at the governing board of this city.

A prospective Mayor of Toronto is Alderman Burns. Of course no man ought to be elected to the Council who is not capable of filling at some time or other the place of the Chief Magistrate. But imagine some of the aldermen as Mayor! The only way would be to elect three or four of them to sit in the chair as a sort of human conglomerate. Alderman Burns, on the contrary, has enough solidity of character and ability to qualify him for the post, and I sincerely hope he will one day get there.

Mr. Carl Ahrens, A.R.C.A., has returned to the city from Doon, where he has been studying landscape. I understand that he is engaged on a series of articles on Canadian rustic life which he will illustrate. Mr. Ahrens has a craftsmanlike touch with the pen as well as with the pencil.

I am glad to hear that Mr. T. Arnold Haultain has another article coming out in *Blackwood's Magazine*. His subject this time is "How to Read," and he is sure to deal with this subject in an interesting and suggestive way. I have long wanted to know how to read, myself, as I hope, some day, to find time for that occupation.

An article might be written on the subject, "How to Read Aloud," and all the teachers in our public schools should peruse it. A good many of their scholars mispronounce the English language to a serious extent. They mispronounce it themselves. Now Inspector Hughes doesn't—I know for a fact that he appreciates good English reading, I call upon the Grand Worthies, etc., James L., to look to the matter.

He has, I understand, recently returned from a trip to Jamaica, where he was *persona grata* with everybody, including the negro population. I hear he was holding forth to an audience down there on the beauties and advantages of Toronto and especially its Public schools, when one of his black auditors, grinning from ear to ear, called out the negro proverb, "Jim Crow tink him pickney white"—referring to the tendency of parents to think their "pickney"—kid, cub, or child—beats all creation. This, however, did not disconcert our ever youthful Inspector, and now the Jamaica people—some of them—think Toronto is like heaven. It is people like Mr. Hughes that make this a convention town.

DIOGENES.

In the Good Old Time.

Many and many a year ago
(Oh me, but the years are long !)
His hair was brown that is now like snow,
His cheeks had not lost their sunny glow,
His body so bent was hale and strong.
(But the king, the king can do no wrong !)

They dragged this man to a place of woe ;
(Misery makes the years seem long !)
They buried him in a dungeon low ;
And the world went trampling to and fro,
While he laid forgotten by the throng.
(But the king, the king can do no wrong !)

His crime ? We never shall rightly know.
And idle jest—or a song :

No matter. The king was vexed ; and so
This creature must learn how men can grow
To pray each hour for the headsmen's blow.
Oh, the axe falls lighter than the thong !
(But the king ? Oh, the king can do no wrong !)

HENRY BEECH.

Travels in the North-West.*

MR. FIELD is a veteran and a veteran traveller and writer of travels. He has travelled in Ireland, in Egypt, in Greece, in Spain, in the Holy Land, and elsewhere, and he has put his impressions on record. And now, he says, "Europe is an old story, why not turn to the west

* "Our Western Archipelago." By Henry M. Field. Price \$2.00. New York : Scribner, 1895.