

and the crickets and grasshoppers in full chorus will be carolling their harvest cantatas. Some modern people call it noise, but the old Greeks and Byron thought it musical, and made very good poetry out of it.

But the evening is coming on, and the sun is going down in that peculiar summer glow of amber deepening to red, which country people say is a sure sign of hot weather, past and to come. But the heat of the day is quite over, though the air is full of the mellow warmth of the setting sun. A hush comes gradually over the landscape. All nature is sinking to repose. The only sound to be heard is the faint rattle of a far away wagon.

Suddenly there is a rustling among the cedar branches that overhang the path in the valley below, and a cow that had been left behind by the herd at the milking time, bursts through the bushes. The belated and uneasy animal hurries along the path to the barnyard moo-oo-ing in a most inconsolable fashion. She stops two or three times on the way and bawls vehemently, and the whole valley reverberates with the clamour.

Then the echoes die away, silence again surrounds us, and the night comes slowly down.

A. STEVENSON.

QUEBEC AFFAIRS.

OUR Provincial politicians are buckling on the armour for a stiff fight, although what they have got to fight about is certainly not as clear as it might be. One thing is unquestionably beyond dispute: both parties are desperately in earnest: the "outs" to get in and the "ins" to keep in. The control of the public purse is the ultimate aim and end of a Quebec politician, no matter to what political party he may for the moment belong. Perhaps, after all, this patriotic desire to guard the finances of the commonwealth is a natural outcome of our representative institutions: it is fairly well established now, that the man who has got to spend the public money is a rogue, or a spendthrift, or both, while the man who has not is honest and economical—or at all events he says he is. The so-called Liberal party is entitled to some measure of sympathy, for while "the rank and file" profess a desire to do right, the leaders invariably go wrong. During the last session of the Legislative Assembly this tendency was particularly noticeable, involving disaster along the whole *Rouge* line of attack. Mr. Mercier proved his incapacity as a leader in a variety of ways, and in every way successfully; he is now out with his "Great Moral Show," and it remains for the electors to say to what extent they are prepared to patronize it. That Mr. Mercier should, on the eve of an election, talk a good deal of bunkum was to be anticipated, but that any one should be silly enough to treat it sensibly is simply incredible. For example, his programme includes "Provincial Autonomy" and full protection and respect for all the rights of minorities. It is to be presumed that Mr. Mercier refers to the rights of the English minority, and if so, the best commentary on this political high falutin' is that in the House and out of it Mr. Mercier arrays himself against conceding almost any rights to the English-speaking minority. On the contrary, he and others of like ilk appear to regard the very existence of an English-speaking people in this Province in the light of an insult, and when the minority happens to differ from Mr. Mercier, as it does just now very seriously, the insult reaches the proportions of a crime. As to his anxiety about "Provincial Autonomy," we have only to recollect his endless series of non-confidence resolutions on the Riel question to feel assured that there could be no better way to destroy Provincial Autonomy than by the indiscriminate mixing of local and Dominion politics after the manner of Mr. Mercier. He it is whose selfish, we might almost say criminal, anxiety to obtain office through the *post mortem* influence of a traitor and a murderer, has endangered Provincial Autonomy, if indeed it be endangered.

Mr. Mercier's eloquent manifesto travels a long distance into the realm of fiction, as witness, for example, the following amusing paragraph:

"In presence of these dangers all good citizens, without distinction of origin or religion, laying aside all party spirit, have resolved to unite so as to assure to the Province a body of representatives at once independent and resolved to make our constitutional rights respected."

The above statement furnishes a key to the whole address, and tends to create a suspicion that Mr. Mercier was joking when he penned it.

THE closing days of last session witnessed a bitter contest between two rival divinity schools in this Province. The Montreal Diocesan Theological College asked power from the Legislature to confer degrees in divinity, and a vigorous opposition to this petition was waged on the part of Bishop's College, Lennoxville, and also by certain parties within the Montreal diocese itself. After a prolonged discussion and several adjournments, the Montreal opponents of the measure withdrew, leaving the contest to be carried on by Lennoxville; it was finally carried in favour of the Montreal Diocesan College, subject to certain restrictions, and the Private Bills Committee of the Legislative Assembly reported accordingly. It was then

thought that a rather discreditable chapter in local ecclesiastical history had closed, but those who thought so were grievously mistaken; the High Church party rallied all their forces, carried their opposition before the Private Bills Committee of the Legislative Council, and by methods not over creditable defeated the Bill by a majority of *one*, that one being a gentleman who was dragged up to vote almost in a dying condition. The Montreal promoters of the Bill feel deeply incensed, particularly against the Bishop of Niagara, for his interference in a matter with which, as they allege, he had no concern. His lordship answered this by claiming that as a Bishop of the Church he was directly interested in the educational *status* of the clergy, and generally he held that the matter was one upon which the Provincial Synod should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion. Montreal, through her Bishop, asserts with emphasis that the Provincial Synod has nothing whatever to do with the matter, and that sooner than submit to such unheard-of doctrine she would step out of the Provincial Synod altogether. Bitter feelings have been generated on all sides, and the respective Synods of Quebec and Montreal appear to have elected their delegates with a view to the coming contest. The Quebec delegates to Provincial Synods have been to a man, lay and clerical, selected from the High Church party. The lay element of the Evangelical party was buried in the grave of the late Mr. H. S. Scott, and his co-workers have become recreants to their life profession and are now shining lights in the High Church ranks. There are only a few distinctly Evangelical congregations in the Diocese of Quebec, and they are *per se* excluded from the fellowship of High Church saints, but this terrible deprivation they manage somehow or other to survive. Church life is peaceful in Quebec, but it is the peace of the graveyard. The forthcoming meeting of the Provincial Synod will prove very interesting, because the question of Diocesan Autonomy is distinctly raised by the Bishop of Niagara, and it remains to be seen how far the laymen of the Anglican communion are prepared to follow his lordship on this important issue.

"NEVER," said a gentleman the other day, "do I remember to have seen business so low as it is in Quebec this year." From at least two dozen people I have heard the same statements, and, unless my eyes deceive me, the evidence of its truth is everywhere apparent. And yet every now and again, particularly when our civic wisdom melts under the genial influences of "old hock," we are treated to a vision of Quebec's future, which is very promising. Indeed it consists of promises and nothing but promises, and these, we are sorry to say, have been falsified one after another. The North Shore Railway, that gave such promise, we sold for a song, and now the great Pacific Railway, that was to have restored new life to the dead capital finds that one or two passenger trains to Quebec during the day is ample. Our deal trade has gone to Montreal, and we have ceased to be a distributing centre; our export trade is confined exclusively to square timber, and that is diminishing rapidly. We have a few prosperous boot and shoe manufactories, but beyond these there is really nothing to rely upon, and yet we are duly informed that at a lunch given on the 23rd instant, at Chateau D'Eau, on the occasion of the inspection of the new aqueduct, His Worship the Mayor, in speaking of the prospects of Quebec, said that most of our backwardness was due in a great measure to ourselves. He said there was a class of men among us who were constantly running down our city and its prospects, and no good was ever to come of us, according to those men's views.

We have heard all this a good many times, but nothing has come out of it. There is perhaps no reason to doubt that Quebec has not been remarkable for the enterprise of its merchants; however, it is useless to blame them now, for the responsible ones are either dead or gone elsewhere, and we who remain enjoy the heritage of decay. Nobody has any confidence in the future of Quebec, and the English-speaking population is getting away as opportunity serves, so that we fail to discover any foundation for the sanguine hopes entertained by Mayor Langelier. It is true that he alluded to "the harbour improvements, and spoke, from a personal visit to the works, of the great good to come from those improvements, and gave great praise to the Government for the aid extended to the Harbour Commissioner to effect the improvements, which he characterized in the highest terms, and which he looked upon as of immense value to the future of Quebec and our commerce." It may be exactly as the mayor says it is, but most people without a personal interest in the matter will pronounce the outlay a useless expenditure of public money, and for this reason: Quebec, with all its facilities and splendid harbour accommodation, is literally deserted; while Montreal, with its wretched insufficient accommodation, its rapid currents and dangerous access, is crowded. We think the mayor had better look into the question again, and that without the disturbing influences of a cold lunch. Her future, if she has a future, is a military one, and to secure this advantage to her the mayor has done nothing, and Halifax has quietly walked off with the plum. NEMO.