

control. We will have one system of public schools, free to all, to which all must contribute. If any sect wish to have schools for the propagation of their religious creed they are at liberty to do so, but they must not expect the State to help support those schools." But under the principle of local control which obtains in the School Act, we have no doubt that the schools in districts essentially Catholic are under Catholic control, subject only to certain broad general principles which are necessary in order to insure that they shall remain public as distinct from sectarian schools. Where is the tyranny in this, or in enacting that in a British Province the official language shall be the English? If any one were forbidden to study, or teach, or speak the French language, the cry of tyranny would be in order. As to Mr. Tarte's comparison drawn from the position of the English-speaking people and schools in Quebec, the cases are not parallel, as we shall show presently. If they were, or even as it is, if the Quebec Legislature should propose to substitute *bona fide* free, unsectarian, public schools for the present system, we dare say that Protestants would not object. As to the language, they would of course insist on their right to have the English language taught and spoken in a British country though not to the exclusion of the French. Possibly if Mr. Tarte would bear in mind that Canada is a British not a French country, or even, in constitution and allegiance, a British-and-French country, he would be saved from some confusion. But the assumed parallelism between Quebec and Manitoba does not exist, for the sufficient reason that the separate schools in Quebec are the result of a compromise between that Province and Ontario. That compromise may have been wise or unwise, but it exists, is embodied in the constitution and both Provinces are bound by it. For the separate schools it gives Protestants, Quebec has its *quid pro quo* in Catholic separate schools in Ontario. Neither can be abolished without a change in the constitution or—a revolution.

Which is better, unlimited freedom of speech with minority rule, or limited freedom of speech with majority rule? This is the question which has been decided by the action of the British Parliament, and which will have to be decided sooner or later in the United States. In fact, the present state of affairs in the Senate of the latter shows that the inability of the majority to limit debate has virtually decided the question in favour of minority rule. There can be no doubt that it is the will of the minority which is now ruling in the United States, through the delay of the Senate to come to a vote on the Silver Suspension Bill. It is really illogical to regard the question as one of freedom of speech. Freedom of speech concerns the

right of any citizen to express his opinion on any question, in a proper manner, and on a proper occasion, in the presence of those who may care to hear him. The present question in the U. S. Senate is rather, as an exchange puts it, one of the "courtesy" which will not allow a vote on any question until every member who has or pretends to have something to say shall have spoken to his own satisfaction. It is really difficult to think of anything much more discourteous to the majority and the nation than the conduct of those Senators who persist in claiming and abusing the right to speak for purposes of obstruction, while the business interests of the whole nation are suffering grievous loss in consequence. Yet the majority is apparently powerless in the matter. They cannot pass a closure resolution because the same tactics which are proving so successful in delaying the silver repeal bill would avail to prevent such a resolution from being brought to a vote. The attempt to decide the contest by physical exhaustion has failed, because the power of endurance of the minority has been proved greater than that of the majority. The question of the moment is between compromise on the one hand, and no one can tell what on the other. But it is felt that the compromise under the circumstances would be not only a betrayal of the interests of the public but a concession of the right of the minority to prevent the expression of the convictions and will of the majority in legislation, a result which would be in violation of the fundamental principle of democratic government.

It is pretty evident that whatever may be the outcome of the present struggle in the United States Senate, the experience of this session is likely to lead to some modification of the present system. It is possible that when the immediate cause of the difficulty has been removed some rule for the limitation of debate in the future may be agreed on. A good many seem disposed to give the question a much wider range, and make it the basis of an agitation for the reconstruction or the abolition of the Upper House. Of course that is hardly logical. A similar deadlock is liable to occur at any moment in the representative chamber, as would have been the case in Great Britain during the late session, had not the closure been already available. Yet in this case there are other aspects of the affair which are giving rise to vexatious questions and may yet cause serious trouble among our neighbours. The composition and use of the Senate are under consideration as never before. The fact that some of the most determined obstructionists are Senators from small States which produce little but silver, and that the struggle on the part of these is manifestly carried on in a small, selfish and mercenary spirit, is causing many to ask whether it is fair and

wise that the influence of such a State should counterbalance that of New York or Pennsylvania. Then again, the fact that the Senate is a Chamber of plutocrats and that these are under no direct responsibility to the people, is being impressed upon the minds of the thoughtful as never before. In fact, it is not unlikely that in the United States, as well as in Great Britain, and possibly in Canada, the question of the constitution and usefulness of second chambers to revise the conclusions reached by the representatives of the people is about to be considered and discussed as never before. Whether the result shall be the mending or the ending of the Upper Houses, it is evident that these chambers will have shortly to bear the brunt of such assaults as they have never before encountered.

### THE CONTROL OF RAILWAYS.

Our correspondent "X" opens up a question which demands the most serious consideration. We should be glad to see it thoughtfully discussed. While we cannot agree with the opinion that the invention of the locomotive was a calamity, we are quite at one with him in the belief that the safeguarding of human life on railroads has not yet received nearly so much attention at the hands of either the people or their legislators as it ought to receive. It is true that, in consequence, largely, of the readiness of juries to mulct the railway companies in large sums by way of compensation for the loss of life or limb, or disability of any kind received in railway travelling, the companies are placed under pretty heavy bonds for the safe transmission of persons and goods entrusted to them. But it is in the highest degree probable, as our correspondent intimates, that the precautions and safeguards hitherto adopted, even on the roads which are best equipped and managed, fall far short of being the best possible, or the best attainable as the result of independent and searching investigation by competent committees, scientific and expert. It is also too clear to need demonstration that whenever injury or loss of life results from a cause which might have been foreseen and guarded against, those who are responsible for the management of the road on which such so-called accident has occurred are morally guilty in proportion to the degree of neglect, carelessness, or parsimony which made its occurrence possible.

Whether and to what extent any one of the different methods suggested by "X," viz.: The cable system, the block system, the complete separation of freight from passenger traffic, etc., is practicable and would be productive of greater safety, it is for practical men to judge. If we are not in error, the block system in particular is in use on some important roads and is