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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

ON the first of July the Act passed by the Ontario Legislature at last session, forbidding the sale of tobacco in any form to boys under eighteen years of age, came into operation. This bit of prohibitory legislation has called forth a good many sneers, as if in enacting it the Government and Legislature were transgressing the bounds of their proper sphere and entering the domain of morals. And yet, we suppose, a good many of those who denounce the Act in question as injudicious coddling, would not hesitate to approve the legislation by the same body which puts the practice of medicine in the Province into the hands of a close corporation of doctors, and authorizes them to say virtually what physicians the people of the Province may and may not employ; nay, which even empowers this self-interested body to prohibit, under severe penalties, any medical man, no matter what his qualifications, from practising the healing art in Ontario, until he has first obtained the gracious permission of this legalized guild. Surely those who approve the latter act and condemn the former, strain out the gnat and swallow the camel, with a vengeance. We should, in our simplicity, have supposed that the adult citizens of this intelligent and well-educated community might be safely left to the exercise of their own discretion in the choice of their medical advisers, and that on the other hand, it was quite within the province of our legislators to protect the minors of the country, especially those who through orphanage or some other misfortune are without natural protectors, from the greed of those who would make a gain out of the sale to them of a drug which unquestionably tends to produce both physical and moral deterioration when used in tender years. We have doubts about the wisdom of some of the provisions of the Act in question, but we see no reason to doubt that the man whose own moral sense will not deter him from selling tobacco to children, should be firmly restrained by the strong arm of the law.

SUCH a duel as that which took place on the floor of Parliament, on Tuesday of last week, between Sir Richard Cartwright and Sir John Thompson, is not a pleasant topic for journalistic comment. We most devoutly wish there were no necessity for handling so distasteful a theme. But the statements made in the course of that contest in the art of invective, and which are thereby sent forth to all the world, or to all that part of the world which is interested in Canadian politics, are of

so grave a nature; if true, they reflect so seriously upon Canadian politics and character; if false, they recoil so destructively upon the heads of those who made them, that we cannot deem it consistent with the duty of an independent journal to pass them by. That both speeches were exceedingly able in their way is undeniable. Assume Sir Richard Cartwright's charges to be true, or to have a substantial basis of truth, and what follows? That for the last ten years the Government of Canada has been sustained and its party majorities secured by a system of organized fraud; that the public funds have been systematically used in subsidizing railways, erecting public buildings, and other public works, not with reference solely to the needs of the country, but to promote the interests of the Party in Power; that in return for Legislative and Departmental favours conferred at the public expense, railway promoters, manufacturers, and contractors have contributed large sums of money which have been used by the Government or its agents in bribing electors; that the constituencies have been outrageously "gerrymandered" for the purpose of creating artificial Government majorities; that a Franchise Act has been passed and manipulated for the same purpose; that investigations demanded by the Opposition for the purpose of unveiling specific cases of corruption have been refused or turned aside by ineffective substitutes; and that, as a result of the persistent and systematic use of these and similar corrupt methods, the public conscience has become so deadened and debauched that the clearest evidence of the grossest corruption no longer avails to arouse popular indignation. As at once the confirmation and the culmination of the whole series of alleged infamies, Sir Richard Cartwright points to the documents recently published in the *Globe*. These documents, he maintains, have proved "the existence of a great corruption fund, and the expenditure of that fund corruptly in a number of constituencies sufficient to change the fate of parties," the late Premier and the whole Government being privy to the transaction, while an investigation has been refused, or worse than a refusal, a sham trial has been granted.

THAT Sir Richard Cartwright's attack was made in the spirit of partisanship goes without saying. His well-earned reputation for bitterness of speech was amply sustained throughout this remarkable indictment. But the great question for the people of Canada is, "Are these things true?" Disapproval of the accuser, or of his modes of speech, should not be permitted for a moment to obscure this great issue. If one-half the allegations made have a foundation in fact, the bitterness may well be excused, if it be not even justified. If one-half be true, every honest Canadian ought to bow his head in shame and then rise up in indignation and demand such an investigation as would probe the whole matter to the bottom. Whether and to what extent these tremendous charges are based on fact is not for us to say. That there is far too much of electoral corruption in the country is admitted and deplored by all honest men in both parties. That the corruption is not all on the Government side the records of the election courts have made painfully clear. But of course the kind and degree of corruption charged by Sir Richard are in their very nature such as only the Party in Power could be guilty of. Should not the people sift the evidence and judge righteous judgment? Sir John Thompson's answer was remarkably clever of its kind as was to be expected, for there is no abler man in the Canadian Parliament. But was it satisfactory? It certainly did not answer, in the sense of refuting, the charges. But then could any satisfactory answer in that sense be given to the charges, even if they were wholly baseless? The truth or falsity of such allegations is a question of fact. It could not in any case be settled by argument, but only by evidence. It is, then, unreasonable and unfair to claim inability to refute them on the spot as a proof of their truth. But just here is, it strikes us, the failure on the part of Sir John and his colleagues. The only way in which such charges can possibly be disproved is by evidence. Would it not be natural and becoming for a Government conscious of innocence, or fully resolved not to spare the guilty, to say promptly,

when such charges as those brought by Mr. Edgar were formulated, "You shall have the tribunal of your choice. We challenge investigation before any court. Bring your evidence and prove your charges, or stand convicted of the basest slander." That the tribunal which the Government has established is estopped by the terms of the reference from enquiring into the most serious part of Mr. Edgar's charges, we have before shown, and Mr. Laurier made clear. It is a deplorable fact that nearly or quite one-half of the people of Canada sincerely believe not only that the Government shirked investigation of this part of the charges; but that the substance of Sir Richard's indictment is true. What will the Government or the people do about it? There are elements of serious danger in the situation.

MR. HUGHES did well to call the attention of the House of Commons and of the country to the abuse of the franking privilege. Mr. Laurier hardly displayed his usual acumen in saying that in order to be consistent, Mr. Hughes should have moved for the abolition of the privilege. It is illogical to argue from the abuse of a privilege against the thing itself. Such an argument suggests the ready rejoinder that the privilege is supposed to be used under a sense of honour, and that it is hardly supposable that an "honourable" member should have on the list of his intimate friends those who would tempt him to do violence to his sense of honour, even in a trifling matter, for the sake of saving them the petty cost of a few stamps. If, however, the fact be, as Mr. Laurier intimated, that none of the members are in a position to throw stones, it is evident that the sooner the franking privilege is abolished the better. The matter may seem to be a small one, but nothing is really small which involves the double temptation for a member of the House to abuse a privilege, and for friends out of the House to make themselves small for a postage stamp. As a matter of fact we suppose it is pretty well known that the franking privilege is often very grossly abused. It is to be hoped, therefore, that some one will at the next session act on Mr. Fraser's suggestion, and move for the removal of the temptation out of the way of the weak. Moreover, the fewer the privileges and the more business-like the Parliamentary arrangements the better on general principles.

THE Dominion Senate is just about to have the opportunity of a lifetime. Circumstances have put it into its power to show unmistakably that it is not the mere party registering machine which it is so often and so contemptuously alleged to be by its detractors. Its chance will come when Senator Boulton rises to move the resolution of which he has given notice, providing for the reference of the constitutional question raised by Mr. Davies in the House of Commons, to the Supreme Court for decision. That question is, it will be remembered, whether Parliament is competent to perform the function of making the decennial redistributions directly, by the use of its own party machinery, or is bound by the Constitution simply to affirm the principle in accordance with which the redistribution is to be made, and to transfer the responsibility for the carrying out of that principle in an impartial and non-partisan manner to some suitable agency. That the question is one of real and serious difficulty is evident from the fact that leading lawyers on both sides of the House have expressed their opinions strongly in support of the latter view. The Senate may never again have so good an opportunity to discharge in a fearless spirit its proper duty as a revising Chamber, and thus to demonstrate its usefulness as an important part of the legislative machinery. Will it prove itself equal to the occasion? [The opportunity has come and gone. Senator Boulton's motion was negatived by a majority of 35 to 7. We fear the Senate has yet to demonstrate its usefulness.]

SIR CHARLES TUPPER'S motion before the Congress of Chambers of Commerce in London, approving slight preferential duties, not exceeding five per cent., within the Empire, was voted down by a majority of 78 to 34 on a vote by delegates, and subsequently by a majority of 57 to 33, on a vote by chambers. The latter result