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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 other person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

ANOTHER curious illustration of how far our civic arrangements still fall short of an ideal standard is afforded by the way in which our towns and cities dispose, or rather fail to dispose, of their refuse. The fact that a city like Toronto can as yet find nothing better to do with its daily product of solid garbage than to dump it in hollows, to be not only an offence to the eyes and noses of hundreds of citizens, but a menace to the health of the whole city, is a most curious reflection upon the general intelligence. Such a proof of our civic incapacity is paralleled only by our no less brilliant plan of conducting the liquid refuse of the city, by sewers, into the lake from which we draw our water supplies. Thus far we had written when we gleaned from a daily paper the welcome intelligence that the city fathers had at last resolved to go on at once with the erection of a crematory, thus calling in the aid of the great purifying agent provided by Nature for resolving decaying animal and vegetable matter into its harmless constituent elements. Let us hope that henceforth the purifying fires may never be quenched in our local gehennas. The tone and declarations of the meeting of some of Toronto's most influential and energetic citizens, afford, also, a pretty good pledge that the esplanade difficulty is about to be grappled with and another great reproach to our civic management taken away. But surely when the city sets itself in earnest to secure the water front from the grasp of private corporations and to make it a thing of beauty instead of the offence and menace it now is, they will not forget the necessity of, at the same time, settling once and for all the sewer question. It will be clearly impossible to make the city front the pleasant and attractive locality it should be, so long as the sewers contribute their foul current to defile the waters along the lake shore.

ASSUMING, as we may with certainty of almost universal assent, that the continuance of the present colonial status of Canada is out of the question; that change, development of some kind is inevitable in the near future,

there are in all three possible courses which this development may take: Annexation, Federation, Independence. The first may be at once eliminated. No influential party in Canada advocates it; the great majority of the people are resolutely opposed to it; even candid American statesmen admit that it is not now a practical question, and those who regard it as manifest destiny are obliged to relegate it to a distant future. Of the remaining alternatives the prospects of Imperial Federation can scarcely be said to be much brighter than those of annexation. While to the eyes of Mr. Parkin, and a few other enthusiastic Canadian federationists, the day of a differential tariff in favour of the colonies is within measurable distance, the words of leading British statesmen on both sides of politics, and the general tone of British journalists show that there is scarcely the remotest possibility of that *sine qua non* of the project coming within the range of practical politics. Nothing could be more significant than the fact that Sir Charles Tupper's suggestion of a conference of colonial delegates in England is disapproved by leading English federationists, as likely to retard rather than hasten the movement. The chances of success for an idea whose advocates are not only unable to formulate a scheme, but even shrink from having the matter discussed by avowed friends, are surely remote. Why should not patriotic Canadians, then, turn their attention seriously to the only remaining course worthy of themselves and their country? Objection on the score of expense can scarcely be taken by those who are willing to face a scheme of Imperial Federation. The argument based on the assumed necessity of a great standing army and navy is the outgrowth of European rather than American ideas. "The people of the United States," says Senator Hoar, "do not conquer other people, do not subject them to our institutions against their will." The remark is of value, not because Mr. Hoar says it, but because we know it to be a true expression of the sentiment of the great body of the American people. In any case, ought five millions of Canadians to be afraid to take the risk? As to the more difficult question of all, the French national question, independence could not aggravate the difficulty, and might afford the best opportunity for settling it. Members of the "Equal Rights" association should not shrink from the attempt. If our Nova Scotia correspondent of a couple of weeks since rightly gauges the sentiment of the Maritime Provinces, and there is hope that an independent Canada might effect that real union with the East which confederation has conspicuously failed to bring, a new and powerful incentive would be added.

THE Manitoba *Free Press* maintains that under the Constitution the Manitoba Legislature has the power at any time to amend the French language out of official existence, and points to the action of the Province in abolishing the Legislative Council as a much greater exercise of the right to amend its own Constitution than that which would be involved in doing away with the dual language system. The *Free Press* thinks, however, that the official use of French is gradually dying out. If so the evil may cure itself, if left alone. The question of Separate Schools is, it admits, a more difficult one. We may add that it is, too, a much more important one, in its bearing upon the future of both the Province and the Territory. In view of the great difficulty which the scattered residents of the Prairies must find in maintaining a single set of efficient public schools, the folly of the system which leads them to attempt to support a double set is too apparent to leave room for argument. One of the most healthful tendencies observable in the early settlement of the North-West was that of the incoming settlers to leave behind them to a large extent their old prejudices, both political and religious, and work together on broader principles. This was a tendency which should have been encouraged, but which the ingrafting of the Separate School system was well adapted to counteract. Left to themselves, aside from clerical pressure, we believe that very few of the settlers would have raised a finger in favour of Separate Schools. The Equal Rights Association could confer no greater boon upon the people of the great North-West, for all time to come, than by securing the union of all the people in the use and support of one

efficient set of Public Schools. Why should not Mr. Dalton McCarthy make the abolition of the Separate Schools in the Territory another plank in his platform?

IF it be true as reported, and as there seems good reason to believe, that another British vessel has been seized by a United States revenue cruiser for seal fishing in Behring Sea, the grave international question which was supposed to be in process of settlement will be reopened with new aggravation. The action of the United States in this matter is simply incomprehensible. The Government, the leading publicists, and the more influential journals of the nation seem, so far as can be ascertained, to admit that no claim to jurisdiction over these waters can hold, and yet their cruisers, acting under Government orders, proceed to capture and confiscate British vessels on what is, themselves being judges, the open sea. If they do so, simply counting on the wonderful forbearance of the British Government, it must be confessed that their assurance seems so far justified. Can it be, one is tempted to ask, that pending the conclusion of negotiations, they have some secret understanding with that Government in virtue of which they are authorized to exercise a police supervision for the protection of the fisheries? But, no, that cannot be, else Canadian fishermen would surely have been warned. The Canadian Government is, of course, bound to suspend judgment and action until it is in full possession of the facts. Then, save in the highly improbable contingency of the seals having been taken within the real jurisdiction of the United States, it cannot hesitate to urge the matter upon the attention of the Colonial office and insist upon being promptly and distinctly informed whether protection of Canadian rights is to be given or not, that we may govern ourselves accordingly.

CANADIANS are, it may be hoped, much too sensible not to welcome an unpleasant as well as an agreeable truth from the lips of a not unfriendly critic. It may not be flattering to our self-esteem to be told that it is in view of the future, and not of the present, that the population of our great North-Western provinces and territories are matters of interest to our neighbours. We cannot, unfortunately, deny the substantial correctness of Senator Hoar's statements when he tells his compatriots that there are not 50,000 white people, all told, in British Columbia to-day, and not 100,000 white people in Manitoba; and that "five years' growth of Tacoma and Seattle, five years' growth of the single city of Minneapolis, makes up a larger population and one which is infinitely more important, as a customer, to the people of the United States than the entire population of British Columbia or Manitoba to-day." Nor will we, if we are wise, be angry with him for saying that, for some reason or other, these countries do not get settled up under Canadian institutions. It will be much more to the purpose for us to ask ourselves seriously what is the reason of the fact. The question admits of various answers, anyone of which may contain a modicum of truth. But few thoughtful readers will, we believe, doubt that first and most potent among the operating causes is the fact that we are without a national name or status. The better class of emigrants when leaving their native land naturally prefer to go to one which has the power and prestige of nationality. No natural advantages, no amount of undeveloped resources can avail to enable a colony to compete for capital and population on anything like equal terms with a great republic at its side. It is at least well worth considering whether and to what extent the undeniably slow rate at which the great fertile plains of the Canadian North-West are becoming peopled is due to the fact that Canada, not having a national existence, is and must remain comparatively unknown and unappreciated. We shall, of course, be met with the familiar assurance that the basis of unfavourable comparison does not exist, since the percentage of Canada's increase within a certain period is greater than that of the United States. We do not think such reasoning can convince any one. The hard fact remains that the North-West does not fill up under Canadian institutions as it ought, and that at the present rate of progress a discouragingly long period must elapse before Canada can hope to have become the home of even the