

Keep Watch and Ward. It is to be hoped that the merchants most interested in the future of the metropolis of Canada will interest themselves in watching the progress of the discussion at Quebec of the new city charter, and especially in the matter of proposed changes in the present system of taxation. In suggesting the formation of a committee for this purpose in our issue of December 16th, we said:—

"It is with such important questions that the proposed joint committee of citizens and aldermen would have to grapple when finally revising the new Charter, and it is more than likely that the members of such a committee would find that very few changes in the present system of taxation in Montreal are requisite. The abolition of any unfair and indefensible exemptions, a slight increase if found necessary to the growing needs of a greater Montreal in the present rates, and the administration of civic affairs in a business-like way by competent, well-paid commissioners, will raise Montreal to the proud position of a model city, and cause her praises to be sung in many a community now having good reason to reproach the Canadian metropolitan city with neglecting the golden opportunities at her very gates."

Vaccination Its Importance Shown. Late London papers report great growth in the movement having for its object the withdrawal of the so-called conscience clause inserted in the British vaccination act. There has been no uncertain sound in the expression of public opinion, and, as knowledge of the risk of permitting the conscientious objectors to evade vaccination is now disseminated among the masses, pressure is being brought to bear upon the Government. The City Press states that several metropolitan boards of guardians have passed resolutions calling upon the Government to take steps to release themselves from the grave responsibility assumed by their foolish concession to the fads of a few noisy agitators. The same paper adds:—

"Possibly the clause will remain in force for a while, but it is very certain that before more than two or three years have passed we shall see the repeal of what ought never to have been placed on the Statute book. It remains to be seen whether the Government are wise enough to admit their mistake at once, or whether they will wait until the folly of the clause has been made apparent in a manner that even the agitators will be compelled to appreciate."

While dwelling upon this subject of vaccination, we take occasion to note that at a recent meeting of the Liverpool (Eng.) Health Committee, the medical officer of that city pointed to two exceptional circumstances justifying an order under the Vaccination Act authorizing the vestry to keep open the vaccination stations. The first was that Liverpool had always been one of the best vaccinated communities in the country, to which was due the remarkable immunity of the people from small-pox. The second exceptional circumstance was that Liverpool communicated with every quarter of the globe, and the

possible introduction of the dread disease from any foreign port rendered the protection of the population by vaccination of vital importance. The Liverpool Health Officer expressed a belief that the freedom of that city from any serious ravages by small-pox is the outcome of the carefully organized system of maintaining vaccination stations to which the people had become accustomed, and the doctor further expressed the opinion that these stations were superior to any system of domiciliary vaccination. At the same meeting, another speaker said that if the experience of Gloucester, where an outbreak of small-pox cost that city of 31,000 inhabitants \$75,000 were duplicated in Liverpool, it would cost something like \$1,500,000.

The doctrine of Cobden and Bright evidently does not extend to free trade in small-pox, against which, in Liverpool as elsewhere, no means of protection should ever be neglected.

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"This sort of forensic apology may hood-wink provincial audiences, but it will be seen through as soon as it is subjected to the test of intelligent discussion."

The London "Times," by the above vain and thoughtless comment on a recent speech by Mr. Asquith, has provoked an outburst of indignation from the press of provincial towns. The offensive paragraph indicated what one paper is pleased to call the "supreme and silly contempt" of the typical Londoner for the "Provincial," and asks "wherein, we wonder, is evidenced all this vast mental superiority of the Mighty Intelligences of Printing House Square over, say, the presiding spirits of the "Manchester Guardian," the "Birmingham Post," the "Scotsman," the "Glasgow Herald," and at least half a dozen other journals of England and Scotland?"

With the object of correcting this ill-concealed contempt of the citizens of London for anything outside its limits, "The Outlook" has started a series of articles designed to show the people of the metropolis of Great Britain that, outside of its limits, there may be found much of the wealth, industry, and intelligence of the nation. The first of these articles for the correction of the vanity of Londoners deals with Belfast, to which the attention of the intelligent world was directed in the middle of last month, by the launching of the Oceanic—"the finest achievement, to date, of marine architecture." "The Outlook" says: "There, in an Irish town, one may see commercial enterprise carried to the point of intrepidity, quick to give to the advances of science industrial application, and singularly free from that slavish clinging to "use and wont," which more than anything else is handicapping British industry in competition with its foreign rivals."

Altogether, "The Times" seems to have been foolish in claiming a superiority of intelligence for the undoubted commercial centre of the British Empire, and the great paper deserves the rough handling of