

correct, as the critics allege, that he is scarcely the man that would have been thought of for the position, but that he is the son of his father. It is, nevertheless, admitted that he is a man of education, tact, sagacity and ability. He may not be capable of taking literary rank beside James Russell Lowell, or even ex-Minister Phelps, but he may be found equally fitted for the special duties of his office, while the name of Lincoln will ensure him a warm reception by the English people. While all sensible people in both countries will be glad to see amicable relations thus fully re-established, the matter has a special interest for Canadians. These appointments, viewed in connection with the friendly attitude recently taken by Congress, and the renewal of the *Modus Vivendi* by our own Government, may be regarded as good omens, and we shall hope to witness, before the year has passed by, a renewal of negotiations with a view to the final settlement of all matters in dispute between us and our neighbours.

ONTARIO ASYLUMS.

THE attention of the community is often called, by grand jurors, by correspondents to the daily papers and by others, to the alleged neglect of the Province of Ontario to properly provide for the insane portion of its population. As the result, the readers of these productions think for the moment that nothing is being done, and that much blame rests with those in power. On the other hand, very little is ever said as to what has been and is being done. The fact, too, is overlooked, and a most important fact it is, that in this Province the burden of the care of the insane rests on the State alone. On the other side of the lakes, the case is different. There the burden is divided between the States, the cities and the countries. A very large proportion of the insane are provided for locally, either in asylums supported by the municipalities or in the insane wards attached to the poor-houses. In some States, the State provides the asylums, but charges the municipalities from whence the pauper patients come with the cost of their care and maintenance. In Ontario, no such system prevails. The Province takes the whole burden. Indeed, when an inmate of a municipal poor house becomes a little troublesome with the dementia of old age, an immediate attempt is made to gain admission into a government asylum. It is believed that there are at least fifty per cent. of the present inmates of the asylums, who could be as well cared for in properly conducted county poor-houses. They have reached the stage in which medical skill and treatment can do nothing for them. All they require is shelter, food and proper care. Yet, under the existing laws, these people fill the costly buildings primarily intended for hospitals for the cure of insanity, and not for refuges for the harmless.

Let us see what has been done in Ontario. The first start was in 1841, when accommodation was provided for seventeen patients in the old gaol. Now the asylums in Toronto, London, Kingston and Hamilton can maintain 3,200 persons. It appears from the reports of the Public Works Department that these buildings have been put up at a capital cost of \$1,962,754, and public accounts shew that the charge upon the revenue of the Province for maintaining them amounts to about \$420,000 annually. Still, however, the cry is for more room. And the demand is being met. Last year, by the opening of a new portion of the Hamilton Asylum, provision for some 250 more persons was made. This year, two of the so-called "cottages" at Mimico, near Toronto, will be completed, and then room for 100 more persons will be added. Additional cottages are also in contemplation to hold 300 insane persons.

Then, as regards the method of management, Ontario has nothing to be ashamed of. Her asylums are spoken of in terms of praise by such men as Dr. Hack Tuke, one of the best English authorities; by Dr. Tucker, of New South Wales, who has visited nearly every American and European Asylum, and by the specialists from the United States who visit our asylums. The treatment of the patients is of the most advanced order. Some people, no doubt, think that asylums are still managed on the old strait-waistcoat, douche-bath, and repression-of-energy style. Some, too, doubt whether any other style be possible. Happily it is, and happily that other style is believed in by our specialists. The old instruments of restraint, perhaps better called instruments of torture, are now unknown, and the old methods disused. The insane are now treated as persons who are ill, and not as those possessed with a devil, which had to be either bound or to be scourged out. One of the old time "mad doctors,"

as they were most appropriately called, would be astonished to see the latter day patients treated like sane persons. They live in rooms fitted up like those of the sane. They dine in concert at ordinarily furnished tables, instead of like beasts, out of bowls and using nature's forks. They are actually played to, sung to, and acted to, in specially appointed halls. They have their dances, their "At homes," and their picnics. They go to the circus. They work at rational occupations, and, perhaps as a sign of the highest modern culture, the male patients form themselves into baseball nines. They are supplied with the ministrations of the clergy, and libraries are provided for them. Personal liberty is largely accorded, and yet the papers are not full of desperate attacks by patients on their attendants, nor of accounts of attempted escapes. On the economical side, too, Ontario is to be congratulated, as the cost of maintaining each patient is about \$135 per annum. The actual cost to the State is less, as the maintenance of a considerable number of patients is paid for by their friends or out of their own estates. The cost per head in Ontario is lower than in any of the asylums in the United States, as may be seen by any one to whom the reports of the various asylums there are familiar. The question, indeed, is not whether the cost per head be too much, but whether it be not too small; whether a little more luxury might not well be given to these afflicted persons. The Inspector has before now in his reports referred to the fact that the surroundings of the patients are, whilst good, very plain. It should be remembered, however, that the majority of the patients are drawn from classes accustomed to a plain mode of living, and also that those for whom a better style is desired, can be accommodated in the private wards of Toronto Asylum, or in the Private Asylum at Guelph.

The system adopted by Ontario of the State alone making provision for the insane is no doubt a good one. The Province, owing to the greater security it offers, is more likely to obtain the services of a good specialist than a municipal council, and its asylums are more likely to be considered with wider views. Municipal councillors, not being accustomed to the handling of large sums, are very likely to look upon very necessary expenditures as very needless extravagances. But the question is an open one, whether the municipalities should not share with the State the cost of maintaining the asylums, as is done in other countries. The State asylums system is likely to be more popular with the general public, as Government asylums are more open to general inspection, and also to special inspection. A Government asylum is almost sure to be near a large centre of population; a municipal one may be placed at a point nearly inaccessible to many whose inspections would be of value. The asylums now are open freely to the public; the grand juries visit them; specialists who may be passing through the country criticize them, and they are under the frequent scrutiny of the members of the Government and of the Provincial Inspectors. Much of this inspection would be impossible if asylums were located in the rural districts and distant from the larger towns.

That the present system, apart from its financial aspect as regards the Province, works well, is shown by the facts that the percentage of recoveries and the lowness of the death rate in the Ontario asylums compare favourably with those of other countries. Also by another fact that complaints of ill-usage or neglect of patients are almost unheard of.

The people of Ontario may, I think, fairly conclude that the money voted by the Legislature for the erection and support of our asylums is being well laid out, and that a good return is being received from it. The question of the number of insane in Ontario, and its proportion to the total population, hardly comes within the scope of this article, but it may be stated that the census returns and the figures quoted in the Inspector's report show that Ontario has not an undue number of insane in her midst.

T. O'F.

OTTAWA LETTER.

THE usual lethargic condition of the House received a sudden kaleidoscopic transformation a few days ago by the announcement of a message on State business from the Senate. Yawns were interrupted, eyes opened, and attention riveted upon the mysterious messenger in sword and three-cornered hat, who, amid a silence that bordered upon awe, supported by mace, appeared and uttered, first in English and then in French, the communication from the Honourable Senate to the Honourable Commons. With a retrograde motion, which might have been the

envy of the denizens of London drawingrooms, and a procession, rather than a succession, of bows, hat and sword retired as daintily and gingerly as they had entered. In a second the Speaker, Sir John, and the House had swarmed out of sight in the holter-skelter which has become the traditional locomotion of our Legislature. A few vanishing footsteps and coat-tails, a moment of supernatural repose, and the strength of the message being measured by its length, the House swarmed in again, and back to work. *On dit* that gentlemen that are gentlemen decline to include themselves in these summonses. Little wonder!

The Statutory Holidays of the Dominion are Sunday, Christmas day, New Year's Day, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Ascension, Corpus Christi, Conception, All Saints', St. Peter's and St. Paul's, and Annunciation Day. Monday, the 25th, being the last mentioned Festival, there was no sitting, and members had scattered a good deal for a Friday to Tuesday relaxation. The stillness presaged a storm. Every man was at his post on Tuesday, and in most places there were more than one man. Corridors were crowded, constables were on the alert, the galleries were simply packed, and the heated and vitiated atmosphere is as hard to imagine as it is to describe. Catholic and Protestant Church dignitaries jostled each other, and the entire Vice-Regal Household sat out the afternoons and evenings with untiring zeal. Seldom has a question so entirely occupied the public mind, or a debate so completely consumed the attention, as that which has made the name of Colonel O'Brien a red letter name among the Honourables. We all know how it ended, if, indeed, it has ended, and there are few more hopeless and despairing conditions for a country to arrive at, and revel in, than the spectacle we present to each other. Not right or wrong. Not justice or injustice. But expediency, policy, plot, counterplot, by which we profane the sacred name and cause of country.

Sir Hector Langevin has arrived at the celebration of his silver wedding as a politician. Nothing short of a grand banquet would have satisfied his admirers had not the pressure of Parliamentary business rendered a postponement judicious. But the feast will keep, and an address and a handsome testimonial must suffice for the present. It may be questioned whether all such grateful discipleship—the gratitude which is a lively sense of favours past and future—ought not to be made illegal.

Another expression of perhaps the same prospective gratitude awaits the return of the Hon. Mr. Chapleau. But the honourable gentleman's health and movements are so uncertain that the thank-offering has difficulty in taking any definite shape.

The Hon. Mr. Allan, Speaker of the Senate, being President of the Lord's Day Alliance, occupied the chair at the annual meeting of that august body last week. A constitution was drawn up, which declared the name to be The Lord's Day Alliance of Canada. Their basis is the Divine authority and the universal and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath as ordained by God at the Creation, and enjoined in the fourth commandment; and maintained by the Church to the present day as essential to the physical, intellectual, moral and social welfare of mankind. The laws for Sabbath observance have accomplished much of at least outward conformity, which is all that law claims to do. As may have been expected, Ontario stands first in the list of Provinces in her interpretation of freedom as the regard instead of the disregard of law. One of the obstacles which stands most stubbornly in the path of the Alliance is the apparent necessity for Sunday labour on our railways, canals, and other public works. The meeting revealed the surprising fact that appeals to the churches for aid and support have met with little more practical satisfaction than circulars to the railways. The Central Ontario Railway Company replied that no Sunday traffic has been carried on for some time. The President of the Canadian Pacific Railway wrote that the requirements of trade did not permit of an interruption on Sundays. All other railways were, like most of the churches, conspicuous by the absence of their replies. A committee was appointed to approach Parliament on the subject.

A large congregation of the faithful gathered in St. George's Church to assist the rector and the organist in testing the power and tones of a beautiful new organ. It is constructed on the tubular pneumatic principle, which secures a more certain response and a freedom from noise in action than the ordinary "tracking" system is capable of. The improvement is a patent of the manufacturers, the Messrs. Wadsworth, England. In addition to this the organ possesses two manuals, with great, small, and