

upon them. Most persons will readily admit that the use of the ballot in elections should not be made compulsory upon any body who do not desire it. But what if some of those interested desire it and others do not? How shall the question then be decided? By the majority? But for what is the ballot generally desired save for the protection of the rights of a minority? Were the right of the secret vote to be withheld in every case until it was demanded by the majority, it is doubtful whether it would ever be granted at all, for when the majority dared to ask for it openly there would generally be no further need for it. The case is one of those in which no possible injustice can result to the majority from granting protection to the minority. Its use deprives the majority of no right. They are still free to cast their vote and influence in favor of whom they will, while the same privilege is by the ballot secured to the minority who might be afraid to cast an open vote contrary to the wishes of those on whom they were in any way dependent. The peculiarity in the case before us is that the wishes of the clergy are constantly referred to as if they were the Catholics, and we are told that the Catholics supporting the Separate Schools do not wish the ballot, when the simple fact is that the Catholic clergy do not wish it. But the great reason why any supporters of these schools should wish for the secret vote would be that they might vote without the knowledge of the clergy. Hence the inconsistency of regarding the voice of the latter as the voice of the people in the matter. No means have, so far as we are aware, been taken—it is not easy to see how any effective means could be taken—to ascertain the real wishes of the Catholic laity in the matter. It is, however, well known that some of the latter do desire the ballot. Why should not their request be granted, on the principle above mentioned, seeing that their freedom of action would in this way be safeguarded, while no real right or privilege of either priest or laity could be affected.

Dr. Bourinot, the well-known historical and constitutional writer, has prepared a *Manual of Procedure* (The Carswell Co., Toronto), for the use of municipal councils, shareholders and directors of companies, religious conferences and synods, societies, and public meetings of all classes. As the author very truly says in his prefatory note, "in the practice of many societies and public bodies in this country, some confusion appears to exist with reference to the true meaning and application of the previous question! and of such motions as 'to lay on the table,' 'to postpone definitely,' or 'indefinitely,' and 'to reconsider,' which are drawn from the procedure, not of our own Legislative Assemblies, but of Assemblies in the United States." In the present treatise, Dr. Bourinot gives such

explanations as will aid in preventing confusion or doubt in the application of these methods of procedure. Like all his previous literary efforts, this book is noteworthy for its clearness of style and logical arrangement, and meets the wants of that large body of persons who, in this country of popular institutions, are immediately interested in the methodical progress of business, and naturally wish to make themselves conversant, as easily as possible, with the principal rules and usages that should guide the proceedings of public bodies of all kinds. The book is divided into five parts, the first of which contains an admirable summary of the leading rules and principles of parliamentary procedure "which lie necessarily at the base of the proceedings and deliberations of all public assemblies in this country." In the other divisions, we have an application of those rules and principles to the proceedings of public meetings, societies and municipal councils. As a manual for the instruction of all persons engaged in municipal government, we have no book to compare with this. Dr. Bourinot is one of those authors who thoroughly understands the value of a complete index, and has consequently devoted over forty pages to what is really an analysis of the contents. This handsomely printed book, whose cover with the mace and Dominion arms has a Canadian character, merits to be a *vade mecum* with every person interested in public affairs. Its general circulation will give us regularity and uniformity of procedure. That will be of decided public advantage; for, to quote Dr. Bourinot's own words, "laxity of procedure is antagonistic to the successful prosecution of business."

A writer in the April number of the *Canada Educational Monthly*, more in sorrow than in anger, reproaches THE WEEK for "casting in its lot with those who declare that all religious instruction in State schools is impossible." The deep importance of the question, even more than the admirable tone of the criticism, makes us desirous of setting ourselves right upon one or two points in regard to which our views, very likely through our own inadequate expression, appear to have been misapprehended. The contrast between a Theocratic Government, with inspired leaders and prophets, and a modern political State with its uninspired ministers and methods, is so broad that we need not stay to consider the argument drawn from the Hebrew Commonwealth. We do not think we have said anything to indicate that we believe that religion and true morality can be divorced, though we do maintain that they can be and must be clearly distinguished. It does seem to us passing strange that our critic, while holding that the mere reading of the Bible in the schools is "not a very useful thing to do" should imply that the teaching of some dry doctri-

nal system, such as the Apostles' or the Nicene creed, would serve the desired purpose of religious instruction, a view which it might not be easy to reconcile with that of the Teacher who claimed that the words which he spake were life.

But we notice the article in question chiefly to point out that the writer does THE WEEK an injustice, unintentional we doubt not, by confusing two things which are in our thought quite distinct. We discriminate broadly between state-taught religion and religious teachings in state schools. We object to the teaching of religion by the state as not only impossible under the conditions which prevail in English-speaking Canada, but in every way undesirable. But while we deem the teaching of religion in the public schools impracticable, we are far from thinking it undesirable. The difference is obvious. The proposal to which we did and do take strong exception was, as we understood it, to have religion taught compulsorily in the schools by the state-licensed teachers. This, as we pointed out, involves two intolerable things. It implies that the state must decide what religion is and how it shall be taught, and that the state shall apply a religious test to the teachers whom it licenses. Could the plan which the writer in the *Monthly* proposes be proved feasible, and a half-hour of the best part of the school day, at proper intervals, be occupied by voluntary religious instruction, whether imparted on an undenominational basis approved of by all the leading denominations, or by denominational teachers to the members of their own bodies, the liberty of conscience of all being carefully guarded, that would be a very different thing. Our impression is, however, that it has not hitherto been found practicable, and that it cannot be made so. To our question as to the effect of the teaching of religion by the state in Europe our critic replies, as soon as he recovers from his consternation, "All that is best in us Canadians comes from the religious principles which our ancestry acquired through the instruction which they received in the Old Country." Granted. Does that answer our question? Was that instruction given by the state, even indirectly through a state church, which is quite a different thing from a state school? If so, why did some of those ancestors flee to America to escape the domination of the state church? And why did our less remote ancestors in this country make such haste to sever the connection between the state and the church? But in order to get the true answer to the question which has so shocked our friend, let us study the state of things in France to-day, with the bulk of its population divided between gross superstition and rank infidelity. Or, if that does not suffice, let us turn our eyes to Russia, where the state assumes, perhaps, a more direct control of religion than in