

ing ground for the writer of fiction. It is fitting that these characteristics should be presented to the world by Canadian authors and through the medium of Canadian publishers.

Mr. Goldwin Smith
and the Old
Testament

In the current number of the North American Review Mr. Goldwin Smith's name appears under an article entitled "Christianity's Millstone." This article will be very differently received in different quarters. It starts from the assumption that the Christian world still holds to the verbal infallibility of Holy Scripture. It then enumerates an immense number of religious and moral difficulties against such a position. No Christian scholar of note to-day holds the doctrine of verbal inspiration. But doubtless Mr. Goldwin Smith is not wrong in supposing that many Christians do. Such being the case, this article ought to have much the same kind of effect as Colonel Ingersoll's work, which helped to destroy the caricature of Christianity which was popularly known as Calvinism. We hope Mr. Goldwin Smith's recent utterance may help to clear the ground of the now discredited, and, in educated circles, discarded, theory of verbal inspiration. And, no doubt—as the title of his article implies—this was the intention of the writer.

Mr. Goldwin Smith
and Lux Mundi.

By the way, Mr. Goldwin Smith falls foul of the editors of Lux Mundi. He completely misunderstands and consequently misrepresents their position. If Mr. Goldwin Smith is going to use the results of Old Testament criticism to pull down old positions, he ought in all fairness to have made himself sufficiently acquainted with the new learning to point out that there is a new and truer view of inspiration which recognizes all the difficulties to which he has called popular attention, and deals with them, yet, at the same time, firmly maintains the inspiration of the Old Testament. If Mr. Goldwin Smith is unaware of this, he forfeits his right to deal with the subject. If he is not unaware of it he has no justification for thus wantonly adding to the religious unrest of many minds.

Higher Criticism
and the Multitude.

What right has any man to undermine a people's religious convictions and give no sign that these convictions may be true though improperly based? Mr. Goldwin Smith's article while it seems to upset the religious value of the Old Testament, in reality only upsets a human view of the *mode* of its inspiration. He must know that such an article may do untold injury to many a man's faith. If in so purely scientific a matter as astronomical knowledge the Copernican theory did not supersede the Ptolemaic view without a bitter struggle, what is to be expected when a religious world is suddenly called upon to resign an infallible Bible? It is, therefore, not merely a blunder but unpardonable cruelty to expose to men the impossibilities of their cherished theory before they are ripe for the newer and truer theory which will enable them to hold substantially the same religious convictions as before. That men are not yet ripe for a complete revolution in their view as to *how* God inspires his prophets is notably shown in this latest incursion of Mr. Goldwin Smith into the realm of theological thought. Mr. Goldwin Smith shows a complete grasp of the facts which some time since led the editors of Lux Mundi to discard the old-fashioned theory of verbal infallibility. He fails entirely to grasp the new view of the best Christian scholars of our day, which takes account of the difficulties in the Old Testament without giving the *impression* that it is time the Old Testament was discarded.

The Political Situation.

AT a time like the present, when bye-elections call for an expression of opinion and a declaration of policy from the outs and the ins, respectively, it is the duty of every intelligent member of the community to try and form a reasonable opinion. The day for strict allegiance to party lines is, we believe, drawing to a close. Older men, who have been brought up in the habits of party discipline, find it difficult to do justice to the motives or arguments of political opponents, but the younger men are, in many cases, exceedingly desirous of forming an untrammelled opinion on the matters now being discussed.

The sole issue, apparently, at the next Session will be that of the Roman Catholic Separate Schools in Manitoba. That issue at present offers itself in this way. The Roman Catholics complain that their rights and privileges have been interfered with by Provincial legislation in Manitoba. The Privy Council have decided that they have a grievance; the Dominion Government have promised to remedy that grievance, but before undertaking to do it themselves they have stated that they prefer that the Provincial Legislature, who passed the laws in question, should either repeal or amend them. The latter Legislature has, so far, declined to do either, and the Dominion Government have now to act upon the promise they made. While Protestants, as a general rule, deplore the determination of their Roman Catholic fellow subjects to insist upon Separate Schools, the larger majority feel that it would be impolitic as well as unjust to coerce them into attending schools to which they object, and we doubt very much whether the fanatical denunciations of the extreme ultra-Protestants find sympathy with the large majority of electors. It does seem unfair to insist upon the members of that creed being compelled to pay double rates, that is, in support of Public Schools, which they do not approve of, and at the same time support schools which their Church requires them to attend. It is a serious concession for the country to be obliged to make, and if it could be avoided the large majority would gladly not have to make it, but, as it is a question of faith and not merely of practice, we must bow to the situation. If, in the end, the agitation leads to some general scheme whereby religion shall be taught in State-supported schools it will not have been entirely thrown away.

But what strikes us as the most serious feature in the political situation is this. While the whole country is being upset and worried by the constant and heated partisan discussion of a question which really interests very few people, the material interests of the Dominion are seriously prejudiced. In the first place, instead of the whole united force of the Canadian people being devoted to the development of the Dominion, bad feeling is being engendered and race and creed distinctions are being developed, which prevent united action in any direction. If Canadians are to create and maintain a country of their own, it must be by united effort, and it is preposterous that a question of whether five or six thousand children should or should not be educated in schools by themselves, should be allowed to turn the whole country upside down. It is time for common sense and moderation to be once more called into play, and the mischief-makers, and discontented and dissatisfied politicians who have raised this question, must be taught their proper place.

A further difficulty stares us in the face: the trade relations of the country may be altered by a vote on a collateral issue. Are the people prepared to allow those trade relations question to be decided or disposed of by a side issue? We believe not, and we hope to see yet a sense of