

it is in England. Nor is Sir Charles Dilke sensible of the difference between the Old Country where the use of indefinite powers is limited in practice by traditional understandings and a colony in which no traditions or understandings exist and whatever power is conceded will be used without limit for party purposes. If Parliament had an axe hanging over its neck which the Prime Minister might at his pleasure let fall, its independence, which the caucus and corruption have already reduced to a minimum, would be gone, and there is no saying to what extent an unscrupulous Minister, by always dissolving when the chances happened to be in his favour, might establish himself in a morally usurped power. If any authority whatever is left to the Governor-General and he is not a mere *cochon à l'engrais* at \$120,000 a year he is bound, by refusing to dissolve without constitutional cause, to defend the independence of the legislature and the right of the people against the unscrupulous ambition and cupidity of the masters of the party machines.

—As the Royal Society of Canada is holding its ninth annual session, there has been time to show whether it earns its public grant. What is the harvest? In the literary field, we fear, next to none. A society for the promotion of literature is an anomaly. An Academy of Painters produces something tangible and by clubbing makes a show. A scientific association, like the Royal Society founded by Charles II., has also its *raison d'être*; it helps joint investigation, promotes the communication of ideas, and produces tangible results. But there can be no *raison d'être* for a society for the promotion of literature, the essence of which is taste, which no royal or gubernatorial patronage can bestow. The utmost that can be said even for the French Academy is that it may possibly serve to keep out of literature that provinciality against which Matthew Arnold inveighed, a function which cannot possibly be performed by the body that meets at Ottawa. Anyone