

of a not very rich colony? The present seems as good a time as any other to discuss and decide the "question. We do not know whether such an arrangement would be found practicable in the city of Ottawa, but if it were, it would be less embarrassing to both parties could a certain fixed allowance be substituted for the obligation to supply a furnished residence for the Governor-General.

It is to be devoutly hoped that current rumours and even solemn affirmations are incorrect, in so far as they point to the use, or attempted use, of dishonest methods in connection with the annual elections of officers in one or both of the young men's political associations in this city. We have been accustomed to look to these young men's societies as containing the promise and the potency of cleaner, manlier methods in the future public life of the Dominion. The spirit of young men is, or ought to be generous, their ideals pure, their aspirations lofty. They should despise meanness in every form. They are not supposed, as yet, to have come into contact with the influences which tend so powerfully to debase the ideals and check the generous aspirations of politicians. But if even our young men cannot conduct the elections to the places of honour in their societies without resort to evasion and trickery, the outlook for the future is indeed discouraging. Apart from this view of the case we cannot but regret that the intelligent and ambitious young men of our cities are not able to assert at the outset their freedom from the shackles of partyism. It would be a refreshing sight and a powerful object-lesson if they could unite their forces in a city like Toronto in a single powerful organization, having neither Liberal nor Conservative, Grit or Tory, on its banner, resolved to debate every public question, whether of principle or policy, purely and simply on its merits. It is impossible that, at the ages at which most young men are supposed to join such societies, the majority of them should have studied the larger questions of politics with any degree of thoroughness, or have reached firm opinions by the only right road, that of personal, dispassionate study. What a grand thing it would be if a genuinely independent club could be organized, in which every member should feel himself bound to cast aside all personal and party predilections and seek only to find out the truth on every question under debate. This would be, we suppose, too much to hope for. But, failing this, if young men must follow old lines of cleavage and come together wearing party shackles, and pledging allegiance to Sir John Thompson or Wilfrid Laurier, let the good and true in both organizations at least do their utmost to make their respective societies training schools in genuine political morality and manliness.

Mr. J. Israel Tarte has written to the Toronto Mail a letter defining his views on the Manitoba school question. Every one who wishes to see both sides of this question will do well to read his letter. It will be accepted, we dare say, as a fair resume of the argument in support of the position that the French Canadian Catholic minority in Manitoba has been deprived of rights, and so treated with injustice, by the abolition of the official use of the French language and by the Public School Act now in force in that Province. Mr. Tarte's argument, if we understand it, may be summarized as follows: The French minority in Manitoba have been granted the same rights in regard to their schools and their language as the English minority of the Province of Quebec. On this principle the intention of the Manitoba Act was to give the French minority in that Province the use of the French language and a system of Separate Schools subsidized by the State. If, as appears from the decision of the Imperial Privy Council, the Act was so improperly worded as to fail in this object, it is not fair to take advantage of that fact to trample upon the rights of the minority in Manitoba. The English majority in Manitoba and in the Dominion have the might but they have not the right to do so. The two races, English and French, were to be on the same footing. "I am," says Mr. Tarte, "a lover of liberty. Is it liberty to deprive men, women, and children of French origin of a language and of schools that are dear to them? . . . I say, 'Let our English friends in Quebec, in Manitoba, etc., have the schools their desire. Let them have the free use of their language.' You say: 'The French Canadians will (shall) have our schools and our language.' This is not British fair play. It is tyranny."

The Mail has, of course, made its answer to Mr. Tarte. With that we are not now concerned. But as Mr. Tarte's letter may be regarded as in a sense intended for the English-speaking people of Ontario, as he makes special reference to the positions taken by other journals, and as *The Week* is one of the journals which has defended the action of the Manitoba majority, it will not, we think, be regarded as an intrusion if a few words be said from our standpoint. In the first place, we are willing to concede, we have in fact conceded in previous articles, that it was probably the intention of the original framers of the Manitoba Act, or some of them, to provide for the establishment and perpetuation of Separate Schools in that Province. We say "probably," for it is impossible to say with certainty what was their intention, save as it is expressed in the Act. But grant that this was their intention, several questions arise and demand answer before we can admit that those intentions are morally binding upon the people of Manitoba, or

upon the Dominion, for all time to come. That they are not legally binding has been decided by the highest authority. Such questions are: Were those who acted on the part of the Red River country duly empowered to negotiate on behalf of the people of that country? Was there not a Protestant minority in that country whose views were not represented, and who would have been opposed to any Separate School system? This question should have force with Mr. Tarte, who pleads so earnestly for the rights of the minority. Waiving that point and assuming that the people of the Red River country were properly represented in the negotiations, does it follow that the handful of settlers who then dwelt on the fringes of the great prairies had any moral right, or even that the Canadian Government and Parliament had any such right, to impose for all time to come a yoke upon the necks of the hundreds of thousands, or the millions, who were to go in and possess the land and make it their own by settlement and cultivation? There is surely a principle of Provincial rights here and a broader principle than even that which is contended for by the English-speaking Provinces and the French-speaking Province alike. It is the right of a free, self-governing people to deliver themselves from the thrall of a dead hand, in the shape of mistaken or outgrown legislation. There can be no doubt that if the framers of the Manitoba Act intended to provide for and perpetuate a Separate School system, they did so in the expectation that within the narrow confines of what was originally intended to be the Province, there would grow up an essentially French-speaking Province—a second Quebec. Had this expectation been realised it is not likely that the present difficulty would have arisen. With the enlarged Province, settled with a large English-speaking and Protestant minority, it was inevitable that no such system, repugnant to the principles of the great majority, would long be tolerated. The fact that it has been found that the Manitoba Act does not really provide for Separate Schools simply obviated the necessity for the constitutional change that would shortly have been demanded and insisted on, had it been found that such schools were provided for in the constitution. The official use of the French language had in the nature of things become a practical nullity, not to say absurdity, before it was finally abolished.

But this is not fair play; it is tyranny, says Mr. Tarte. Is it? In this connection Mr. Tarte introduces his worst fallacy. The Manitoba majority do not say to the French minority, "You shall have our schools and speak our language." Far from it. They simply say, "We will not tax the people for the support of two sets of schools, one of them under ecclesiastical