

wish to call special attention to the claim of Mr. J. A. Beaudry, for a place on the Board of Control. Mr. Beaudry is eminently qualified to represent the citizens of Montreal. As a result of his wide business training, he is unusually well qualified for the duties of the position. Furthermore, he has a wide acquaintance among both the French and English sections, and speaks both languages fluently, which fits him to represent both elements.

Mr. Beaudry, as a publisher, has unique opportunities of becoming acquainted with all classes of business men. As publisher of *Le Prix Courant* he is brought into intimate touch with the wholesale, manufacturing and retail business interests of the city, while as Editor and publisher of *Le Progrès Ouvrier*, he thoroughly understands the attitude and claims of the working men. Above all else, he is a student of municipal matters. He has made a special study of civic affairs, and is probably better informed regarding the finance question and the many other problems which are now up before the City Council for solution than any claimant for office. One or two of the planks in Mr. Beaudry's platform illustrate his grasp of affairs. He is advocating a new system of accounting at the City Hall. At present a record is kept of money received and paid out, but no record of merchandise purchased. Machinery, tools, equipment are all charged up to expense account instead of to capital account with provision for writing off a certain percentage each year. Business men all readily understand the value of a proper system of accounting.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the importance of having good business men at the City Hall, Montreal, in round figures, has an annual income of \$12,000,000, and an annual outlay of \$14,000,000, which, if kept up indefinitely, will lead to the bankruptcy courts. Civic taxes amount to a great deal more than the city pays for Federal and Provincial purposes, while in addition municipal matters touch our everyday life at a hundred points where we are affected at a single point by either Federal or Provincial enactments. Such questions as fire and police protection, water works, sewers, sidewalks, parks and playgrounds, transportation and a score of other matters affect the daily life of her citizens—all of which are in the hands of the men at the City Hall. For these reasons it is most essential that business men should be sent there to represent us. As we stated at the outset, there is no better informed or more worthy representative than Mr. J. A. Beaudry.

Manitoba's Bilingual Question

THE Manitoba Legislature passed, by a decisive majority, a bill to repeal the section of the school law which provided for bilingual schools. The section in question was a part of the arrangement made in 1897 between the Laurier Government and the Greenway Government, for the settlement, in part at least, of the Manitoba school question which had for several years disturbed the country. While the provision was one of general character, it was well understood that the purpose of the section was to meet the wishes of the French Canadian people, of whom there were many in the Province. In time, however, a condition that had not been foreseen arose under the section. The immigrants who came into Manitoba in such large numbers were of many nationalities. Nearly

all the nations of Europe are represented in the population of the Province. The Scriptures are sold in the West in forty-five different languages. Wherever the settlers of any nationality were in sufficient number they availed themselves of that section of the school law to require the teaching of their own language in the schools. The result was a very serious crippling of the educational machinery of the country. The Minister of Education in the present Government frankly told the House that he could not successfully administer the school system of the Province if the bilingual privileges were to be granted to these many nationalities. That there was much to be said for the teaching of French, the language of the early settlers of Canada and of Manitoba, was admitted, but it was felt that since the law encouraged demands from the other nationalities as well, the wisest course would be to repeal the troublesome clause. So far as religious teaching is concerned—and that was the main feature of the Laurier-Greenway arrangement—no change is made. It is only the language question that is affected. The moderate and conciliatory manner in which the subject was discussed encourages the hope that in the administration of the law as amended it may be found possible to make the system acceptable to the French districts.

Duties of an Auditor General

IN the discussion of the financial affairs of Ontario questions have arisen respecting the proper functions of the Auditor General of the Province. The legislation respecting the large operations of the Hydro Electric Commission appears to have made no adequate provision for the submission of the accounts of the Commission for examination by the Auditor General. That official, in his report, states that \$1,564,098 has been expended by the Commission beyond the authority granted by the Legislature, a condition which he attributes to "the absence of even the semblance of legislative control over the expenditures of the Commission." The *Globe*, in discussing the subject remarks:

"Under the provisions of a change in the Audit Act made in 1914 the Treasury Board has ordered that no statement of Hydro-electric expenditure, neither names nor amounts, shall be published, other than authorized by the Board. This has made it impossible for the Auditor-General to do his work properly or give the public the information to which they are entitled. He has in consequence appended to the Hydro-electric statement appearing in the Public Accounts a note disclaiming responsibility, and stating that the figures are those of the Treasury Board."

If the Ontario Act is as the *Globe* states, the public of that Province are not receiving the protection that such legislation is usually designed to give. Of course, it would never do to give an Auditor-General, however faithful and excellent an officer he might be, supreme authority respecting public expenditures. In a democratic country, claiming the blessings of "government of the people, by the people, for the people," it is folly to try to get away from the control of the representatives of the people. This is a principle that should be learned by some well meaning reformers who, in various fields of public affairs, are found advancing schemes for creating some forms of authority beyond the reach of the people. For good or for evil, the will of

the people, expressed through their elected representatives, must prevail, and not even an Auditor-General can be permitted to override it. The true theory of the duties of an Auditor-General is that he shall be a brake, but not a block, to the Government of the day. From every decision that he may give, every protest that he may record against what is being done, there should be an appeal to the Government, through its Treasury Board or some other channel, and if they see fit to differ from him they must be free to do so; and their decision must prevail. They are responsible to the people, and must answer to them in due course for their action. But in order that the public, in such a case, may judge intelligently between the official and the Ministry, the latter should be obliged to publish among the official documents every objection made by the official. Indeed, the publication of information concerning the public accounts should be under the control of the Auditor-General rather than under that of the Ministry. To say that the Auditor-General is not free to publish his views concerning the financial business of the Government, and that only such accounts and papers as the Treasury Board may authorize shall be made public, is to abandon the main purpose for which the office of Auditor-General should exist, and to deprive the people of one of the checks and guards which are necessary in the management of public affairs. If the law of Ontario does not give the Auditor-General of the Province the right to place his views on record as respects all public expenditures, there is much need of an amendment of the Audit Act.

The Passing of a Great Newspaper

THE suspension of the London Standard (not the Evening Standard) closes the career of what was once a great London newspaper. But a few years ago the Standard was the foremost organ of the British Conservative party. It represented, better perhaps than any other journal of its time, the sober and solid elements of that party. It was conspicuously the daily of the English country gentlemen who formed such a large part of British Conservatism in the days of Disraeli and Salisbury. In later years it came into the hands of Mr. C. Arthur Pearson, at a time when that energetic publisher was becoming a rival to the Harmsworths in the magazine and newspaper field. Mr. Pearson put a new kind of life into it, making it perhaps more enterprising and progressive and appealing more to the average "man in the street." Perhaps if Mr. Pearson had been able to retain it and carry out his plans it might have been made successful in its new atmosphere. But Mr. Pearson's activities as a publisher were stopped when the affliction of blindness came to him. He is doing noble work to-day in the scheme of providing for the war's blinded soldiers. The Standard passed into other hands. It had lost its old position as the sober organ of English Toryism, and it never got a firm hold upon the public in the more modern field which its promoters had desired to occupy.

The conference that is being held in Paris at which representatives of all the Allied Powers will be present will be a meeting of much importance in its bearing on the naval and military plans for prosecuting the war, and also on the economic questions which have immediate relation to the war policy. But those who expect — perhaps desire — agreements as to the commercial policy to be followed after the war will be disappointed. The time for such things has not arrived.