

failed, and worse. There is no use expecting figs from "thorn" bushes, nor honorable administration from scalliwags. The ministers were but four, all conspicuously well known for straight private and business lives, all fairly wealthy, and all of that fraternal disposition which is so curiously notable all over "the Province of the glad hand." They were not one bit demagoguish, and yet they were comrade-like, with all decent folk. Church-going men, teetotallers. And, what is remarkable, and may be instructive, not one eloquent man in the lot. Quiet men. The blather-skite is one of the curses of politics everywhere else. His performances cause multitudes of people to mistake gab for reasoning, and the gift of it for fitness to do public business. The Alberta ministers were all very capable of slowly explaining what they thought the right thing to do, and they were duly convincing and persuasive. Hearing them in 1905, and their principal opponent, a man of platform fireworks, I concluded that he was beaten every time, just because the audiences discounted his rhodomontades, and believed every word the slow, conscientious-talking fellows uttered. They proved to be as quick in action as they were steady, if rather awkward on the stump.

The absence of partisan opposition in the assembly had various excellent effects. First, there was no waste of time in vituperation, accusation, suspicion, slander, and all the malign bosh that comes from both sides in regular, party-divided legislatures. Thus the people were not drawn into a long succession of imitative recriminations. Hence they kept on friendly terms with one another, and Alberta is conspicuously alone in this agreeable condition. Every visitor notes it.

#### COST OF DEBATE.

Again, a great deal of public money was saved by the shortness of debate in the assembly. Electors seldom reflect on how expensive is blather-skiting. At Ottawa it costs \$28 a minute counting all the expenses dubbed "for legislation," and all the services, clerical returns, paper, printing, etc., etc., that have to be paid for in proportion as Parliament sits long, and gives its time mostly to angry, futile contentions, the Opposition fishing for "scandals," and the ministry leading them on into carefully planned pitfalls, all to make election capital. Moreover, the horrid practice of blather-skiting uses up ministers, takes the time they ought to be giving to public business, worries and wearies them, puts some of them out of the right temper for dealing carefully, and causes many things to be "rushed" instead of long meditated. From all these evils the Alberta people set themselves free by their uni-party system. They saved, for expenditure on public works, and on the promotion of agriculture, a great deal of money. It cannot be too much insisted on that the system leaves good men free to do good work.