

bright weather and just in the nick of time for quick seeding and a rapid growth. The prospects for the harvest of 1907 are very fair; the yield may be nearly as good as last year. With price twenty to twenty-five cents higher, there is every reason why the western boom should continue. And if that continues, Canada's general prosperity must continue. The economic condition of the East is irrevocably tied up with that of the West and what spells prosperity for the one is honey and molasses for the other.

WHEN a government calls for tenders on certain specifications, and afterwards changes the specifications, should fresh tenders be called for? This is a question which is now being discussed in certain quarters in the province of Ontario. The

QUESTIONABLE ETHICS

Education Department called for tenders for printing the Ontario Readers for a year and a half. Certain specifications were handed to those who proposed to tender and bids were put in on that basis. After the bids were received, the department changed the regulations and made an arrangement for the supply of readers with the Canada Publishing Co., one of the three firms which have had the contract for twenty years.

Was this fair to the other tenderers? Is this the practice followed by all governments? If it should become general, what would be the effect on the system of public tenders? These are the questions which people are asking.

Suppose, for example, in letting a contract for the construction of a section of the National Transcontinental Railway, the Dominion Government were to amend the specifications materially after all bids were in, and then make a contract with some political favourite without calling for fresh tenders, what would the public think? Would they not feel that there was something decidedly unfair in such a proceeding? Would they not be suspicious, and justifiably suspicious, that the Ottawa authorities had some ulterior motive? Would it not on its face look as if there had been a "deal" of some kind?

In this case, the price at which the contract was ultimately given was very low, and means an annual saving to the province of about \$25,000. There is therefore less appearance of anything underhanded. Nevertheless it seems as if the department had adopted an unsafe and intolerable method and left themselves open to serious criticism.

AT Fredericton last week, the first stage of Mr. Emmerson's action against the alleged libel in the "Gleaner" was passed and the defendant was committed for trial. According to Mr. Emmerson's story,

WINE AND WOMEN

he was the victim of circumstances. Two ladies invited themselves for a trip on his private car when he was returning from New Brunswick to Montreal. Further, because he happened to be staying at the same hotel in Montreal these ladies invaded his room after midnight. They became provoked at a porter who objected to their actions and their noise, and all three left the hotel about two o'clock in the morning.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier should issue an order that women who disturb the even tenor of the way of his colleagues should be summarily punished. It is not meet that gentlemen of high rank should be troubled in this way and suffer loss of reputation and position in consequence. Cabinet ministers must travel and they must occasionally stop over night in hotels. If they are to be subject to such foolish and embarrassing attentions, they will be inclined to stay at home and let public business go hang.

One cannot but regret the action of the "Gleaner" in attempting to throw blame upon the minister. It had

been better employed in pointing out the dangers to which politicians and other public figures are subject, and in asking the public, especially the female public, to refrain from impeding the business of the State in this manner. It is the first duty of every journalist to safeguard the higher interests of the nation and, had Mr. Crockett kept this diligently before him, he might have rendered a service to his country and avoided a waste of mental force and hard-earned dollars in a miserable libel suit. It is to be hoped that other Canadian journalists will profit by the lesson and steadily eschew trying to create unnecessary scandals when they should be devoting their energies to matters of national moment.

DOWN in the province of Quebec there is much religious unanimity because the great majority are Roman Catholics. The others are Protestants of various complexions. Because these are a minority, the Protestant churches in many places are

CHURCH UNION IN QUEBEC

small and "struggling." In some towns there are two or three miniature Protestant congregations, facing fearful odds to keep their preachers fed and clothed.

Under these circumstances, the Methodists and Presbyterians occasionally find it convenient to unite. At the meeting of the Montreal Conference of the Methodist churches at Gananoque last week, the stationing committee recommended that the congregations in Megantic be united under the Presbyterian rule and those in East Angus be united under Methodist rule. This recommendation was adopted.

Why should not these two churches draw up a general agreement providing for such union in all places in Canada where small congregations think it advisable? It would be a first step in church union and it would enable many self-sacrificing ministers to secure larger congregations and more adequate salaries. It would not be forced union, but would only occur where both congregations felt that something would be gained.

THE Jules Verne stories that seemed wonderful in our childhood days are one by one coming true.

Aerial navigation is as yet a luxury, since few can afford a balloon or an aeroplane. The average man is some-

what nervous about flying machines and their management, having in mind, perhaps, the fable of

**THE LATEST
FLYING MACHINE** Icarus and the later prosaic tale of Darius Greene and his ill-fated invention. But the balloon is surely making its way, not only among the clouds, but in the less nebulous region known as fashionable circles. Even such an accident as befell Captain Ulivelli in Italy, last Sunday, when the war balloon of which he was in charge was struck by lightning and exploded, cannot daunt those who prefer pleasures flavoured by peril. But the flying-machine is another matter, which presents greater commercial possibilities than the mere balloon. The latest announcement on the subject comes from Professor Alexander Graham Bell, who, on his way to his summer home at Cape Breton, informs a Halifax reporter that the flying-machine problem has been solved. Professor Bell hopes to show this summer that his variety of the invention, on the tetrahedral kite plan, will fly under certain atmospheric conditions, with power supplied from a gasoline motor. The motor has already been forwarded to Cape Breton and the farthest East of Canada will doubtless see some interesting experiments during July and August. It remains for a patriotic explorer to form a competition with Mr. Walter Wellman and set out for the Arctic regions, with a Canadian aeroplane as final equipment. The native aeronaut who would add the North Pole to Canadian trophies would receive more than an athlete's reception. The Toronto "Globe" might even succeed in raising an education fund of two hundred dollars for such a hero.