

# The Chronicle

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**The School Flag.** Sir Howard Vincent suggested to the Imperial Government that following the example of France the United States and Manitoba, a clause should be inserted in the Education Bill requiring the national flag to be hoisted upon all the state schools. Mr. Birrell, the secretary of Education, replied that "he did not think patriotism in England and Wales needed to be manufactured, nor that it would be promoted by compulsory conditions of any particular ritual in connection with flag waving. The matter was within the competence of the local authorities." With all respect to the Hon. Minister, we think the suggestion deserved more serious consideration. It is, however, very characteristic of Englishmen to expect their patriotism to be taken for granted, it is only under the stimulus of some great national victory or reverse, that they consider it consistent with their dignity to be patriotically demonstrative.

**The Real Estate Tax.** The Legislation Committee of the City Council, has by the casting vote of the chairman voted down a motion to seek power to increase the real estate tax by a quarter of one per cent. The question is not, however, finally disposed of for this year. Seeing that the school tax amounts to 40 p.c., 1 p.c. does not seem excessive for a regular tax to apply to the purposes of general administration. Our impression is that the whole tax should not exceed 1½ p.c. In that case .10 p.c. is all the additional tax that could be legitimately levied on real estate. We approve of the local improvement system, which while it would have its drawbacks would probably be the best way of getting good roads and sidewalks. The tax could be spread over a large number of years and would not be a serious burden to the property owners. At any cost the city should have good roads and sidewalks.

**The Hamilton Strike.** The Police Committee of Hamilton, has formally declared that it is unable to afford protection to the Street Railway Company against the strikers who are wrecking its property. The Mayor, asked to call out the militia, refuses to take this step, but has issued a proclamation threatening that if the disorderly conduct is continued the Riot Act will be read. The threat to read the Riot Act is about as harmless as the Speakers threat to "name" an honourable member. A former Speaker of the British House of Commons being asked what would be the effect if the oft-repeated threat were carried out replied: "Heaven only knows." A situation like that now existing in Hamilton simply means the abdication of all authority, law and justice.

**A Grammatical Casualty.**

The Fidelity & Casualty Company, of New York, is contesting a claim made by Mr. Mallek, a St. Catherine street jeweller, for compensation on account of goods stolen from his store. The company declare that Mallek, in his application made a false statement, which invalidates his policy. The alleged false statement was made in reply to the question: "Was your store never entered by burglars?" To which the applicant replied: "No." It is not disputed that the store had at that time been burglarized, but the plaintiff maintains that on the grammatical principle that two negatives make an affirmative, his answer was correct. It is for Judge Fortin to decide whether the answer was false or misleading, but the question is so framed that it is impossible to answer either "yes" or "no" to it without the reply being either incorrect or misleading. It can hardly be maintained that the question: "Was your store *never* entered by burglars?" means precisely the same thing as "Was your store *ever* entered by burglars?"