

PREMIER MOWAT recently devoted the whole of a somewhat elaborate speech, at Tavistock, to a vigorous attack upon "Canada's New Party." On its destructive side the criticism was undeniably effective, however far it may have fallen short of demonstrating its main proposition, viz., that the party which has so long ruled the Province, under the leadership of the speaker, is in very deed based on those principles of "truth and righteousness," and has on all occasions exhibited that loftiness of motive and purity of practice, which are the boast of the new party and its alleged reason for being. Leaving the latter question aside for the present, and abating nothing of our conviction of the evils inherent in the party system itself, we are bound to agree with Mr. Mowat that the very worst possible way to overcome those evils is to add to the number of parties. To profess lofty and pious purposes as the foundation principle on which a new political organization is built is, as Sir John A. Macdonald said of Mr. Laurier's general assertions, easy. There is no need to question the sincerity of the leader or leaders who are attempting to erect this new party structure upon the basis of "truth and righteousness." But of whom are the rank and file of the new party to be composed? Evidently of those who have for some reason left one or the other of the old parties. What guarantee, what reasonable probability, can there be that these members shall not bring with them the old corrupt practices of the parties they are leaving? It will be replied, we suppose, that those who thus forsake the old to form the new do so because they are upright and conscientious men, who have become disgusted with the corrupt methods of the old parties and are joining the new for the sake of its purity. But how is the sincerity of the refugees to be proved? Who is to vouch for the purity of their characters and motives? What is the standard of admission? What are the tests of "truth and righteousness" for new party adherents, and how are those tests applied? Suppose it should happen, as is certainly not improbable, that a goodly percentage of disappointed self-seekers and unrewarded wire-pullers should be among the recruits, are they to be rejected? If not, how are they to be prevented from being ruled by the same motives and from resorting to the same practices as before, and thus quickly bringing down the new party to the level of the old? That the same electioneering tactics are already resorted to, Mr. Mowat trenchantly pointed out by comparing the confident declarations of enthusiasm and prophecies of victory made on behalf of the New Party before the Lambton contest with the assertions after that event that the number of votes polled for their candidate was equal to their expectations, and that they had known all along that "success was impossible." The obvious conclusion is that the evils of partyism are to be cured, if cured at all, not by more partyism, but by the rising of the better elements of the old parties above all partyism inconsistent with "truth and righteousness."

WE have already, in last week's issue, explained the inaccuracy in a preceding number, which has, we are sorry to see, caused the *Manitoba Free Press* considerable perturbation. If our contemporary will kindly read "Manitoba Act" in the paragraph in question, as used inadvertently to designate the Act of the Manitoba Legislature creating Separate Schools and not the Constitutional Act technically so designated, it will save us the necessity of saying more in reply to the first part of the article in its issue of the 16th inst. We waive for the present two very important questions upon which more light will probably be had at a subsequent stage of the proceedings. One is the question whether the words "in practice," again quoted by the *Free Press*, can be construed, to the satisfaction of any competent authority, as including any schools under Catholic control in the Red River country, prior to its entrance into the Confederation. The *Free Press* assumes this as if it were a settled fact. We have simply admitted it to be possible, not because we think the words can logically or naturally be so construed, but because we cannot see any other reason for their insertion in the Act. The second question is that most mysterious one of the origin and authority of the clause referring to Separate Schools, and one or two other clauses, in the Bill of Rights as given by Archbishop Tache, and alleged to have been used by Father Richot and his colleagues in their negotiations with the Dominion Government. On this point we, as before said, await more light. The *Free Press* proceeds to quote the sentence in which we refuse to admit that, even by the most unequivocal provision of the Manitoba Act, "the people of the Province should be forever deprived of their right of local self-government in this respect." The *Free Press* declares this to be quite un-

worthy of THE WEEK! It suggests changing the word "Manitoba" for "Ontario" or "Quebec" as if that were a *reductio ad absurdum*. Not at all! We are equally ready to maintain that not by the most specific provision of the British North America Act could or should the people of Ontario or Quebec be "forever deprived of their right of local self-government." We claim for the people of Manitoba no such exceptional superiority as the *Free Press* supposes, though we admit that the great difference in the relative proportions of Catholics to Protestants in Ontario and in Manitoba changes the aspect of this particular question, as one of practical politics, very materially. But we are far from admitting that Ontario is eternally bound to the Separate School system. Our super-loyal and shocked contemporary compares the constitution given to Manitoba to one the British Parliament might give to "a colony started in the heart of Africa." Why go so far afield? Why not say "a colony started in the wilds of British North America?" That comparison comes nearer home; but it, unfortunately for the *Free Press* argument, suggests that our forefathers in Canada did refuse to be perpetually bound by the constitution originally given them, and did insist on its being changed into the very different shape it wears to-day. As if remembering this, the *Free Press* goes on to neutralize its expressions of horror at THE WEEK's temerity by showing how the very thing in question can be done. Thus the whole matter is resolved into one of different modes of doing the same thing. On this point we may just say that we have not advocated "kicking holes" in the Constitution. We quoted the sub-section of the Manitoba Act which distinctly contemplates some such action as that proposed by the Manitoba Government, and approved by THE WEEK. The *Free Press* endorses our reference, and says that "to provide against their abolition [that of Separate Schools] the Dominion intervened" with the clause quoted, namely, that which declares that "an appeal shall lie to the Governor-General in Council." Very good! Let the Manitoba Legislature repeal, as it surely has power to do, the Act which it originally passed creating Separate Schools. If the minority seriously object let them use their right of appeal. This will bring the question before the Dominion Government and Parliament much more effectively than the less practical method which the *Free Press* declares to be the only one. When the question becomes a practical one in Ontario, or any other Province, as it may much sooner than the *Free Press* imagines, THE WEEK will again claim the Canadian privilege of free discussion.

MAYOR CLARKE'S clear and comprehensive annual message, read to the Toronto City Council the other day, is a document of great value to all interested in the progress of this growing city. The magnitude of the interests intrusted to the management of the City Council, as thus presented in a bird's eye view, is well adapted to raise the question in every citizen's mind, in which it was not before present, whether the system now in vogue is at all adequate to present conditions. The great number and importance of the subjects touched upon by Mayor Clarke, as demanding the attention and action of the City Council during the current year, almost compel the conclusion that he should have added one more, by pointing out the necessity for some better plan for the conduct of municipal affairs than that now in use. That is however a question which may more appropriately come within the purview of the Citizens' Committee, the Board of Trade, and the Trades and Labour Council, three bodies whose usefulness, particularly in connection with the Esplanade problem, the Mayor very fitly acknowledges. The viaduct is unquestionably, we suppose, the largest project upon which definite action is urgently needed during the current year, but if so it is, in reference to several others which are named, but *primus inter pares*. It would be useless in the space at our disposal to select any of these for specific reference. One tendency, however, incidentally brought out in the course of the Mayor's address, we are very glad to observe. We refer to the gradual increase of the sphere within which the contract system is dispensed with, and the works of the city carried on under the direct supervision of the civic officers. We are told that the policy of carrying out various works by day labour directly under the supervision of the City Engineer has been pursued during the past year with gratifying results, and that in 1889 four miles of sewers were constructed on this plan with the result that the cost of this work was almost exactly ten per cent. less than if it had been done by contract, and that the city has obtained thoroughly good work. Why may not this method be cautiously but almost indefinitely extended to

the mutual advantage of employer and employees? We congratulate Mayor Clarke on his able and admirable message, and the citizens on their good fortune in having at this important junction an officer so industrious and capable at the head of their civic government.

SENATOR JOHN MACDONALD fulfilled, a week or two since, his generous purpose of bestowing \$40,000 for the improvement of the hospital accommodation of this city. The whole sum was paid over to the Park Hospital Trustees, a body organized to carry out the charitable and well-conceived design of the donor. On the receipt of this handsome gift the Trustees were enabled to acquire possession of the Wycliffe College buildings and surrounding grounds, thus securing an admirable location and seat for the institution. The Trustees now appeal to the liberality of the citizens of Toronto for the further aid necessary in order to enable them to establish an institution "equal in all respects to the best of the kind on the continent." When it is remembered that the best hospitals on this continent, notably those of the city of New York, are admitted to be equal to the best in the world, this will be seen to be a very high ambition. Who shall say that it is too daring for an institution which is to be under the oversight of the medical faculty of the University of Toronto, in the rich and rapidly growing city of Ontario? It is doubtful if there is any more noble form which the charity of a wealthy Christian man may take than that of making provision for the relief of the sick and suffering for all time to come. It is a form of benevolence which is one of the peculiar glories of modern civilization. We are glad that our highly respected fellow-townsmen is showing himself possessed of the wisdom which so many of the wealthy and charitably disposed lack, by becoming the almoner of his own bounty, instead of leaving the carrying out of his liberal designs to the uncertain operation of testamentary agencies. It is to be hoped that so good an example will prove contagious, and that this noble donation may be so promptly supplemented by others, that the Trustees will have no difficulty in at once carrying out a comprehensive plan, worthy of the founder and of this Christian city.

"COLOUR Blindness in its Relation to Railway Service" is the title of an interesting article in *The Railway Age*, from the pen of Mr. J. J. Bell. Mr. Bell, in common with most of those who have studied the question, believes that colour blindness on the part of railroad employees is a fruitful source of danger to the lines and property committed to their care. The use of red and green signals he regards as particularly unfortunate. Though these colours are perhaps the most readily distinguished by perfect eyes the colour blind are almost sure to confuse them, and in a faint light red becomes invisible to them or appears black. The caution signal (green) is liable to be mistaken for the danger signal (red) and the latter to appear black, or so far as the effect is concerned, not to be seen at all. Twilight fog, rain and snow add to the liability of confusion, and thus at the very time when it is most important that the signals should be clearly distinguished and understood, the danger of mistake is increased. Mr. Bell points out other objections to the colours at present in use as railway signals and enforces his argument by statistics from prominent oculists bearing on the prevalence of colour blindness. Dr. Wilson, of Edinburgh, thinks that one in fifty of the population is seriously defective in perception of colour, while Dr. Ryerson, of Toronto, places the average at one in twenty-five. Mr. Bell does not think that the substitution of other colours for those now in use as railway signals would effectually obviate the danger. He shows clearly the objections to the use of white, black and azure blue, which have been proposed for use, as the colours most readily distinguished by those totally or partially colour blind. He favours the adoption of some system of form or movement of signals such as is already to some extent employed in the semaphore, the disc and the flag by day, and the swinging or raising and lowering of lamps by night. If colour signals are to be retained he thinks that a test of the eyesight of signalmen should be made compulsory by law. It has already been made so in most European countries and in some of the United States, but in Canada the matter has hitherto been left entirely to the railway companies. We agree with Mr. Bell that this should not be so, and that until efficient legislation is provided to guard against this source of danger an important measure of protection to the travelling public will have been neglected.