

pleasure of seeing his reputation tossed backwards and forwards like a shuttlecock, in an eager contest between contending factions. Though we have, at various times, pointed out what we consider errors in his management of the Grand Trunk, we are none the less disposed to condemn those whose personal or political motives lead them into a mere persecution of the man; to deprecate such attacks as are unfair; and to disregard such criticisms as wear on their face malice prepense. It is an easy thing for Mr. Nelson or Mr. Any-body-else to put together in pamphlet form the gossip of the streets, or the insinuations of the disappointed and the malicious; and it is, unfortunately, no less easy to procure publicity for all the charges or seeming charges that can be concocted. We have no authority, if we had the wish, to undertake a defence of Mr. Brydges; he is well able to stand up for himself. But as between man and man, we think it grossly unfair that he should be persecuted by the reiteration through the columns of public journals of charges of personal dishonesty, which have not been carried to the proper tribunal, or if they have been so carried, have either been disbelieved or disproved. Why should the public be pestered with this "damnable iteration." If Mr. Nelson has charges to make against Mr. Brydges, charges which involve the latter's honesty as a man, and his faithfulness as a servant, there is a proper place where, and a proper time when they can be made, so as to secure not only examination but suitable action on the result. Why, in the name of common sense, does he persist in raving through Canada over matters with which the Canadian public has no power to deal? Those directly interested in what he has to say are the proprietors of the Grand Trunk Railway, and surely Mr. Nelson is at liberty to take his stock of wrongs, grievances, insinuations and advice, to the proper quarter, and there appeal for an investigation. He casts his illegitimate bantlings at our doors, and then rushes off. If he were so dreadfully anxious about the welfare of the Grand Trunk, he could easily have furnished some of those who attended the late meeting in London with a copy of his charges, and the evidence he relies on to sustain them. We have read over the proceedings of the meeting, but we do not find that Mr. Nelson is referred to. It does not appear that he asked for a chance to make good his allegations, or volunteered a statement of affairs. Although he knew that a meeting was coming off in London, that a strong opposition had been organized against the present management of the Grand Trunk, he kept blazing away in Canada against Mr. Brydges, and wasted no inconsiderable

amount of pens, ink, and paper, in his zealous crusade. We are not acquainted with Mr. Nelson's peculiarities, but we do certainly think that his conduct would justify the issue of a writ *de lunatico inquirendo*. Had he applied for an investigation and been refused, then there might be some excuse for troubling us out here with his columns of charges. As it is, Mr. Brydges is perfectly justified in treating such effusions with silent contempt. He is the servant and agent of the board of direction, and, while continued as such, is entitled to shelter himself behind them. They are responsible for his acts, and upon them should be laid the burden; were such not the case every servant of a company might be held personally liable even where his superiors have endorsed his acts and assumed the responsibility of them.

The report of the meeting in London shews that Mr. Brydges was called to account there by some of the proprietors, and our readers may judge for themselves as to the strength of the defence. The *Railway Times* says: "Mr. Brydges spoke out clearly, resolutely, but not defiantly, so much so in fact, that he gained the ear, conquered the antipathy and acquired the confidence of his auditory." So far as we can see, it must be taken for granted that Mr. Brydges has successfully defended himself against charges of unfaithfulness and dishonesty; that his employers accept his explanations; and that something more will be required from Mr. Nelson than mere insinuations or assertions, before the public can be expected to lend credence to his letters or pamphlets. Opinions may differ as to the judgment displayed by Mr. Brydges in his management, but as regards his honesty the verdict thus far is in his favour.

At the adjourned meeting, Mr. Brydges was fully exculpated. Mr. Hodgson said that he thought Mr. Brydges had fairly and fully answered the questions put to him at the previous meeting, and he thought that it was only just to acknowledge it. Mr. Heseltine said that the charges he had made against the Canadian officials did not apply in all cases to Mr. Brydges, and for his own part he was perfectly satisfied as to the honour and integrity of the man. Mr. Creek said that while there were some of the answers to his questions which he should like to have had more in detail, yet, on the whole, he was perfectly satisfied with Mr. Brydges' explanation.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

We are pleased to observe that there is every probability that legislation will be had on this subject during the present Session of

the Ontario Assembly. Two members of the Opposition, Messrs. Boyd and Pardee, each gave notice of motion last week for leave to bring in a bill upon the subject. That of Mr. Boyd was read a first time on Friday last, but not yet being printed, we have been unable to ascertain its contents; Mr. Pardee brought in his bill on Monday, but we presume he intends to incorporate it with that of his colleague. We, some time ago, (in vol. 1 p. 274 of this Journal), pointed out the necessity and urged the adoption of a law of this nature, and predicted that the introduction of one could not be much longer delayed. The promoters of the scheme are both able men, and the Act will therefore doubtless be well drawn; when it appears we shall carefully consider it and hope to see it as perfect as possible. A badly drawn act which would not attain the desired end of a complete registration, would, for the purpose we have in view, viz: that of Life Insurance, be worse than useless; as the returns under it, instead of being a guide, would mislead. An act of the kind has been in force in Nova Scotia for several years; but it is only now, after two or three amendments, that registration under it is becoming anything like as full and complete as it should be. If a good Act be passed here, in a few years we shall be able, from the returns made under it, to frame insurance tables of mortality, similar to the celebrated ones of Dr. Farr, accurately representing the value of life in this Province, and which, therefore, will be, in every respect, more satisfactory than those based upon English lives, which Canadian Companies are now compelled to use.

In compliance with the request of our enterprising friends of the Commercial Union Assurance Company, we give place to a circular setting forth the advantages, all and sundry, that are to arise to insurers from placing their risks with that particular Company. If this document shall be the means of inducing any to take the steps necessary to insure their families or dependants against poverty and want, whether it is done through the excellent agency of the Commercial or any other sound Company, we are satisfied. There is no harm done by any Company giving the greatest prominence to its "peculiar inducements," or even comparing its terms and rates with those of other Companies in a fair and friendly spirit. By this sort of discussion the public are enlightened; attention is drawn to the subject of life insurance; opportunities are offered for impressing its advantages, and good may be done. We have no doubt that the "Circular" under notice will be generally read, and at some future time we may have something to say as to the merits of the questions raised.