

valour. It does not follow, however, that everyone, whatever his qualifications may be, should neglect or ignore these questions. Such a theory would have hindered the progress of knowledge in all ages, and led men to acquiesce in ignorance, however profound, and in superstitions, however abject and degrading. That men animated by the desire for truth, and equipped with adequate learning, should addict themselves to such studies is our best guarantee that the truth will be found. It is, therefore with interest that we note that, at the English Church Congress, now being held in the city of Norwich, the criticism of the Old Testament has been taken up and handled with boldness and with reverence. On the one hand, it was shown that the abandonment of certain traditional views in no way interfered with our belief in Divine revelation. On the other hand, it was brought out that the Mosaic age in the East was a highly literary one, and that the Israelites must have shared in the general literary culture of the time. The books of the Old Testament, Professor Sayce contended, are but a fragment of the Hebrew literature which once existed. It is quite likely that some of the advance guard in criticism may be going a little too fast; but they are nearly all in the right spirit—nearly all—in the love of truth and with a reverent regard for the sacred documents which they handle.

### Good Municipal Government.

IN a note last week we alluded in unflattering terms to the composition of the Toronto City Council. Our remarks attracted instant attention and have apparently appealed to the sense of heavy tax-paying citizens. The line we proposed was that these taxpayers should unite and select from themselves candidates to protect their interests. We are aware that there is a so-called Ratepayers' Association. It has not been a success and has been used as a stumbling ground by "cranks." Moderate businessmen have not joined it, or if they have, have left it in disgust. Work of the kind wanted cannot be done at public meetings. Organization and work without talk is what is wanted. We have had sent to us a book from New York called "Club Book of Good Government (Club A)." This book contains the history, constitution and by-laws of a Club in New York. This constitution contains suggestions which might be adopted here in Toronto and in other cities in the Dominion suffering like Toronto from the effects of municipal mismanagement.

It is necessary to premise that the control of Democracy over public affairs must be reckoned with as a permanent matter. This control will grow more powerful in the future. It is here to stay. Like other huge unruly powers if it cannot be controlled it must be guided. There will be a struggle between the respectable classes and demagogues. At present the latter are in the ascendant. Nowhere is this struggle fiercer than in the United States. In Canada we are on its threshold. In the States, in self-defence, the better part of the community have rallied and united, and one experiment they have tried in this Club. Now, to see how it operates:

"Its foundation was the first crystallization of a new idea in municipal government, which had been long working in the minds of political reformers, but which, while long exemplified in Europe, was entirely without practical application in America. This idea, briefly stated, is that city government is business, not politics; that municipal officers should be elected or appointed with regard solely to their personal integrity and fitness for the municipal service, without reference to their national party politics; and that the pernicious system of national party dictation of local candidates calls for the united action of all good citizens to rescue American cities from its thralldom."

Club A was incorporated February 28th, 1893, and a club house secured. Several hundred members were enrolled within a year. Its first campaign was in November, 1893, and it very nearly elected its candidate in spite of Tammany Hall and the Republican machine. In May, 1894, the Club united with the famous Committee of Seventy and put in Strong as Mayor and Goff as Recorder. In September, 1894, to get rid of the abomination of Tammany the Club united with the Republicans in this way. The Republicans accepted the Club's candidates and the alliance knocked out Tammany Hall. Thus its influence has been immediate and powerful. The Club is called Club A so that other clubs can be formed on the same basis in other cities. The first letter of the alphabet indicates that it is only the first of a series which it is hoped will follow. The initiation fee is one dollar. The dues are six dollars a year, payable monthly or annually. No member can be under eighteen years of age. Up to twenty-one years he pays half fees only. A candidate for election to membership in the Club must be proposed and seconded by members able from personal knowledge to vouch for his respectability and fitness to be a member. Juniors cannot vote, but otherwise have club privileges.

The formation of this Club is a proof that in New York, at all events, the better classes are tired of misgovernment. They see that organization is necessary. It pays them better to unite and keep up a Club like this Club A, and thereby have a permanent centre than to see their property stolen from them. Each man taxes himself his membership fee to save himself from being taxed by the rascals who have hitherto done the business.

The selection of candidates and the discussion of municipal questions can, in such an institution, be carried on in a reasonably calm manner.

In the consideration of all schemes of municipal reform it must not be lost sight of that, as we have said, Democracy is here to stay. It is after all the saving principle of society. An educated Democracy is the only salvation from anarchy on one hand and Despotism on the other. The Anglo-Saxon race is developing this principle. What is wanted is what we have not got yet. Organization of the better elements. The worse element has been well organized. The political parties in Canada are just as bad in their small way as the political parties in other countries. What the ordinary citizen wants in municipal matters is a man who can say "a plague o' both your houses." This Club idea has this advantage. It is open to all theoretically. Practically notorious schemers, faddists, and cranks would be ostracized. The decent members would leave them in the cold where they ought to be. Those who belong to the Club would get, besides, some value for their money. Properly and economically managed it could be made to pay. The younger men could be attracted and learn the science of fair government instead of joining hostile political clubs where they are taught the most approved methods of log-rolling.

At all events whether this Utopia is ever arrived at the time has come in Toronto when the better classes must unite. Unless they deliberately prefer to see their city ruined, they must agree to take turns to mount guard. To save the rest of their property they must sacrifice their time and a little of their money. It is their fault that things are as they are. They themselves are the sufferers. What is property in Toronto worth to-day? Look at the local tax rates. The public school system as conducted is legalized robbery. Unless our merchants and bankers and tradesmen wish to continue to keep a horde of greedy suckers they must join hands, organize, select men for each ward—canvass and plump for them—and thus make a beginning to get the neces-