

THE grinding tax laid by funeral fashions on mourning and sometimes destitute households has been attacked with spirit by the Rev. Mr. Burton of the Northern Congregational Church. May success attend his efforts. The "Bystander" had brought under his notice the case of a widow left penniless, and barely able by her labour to gain bread for herself and her children, who had incurred a debt of over thirty dollars for funeral fripperies. If anywhere, vanity ought to veil its face in presence of death. Yet it is now the fashion to publish in the newspapers catalogues of the floral offerings. Is the clay which is carried to the grave the man, or is it not? If it is, the burial service is a mockery. If it is not, why lavish money and heap decorations on it as though it were? But some day these questions will be settled by the victory of cremation, which evidently begins to gain ground, and has just obtained recognition from the law courts in England, over the revolting practice of protracting the process of decay by coffin burial, while, at the same time, the hideous risk is incurred of burying somebody alive.

THE President of University College in a forcible but temperate and dignified letter to the Minister of Education, casts upon that functionary the responsibility of introducing co-education, if co-education is to be introduced. For himself he has done his duty to the institution of which he is the head, by stating the objections to this great change. It may be added that he has given us what above all things we want—an example of a little moral courage. Had he been on the side of innovation, his long experience would have been triumphantly cited by its advocates as a weighty testimony in their favour; as he is not, he is a fossil and a dotard. No argument, perhaps, is more likely to weigh with a political Minister of Education than the fact, of which Mr. Ross may rest assured, that at the crowded meeting of the University Literary Society held in the Convocation Hall last Friday evening, when the subject was Co-education, the sympathy both of the general audience and of the students was unmistakably with the opposition. The frontispiece of our lively friend, the *'Varsity*, therefore, no more represents the general opinion of the students than, it is to be hoped, its name represents their tastes. The question runs up into larger questions. Are women to enter what have hitherto been male professions? If they are, it would seem to follow, as an economical necessity, that they should be educated with men. Yet, unless all regard for the delicacy of female character is to be given to the winds, reasonable precautions ought to be taken. It is too much to ask us to assume that the whole world has been out of its senses in believing that there could ever be any peril in the unrestrained intercourse of youth of the two sexes, and scoffs at prudence come strangely from those who are bringing in special Bills to prevent schoolmasters from seducing their female pupils. The discussion has elicited some important criticisms from high practical authorities on the complacent assumption that the mixture of girls with boys in High Schools, or in any schools, after the age of ten or eleven, does no injury to the female character. The effects of the system are marked in the States, and, as not a few observers believe, for evil. If the final education of women is not to be professional but general, the part of the woman in life being different from that of the man, it would seem that the final education too ought to be different. Variety, not monotony, will be conducive to the wealth of marriage. But to direct the aspirations of women away from marriage to the path of intellectual ambition is the tendency, and even the object, of the whole movement. There are things in American life about which nobody writes, yet which everybody sees. We seem destined to have some of our Canadian maidens turned into counterparts of the Third Sex, declining maternity, and knowing how to avoid it. But we show no bigotry or cowardice in desiring to limit and guard as much as possible experiments which may involve peril, not only to home and home affections—that is, to all that is best on earth—but as the tendency of things in the States shows, to the vitality of our race.

AMIDST "uproarious merriment," to quote the phrase of the *Evening Telegram*, the Local House has passed a measure altering the political relations between the sexes. An American State Legislature the other day passed a measure which, as the Governor said, would practically have subverted marriage, with a merriment still more uproarious, as it was inspired, according to the account, not only by a polished hilarity, but by visits to the bar. In the American case, the Governor protected the community from the consequences of a tipsy freak by interposing his veto; but here we have no such protection, nor have we the salutary practice of submitting constitutional amendments to the people. The place of those invaluable safeguards is filled among us by the obsolete and illusory forms of a monarchical system which has practically been long defunct. Our government is less conservative than that of our democratic neighbours,

because the conservative parts of it, instead of being realities, like those in the States, are fictions. The Local Premier voted against his recorded convictions in deference to what he calls the will of the people; that is, to the voice of the clique which happens to be close to his ear. The opinion of the people has not in any way been taken on the subject. It is, perhaps, as good an argument as any other in favour of female suffrage that no woman, if she were put at the head of affairs, could show less of political nerve than Mr. Mowat. He is a very worthy man and would consent to nothing, if he could help it, corrupt or wrong; but woe betide any public interest or principle committed to his keeping if he fancies that a breath of unpopularity is to be incurred in its defence. The bones of the Roman sentinel at Pompeii are found upon his post. Mr. Mowat in the sentinel's situation would have shown no such military stolidity; perhaps he would have requested Mr. Fraser to take his place for a few minutes. But the blame rests not on the man but on the system. To get into Parliament a candidate must first lay down his mental independence at the feet of a caucus, and then he must go through a process of fawning, flattery and false profession, which leaves him but half a man.

THAT the Orange Bill would be voted down was an admitted certainty. In truth, if there were not a large majority against Orange incorporation, Orangeism itself would scarcely be able to show good and substantial reason for its existence. It is wanted to face with fortitude a case of supreme need. It is wanted once more, in face of a host superior in numbers, to shut the gates of Derry. The necessity is a sad one. It would be far better, as every good citizen and every right-minded man must feel, if government on the regular political agencies, apart from any special league or society, could effectually protect us against sectarian and tribal domination. Unhappily both of the factions and the leaders of both are slaves to the Catholic vote. On the very day on which the Orange Bill was rejected the Liberal leader paid servile homage to the power at whose hands he hopes to receive office, though it has been, through its whole history, the mortal enemy of its principles. Nothing stands, practically, between the community and Catholic ascendancy but the strength of the Orange Association. Perfect equality in every respect the Catholics have; they have even privilege, for they enjoy separate schools, and in Quebec their church is established; but they want more; here as in Australia, and everywhere else, they want to rule, and at the same time to use the Colonial Legislature as the engine for attacks on the Union and the Protestant civilization of Great Britain. To declaim against them is idle and unjust; they pursue their natural objects, and no doubt in sincerity of heart; but to resist them is both lawful and expedient; it is expedient perhaps, in the real and ultimate interest of the masses of our Catholic fellow-citizens themselves, fully as much as in our own. Let the Orange Association be as political as it may, it cannot practically be more political than the Roman Catholic Church, from which nobody thinks of withholding incorporation. We shall see whether Orangeism will be able to set itself free from the fatal leadership of men whose only object is to sell its vote, and act once more in an independent spirit for its proper objects. If it can, it may yet render to liberty and Protestant civilization a service which, it is devoutly to be hoped, will be the last.

It has been said that nothing gives so much pleasure to a rural neighbourhood as a murder, unless it is a case of *crim. con.* committed by a clergyman. It may safely be said that in the political sphere nothing gives so much pleasure as a scandal. This luxury of emotion the Ontario Legislature is now enjoying to full perfection. It seems that some studious but cynical observers have come to the conclusion that members of the Legislature were approachable by money, and acting on that preposterous assumption, have been led into a trap. It would be wrong to anticipate the results of an investigation which will be in progress when this paragraph goes to press. The "Bystander," for his part, though duly scandalized, cannot affect to be startled. To put up the offices and emoluments of government as the prizes of a perpetual struggle between two unprincipled factions is the way, if there is a way, to produce corruption of every kind. When Sir Hugh Allan drew up, for the instruction of his American partners in the Pacific Railway enterprise, a schedule of the leading public men, with the price of each set opposite to his name, he might be mistaken in particular instances, but as to the general fact he spoke from the experience of a long life.

BYSTANDER.

THE miseries of the poor in England are exciting a sentimental interest among the upper classes in London, whetted by the thrilling record of Mr. G. R. Sims' new book, "How the Poor Live," of which no fewer than 20,000 copies have been already sold.