

ONTARIO AGITATED.

Local politics in the sister province of Ontario are decidedly agitated, and the outlook is not very comforting for either of the old political parties. Besides the Patrons of Industry, who are taking an active part in politics, there is the Protestant Protective Association, which is also in the field, and lately elected a candidate by a large majority. The P.P.A., as the association is called for short, is an organization which bases its constitution upon the belief that the Catholics are aggressive and must be checked, and that they are obtaining too many privileges from the powers that be. The association is not a native born Canadian institution. It was imported from the United States, and first found a foothold at Windsor on the boundary opposite the city of Detroit. The oath or pledge which each member must subscribe to, is a very strong and bigoted one, even going to far as to declare that the member will not countenance the election of a Catholic for any public position. The association carries its warfare into municipal election matters, as well as provincial and Dominion politics. Some municipal councils in Ontario have been nominated and controlled by this association, though it is worthy of note that at Windsor, where the P.P.A. formerly controlled the municipal situation, the new council for 1894 was elected in a straight and victorious fight against the association. The people of Windsor have evidently become aroused and have decided to sit on the P.P.A.'s.

Though there seems to be a good deal of alarm over the movements of the Protestant Protective association, we can hardly believe that the organization can ever attain to any lasting influence in the country. In a few sections there may be local causes which will give it temporary strength, but it can hardly prove to be anything more than a passing wave of sentiment, discernible perhaps to a considerable extent in some quarters, but not general. As Principal Grant says, the principles of the association are too narrow and mean to gain for it any great influence in Canada. In this liberal age, we cannot believe that any great number of the people of Ontario will come under the banner of bigotry and intolerance which has been unfurled by the P.P.A. It is a decidedly retrograde movement, altogether unworthy of our country and its institutions, and out of the natural element in this age of civilization. Educated Canada should not be the country to harbor intolerance in any form. Our best wish for the P.P.A. is that it may die young.

Editorial Notes.

A country merchant complained to THE COMMERCIAL the other day about the difficulty of getting small parcels enclosed in cases from wholesale houses. Frequently when ordering goods in the city, he had arranged to have small parcels sent to wholesale warehouses where he had made larger purchases, with the object of having the parcels enclosed, but they have almost invariably been left out, and had to be sent on singly afterwards. Speaking to a wholesale dealer about this he said they had

always experienced difficulty in securing enclosures. They were frequently asked by customers to send parcels to other warehouses in the city, to be enclosed, but very often the enclosures were not made. He said the trouble is with the packers, who seem to be opposed to accepting parcels from other houses, to be enclosed with shipments being made up to customers. It is an accommodation to the customer to have these enclosures, and the warehouses should compel the packers to be a little more accommodating in this matter. They should be made to understand that the interest of the customer is of more importance than their whimsical objections to making enclosures.

THE recent municipal elections throughout the country have called attention to reforms in municipal matters. One most frequently mentioned is the ward system in cities and towns. Considerable opposition is now being raised to the ward system. THE COMMERCIAL has heretofore expressed its opinion in opposition to the plan of electing aldermen and town councillors to represent wards or divisions. We are pleased to see that the municipal commission, which has been taking evidence in Ontario for some time upon the important subject of municipal government, has declared against the ward system. The ward representative is dependent for support from his own ward only, and he will place his ward interests against the interests of the city at large. He will strive to obtain the best terms for his ward, regardless of the general issue, in some cases even by unfair means. The ward system leads to bickerings and jealousies, and cultivates sectional interests and corner cliques. We believe better men could be obtained to serve the public if the ward system were dropped, and "ward politics" thereby done away with.

It appears from recent English advices, that the farm pupil agency business is not dead yet. Most English settlers have a good deal to learn when they come to this country, with the desire of following farming, but it is altogether unnecessary for them to pay to secure this knowledge. In this country they can get fair wages while they are "learning farming." The young man who cannot make himself sufficiently useful to secure fair wages while he is seeking practical experience in Canadian agricultural methods, is no use in the country. The fact would be proof positive that he had not gumption enough to learn anything. Of course these facts are not generally known in the old country, and sometimes young men are induced to pay a sum of money to be instructed in farming, or rather to be humbugged. The best way to learn farming in Canada is to hire out for a year or so, with a good farmer, receiving wages while gaining the required experience. There are plenty of openings of this class for young men who are not afraid of work, and who will take hold and make themselves useful, and ten chances to one they will gain more experience in this way than if they paid for a course of training in agriculture.

FREQUENTLY some alleged economist comes out with a long-winded article to prove that the world is fast rushing toward a condition

of starvation, and that the production of wheat will soon be short of requirements. This is poor satisfaction to the farmer who has of late years been obliged to accept low prices for his wheat, owing to some extent, though not entirely, to the fact that there has been over production of this cereal. There is vast room for the increase of the wheat area on this continent, and even in the Old World there is room for an increased area. It is surprising, when we think of it, what a small portion of the earth's surface is cultivated. It is said that even in densely populated India, there is considerable land which could be turned to wheat, if the crop could be made more remunerative. In Russia there is a vast area of fine black cereal land uncultivated. There are vast districts of Asia, outside of Siberia, where the soil is productive, but cultivation is limited. In Siberia agriculture is in its infancy, though a great deal of that country is quite suitable for cereal crops. Africa and South America have only a trifling area of their surface under cultivation. Coming nearer home, it is said that only one-eleventh of the state of North Dakota is under cultivation, and about one-seventh of the state of Minnesota. In our own country we know that the cultivated area is only like a drop in the ocean as compared with the total arable land. Where agriculture is carried on with a view to making the soil produce the most abundantly, it is surprising what a vast population can be maintained from the products of a limited area. Belgium is the most densely populated country in Europe, yet Belgium, with only one crop in a year, can export a large quantity of agricultural products annually. India, with her teeming millions, exports wheat and rice and other food products on a large scale. Great Britain imports agricultural products largely, but this is largely unnecessary. If the vacant areas were carefully cultivated, the imports could be vastly reduced or cut off entirely in many lines. The population of Great Britain is not so dense as Belgium, and the latter country exports food products to England. Over a large portion of the earth's surface two and even three crops can be produced in a year. This is a fact that is often overlooked, though it appears that almost as much can be produced in one crop in some of the northern countries where the soil is worked carefully, as can be obtained from two crops in the year from the warm countries. The soil in England, for instance, will easily produce as much wheat from one crop, as can be obtained in India from two crops.

MANITOBA farmers are given a great deal of gratuitous advice as to how they should farm and what they should grow, even by persons whose knowledge of farming would not fill a very large book. Most people resent lectures as to how they should manage their business, especially when it comes from those who really can know very little about the particular branch of business in question. It seems that the lectures and advice to Manitoba farmers from all sorts of sources, as to how they should run their farms, is just becoming a little tiresome. Politicians and other public speakers, and scribblers who know nothing about agriculture, are ever ready to tender their advice to the

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