

Two Great
Defeats.

Last Friday and Monday were bad days for the Dominion Government. The bye-elections in Montreal Centre and Jacques Cartier resulted in severe defeats for the Conservatives. How strong is the ill-favour with which the Government is regarded in Montreal is seen in the fact that Sir William Hingston was beaten by Mr. James McShane, and that a Conservative majority of 1,214 in 1891, is converted into a Liberal majority of 336 in 1895. Montreal has several reasons for rebuking Sir Mackenzie Bowell and his *confrères* and the city has taken advantage of the present opportunity to do so, hoping the rebuke may have a chastening effect ere it is too late. Montreal's most influential and respected citizens have been treated with contemptuous indifference by the Ministers, and besides this Mr. Curran was pitch-forked on to the bench where he was not wanted. But it is most unfortunate that Sir William Hingston should have been the medium through which this rebuke was administered. But the country cannot afford to reject the services of a man of Sir William's mental and moral calibre, and, accordingly his appointment to the Senate, which was announced yesterday, is a matter for wide congratulation.

The Government's
Millstone

The elections in Montreal Centre and Jacques Cartier have shown that the Manitoba school question is a millstone about the neck of the Government. These two decisive and sweeping victories for the Liberals, following hard upon the Government's defeat in Cardwell and its narrow escape in North Ontario, will impress upon the Ministers the fact, so clearly recognized by Sir John Macdonald, that nothing is to be gained by subserviency to the French. A Premier who is strong in the English-speaking Provinces will never lack a good contingent of French members to lend him support. There is little doubt now that from a party point of view the Remedial Order was a mistake. The French members of the Government insisted upon it. Had Sir Mackenzie refused to be led by them and appealed to the country he would probably have carried all the Provinces, save, possibly, Quebec, by large majorities. In that case the French members would have scrambled over each other in their eagerness to get back to the Conservative side, and Messrs Caron and Ouimet would have led the scramblers. But now although the Government has staked its very existence on its French policy the French and other Roman Catholics do not care a button, and vote straight against the men who have imperilled so much for their sakes. It is pretty evident that the Roman Catholic laity are not keenly interested in the Manitoba School question. We are informed that a large number of Roman Catholics would like to see Separate Schools not only not re-established in Manitoba but abolished where they at present exist in other parts of the Dominion.

Montreal
Rebels.

Now that it is pretty clear that the Remedial Order is hampering the Conservative party instead of furthering its interests some of the party's more prominent journals are practically advocating that the Order be abandoned. But this is easier said than done. The Toronto World declares in its emphatic way that the Dominion Cabinet and its school policy will have to be reconstructed. More outspoken still is The World's Montreal correspondent. He says that nothing short of entire reconstruction can save the Conservative party from utter disaster. The opinion in Montreal according to him is that Sir Mackenzie Bowell "should give place to some other man, and it must be said that to-day the name

of the Canadian High Commissioner is heard on every side." It is believed in Montreal that Sir Charles Tupper "could so reconstruct the Cabinet as to insure a complete victory for the Conservative party at the approaching general election." Sir Mackenzie and his Cabinet are evidently without many friends in Montreal at present, and it is doubtful if the appointment of Mr. Robert White as Collector of Customs—which is at last officially announced—or the filling of three of the dozen or so long-standing vacancies in the Senate will do much towards lessening the Ministry's unpopularity in Canada's metropolis. These appointments come too late. The trouble is that the able men in the Ministry are sore let and hindered by their shortsighted and dilly-dallying *confrères*.

Guilty
Indifference.

La Minerve in commenting upon the great Liberal victories in Montreal Centre and in Jacques Cartier weeps over the "guilty indifference" of the Quebec Roman Catholics concerning the Manitoba school question. It deplores the sad consequences these two elections may have with respect to the settlement of the question. La Minerve sees that the falling off of the Roman Catholics "will naturally have the effect of detaching from the Ministerial party on that question a good number of Protestant members, who will not care, according to the common expression, to show themselves more Catholic than the Catholics themselves. Although opposed to the remedial order, they were ready to follow the Government, at the risk of losing their own seat in the Commons, rather than allow the Liberals to come into power. What is the use for them now to expose themselves to sure defeat if they see that the sacrifice which they were ready to make will profit neither the cause of the minorities, the Government, nor the Catholics? Such is the language of the Protestant Conservative press in all the provinces, and it must be admitted that it is not entirely void of a certain logic."

Ethics vs.
Religion.

Our old and esteemed correspondent, "W," of Ottawa, whose letter on the Separate School war we published on the 27th September last, has written to us again on the subject. In his former letter he maintained that it is impossible to teach religion in the schools, and that ethics must be substituted for it. "W" is more than ever convinced that he is in the right. He says: "Erasing in clergymen or others for an hour or two now and then, will never do. The difficulty may be lessened a little where Separate Schools are provided for Roman Catholics and Protestants; but Protestants differ among themselves very greatly; and as it would be inconvenient that the same day and hour should be allowed for the absence of all the pupils from other school work, and each sect would require a separate room, your suggestion of voluntary schools seems the only alternative. It would be unjust to compel a man to pay taxes to support a school to which he could not conscientiously send his children, in Manitoba or in any other Province. Let us then leave the teaching of religion to parents and clergymen; but by all means let every school teach morality, as suggested in my former letter, the teachers carefully explaining the Commandments and Laws I have mentioned, so that the pupils may respectively apply them to their conduct in that state of life into which it shall please God to call them."

Toronto's
Mayorality
Contest.

The field is now cleared for Messrs. Shaw and Fleming. We cannot congratulate the city of Toronto on the fact that the only possible choice is between these two candidates. The main arguments in favour of Mr. Fleming are that his legacies to the city when he left office were the