

Mr. Laurier's
Tour.

As we predicted, Conservatives have been quite as eager as the Liberals to see and to hear the distinguished Leader of the Dominion Opposition, who is now making a tour of the Province of Ontario. He has already visited many places, and his reception has invariably been enthusiastic and his meetings all that could be desired in point of numbers and in attention. These great gatherings of the people have been conspicuous for their freedom from disturbances of any kind. The ubiquitous interlocutor has been present, it is true, but his questions have not been very embarrassing, and Mr. Laurier has always proved equal to the occasion. It is evident that there is a strong and general desire to hear what he has to say on the great questions of the day, and the people are prepared to give him every opportunity to say his say without let or hindrance. The Liberals must be on their guard against being over ready to accept as a tribute exclusively to the party and its principles the immense enthusiasm aroused by Mr. Laurier in this interesting tour. Much of it is for the man himself, apart altogether from his political opinions. This was made manifest in Toronto on Saturday night last when Conservatives cheered him as heartily as those who are his own followers and supporters. His reception in the Capital of the Province, though there was no great meeting to attract the people, was quite as enthusiastic as that of any place visited in Ontario. Altogether, Mr. Laurier has reason to feel that he commands the respect of the Dominion, and that he enjoys the personal devotion of a very large number of Canadians.

A Man with a
Past.

At Kingston Mr. Laurier was joined by Mr. Tarte. We are informed that he made a good impression in Kingston. Mr. Tarte is a man with a past. This perhaps makes him an interesting personage. But whilst he may add to the interest of Mr. Laurier's meetings it is very doubtful if that added interest is not gained at too great a cost. It is quite easy to understand that he possesses abundance of material for making effective speeches against the Ottawa Government, and the fact that he cannot make use of this material without proclaiming his own misdeeds does not seem at all to act as a restraint. On the contrary, he seems to find it very funny. The Liberals should bear in mind that Mr. Tarte may possibly become a Conservative again before long, and it behoves them to follow the advice of the wise man who counselled us to live with our friends as if some day they might become our enemies. We don't wish to be too hard upon Mr. Tarte. An apologist for him might say with considerable truth that though he may not be quite clean he is clean enough for the House of Commons—as some one remarked of the member for Northumberland. At any rate he deserves our thanks for the great exposures of 1891.

Principal Grant's
Views.

The interest taken in the Manitoba School Question is by no means confined to Canada. We learn from a member of the staff of *The Globe* that the letters of Principal Grant on this great subject have been in wide request. The Department of Education, Whitehall, and Mr. W. T. Harris, Commissioner of Education for the United States, have written for complete sets of the letters, and many of the leading journals in England and the United States and also in Australia have devoted much attention to the Principal's opinions on the subject. Religious education in the schools is rapidly becoming a question of immense moment, and Canada's action in the matter is watched with close attention.

"Compromise or
Burst."

The extreme men on both sides have said their say on the Manitoba schools for a good while, but—if we mistake not—the sober sense of the Canadian people will settle the question by compromise. On the one side, the Hierarchy takes its stand upon the principle that the State has nothing to do with education but to supply the funds. The Church has a divine right in the matter, and the divine cannot be discounted. Bishop Laffêche represents this attitude in its best form. He knows nothing of the nineteenth century and takes good care to read only what is written on his own side; and as he is a good man, sincere and pious, he has his following, and he must be reckoned with, like any other elemental force. To argue with him is a waste of time. He belongs to the seventeenth century, and is willing to suffer and—what is of more consequence—to make others suffer, rather than bate one jot of what he calls his principles. On the other side, we find Mr. Martin and the forcible-feeble writers of the *Winnipeg Tribune*. They, too, stand upon "principle" and lecture the older Provinces of the Dominion on their timidity in having so long bowed the knee to Baal. The wild and woolly West intends to do otherwise. The State, according to them, has everything to do with education, and the Church, at the present, nothing, but to obey the Government, so long, that is, as the Government is in right hands. Religious forms may be allowed, but in such shape that they may be called a farce and therefore discontinued after the people see that they are only a farce. Between these two extremes stand the great body of the Canadian people, whose will, in the long run, is sure to prevail. On the one hand, they will not go to Canossa. On the other hand, they will not descend to P. P. A.-ism, nor will they consent to drive religion out of the schools, though they have no notion of identifying religion with any one Church or any set of prescribed exercises. They are far from intending to do any injustice to Protestant or Roman Catholic, and they wish to respect even the prejudices of zealots. They know perfectly well that in a country like Canada, in connection with a question like this, the issue must be "Compromise or burst."

Compromise

Is this an unprincipled attitude on the part of the average Canadian, who is kicked impartially by the extremists? Not at all, though he is sometimes so assailed with mock heroics that he fancies himself a great sinner. He desires to guide himself by common sense rather than by tall talk. He sees that in a country like this we must above everything else be practical; that, in the matter under discussion, the one thing needful is good schools, and that, in order to get these, all parties concerned must be conciliated rather than antagonized. The hierarchical may be a fine theory, or the secularists may be all right in "principle"; but what of that if either extreme is unsuited for Canada or for Manitoba, at present? The French doctor was delighted with his brilliant operation, and it was a mere incident that the patient died under his knife. John Bull takes a different view. He would rather have the patient live, operation or no operation, and Miss Canada comes largely from that robust if somewhat unscientific stock. It follows from this that the Government at Ottawa had better not drive too rapidly. If they do, the people will not follow them. The facts of the case have not yet been presented by an impartial Commission. Mr. Wade, in his interminable pamphlet, seems to think that it is only necessary to prove that the