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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

DISCUSSION is still rife in regard to the case of Professor Workman and the Board of Regents of Victoria University. It is evident that the latter assumed a very serious responsibility in placing the Professor in a position which compelled him to resign his chair for no other offence than that of honestly differing from the members of the Board in regard to certain questions of Scripture interpretation. We say nothing of the fact that the point at issue was one in regard to which, as our correspondent "Presbyter" indirectly made very clear in his letter of two weeks ago, Professor Workman had no doubt had far better opportunities for forming a correct opinion than any of those who condemned his views as heretical. But while it is clear that every such question between a teacher in a public institution and the board of management must be decided on its own merits, further considerations, suggested in part by "Presbyter's" letter, shows that the "merits" in such a matter may cover a much wider area than might at first thought be supposed. In the case in question, for instance, one consideration that seems to enter fairly into the merits, is that of the effect which the decision reached may, and indeed must, have in either encouraging or discouraging freedom of investigation and honesty of expression in the case of other teachers. In other words, it is impossible to dissociate the act of the Victoria Board in dismissing Professor Workman for the crime of having reached, in the opinion of the Board, a wrong conclusion in regard to a matter of interpretation, from the effect which that act is adapted to produce upon the minds of other teachers occupying similar positions. It is surely highly desirable in the interests of truth that those whose especial duty it is to investigate and to guide others in their investigations should be placed under the best possible conditions for finding and teaching truth, or what they believe to be such, without fear of consequences. Could anything be more disastrous to truth-seeking, and we may add with all reverence, more inconsistent with the example and spirit of the great Teacher, which have been the mightiest

inspiration of truth-seekers in every age, than to give every student and teacher in a given college or university to understand that the tenure of his position—to fit himself for which may have cost him many of the best years of his life—depends, not upon his faithfulness in searching for, or his honesty in expounding the truth, but upon his reaching certain conclusions absolutely in harmony with the cut-and-dried opinions of certain of those who have gone before him, or upon his scrupulously concealing from those who are looking to him for guidance the fact that he has reached different conclusions on certain points from those which he is under obligation to teach them as truth. Is not the dismissal of Professor Workman, under the circumstances, a distinct temptation to dissimulation, to others similarly situated—a distinct warning to all such that they must beware how they venture to examine and think for themselves, or must dissemble in the presence of others?

ONE of the most important subjects in regard to which legislation is promised in the rather meagre list of topics mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, with which the proceedings of the Ontario Legislature were opened on Thursday last, is that of payment of public officials by fees. We do not suppose that any very radical reform in the matter is to be looked for at the hands of Premier Mowat, who has, if we remember correctly, on a previous occasion expressed himself as favourable to the fee method within certain limits. Possibly the promised legislation may take the shape of an attempt to prescribe the proper limits. But it is encouraging to those who believe the whole system of payment by fees instead of by salary to be wrong in principle, to know that the subject is to be brought up for discussion in any form. The tendency of all such discussion is in the right direction. It turns on the light. It brings the subject before the minds of the thoughtful both within and without the House. There is something so manifestly unfair in the arrangement whereby one public officer receives from quasi public sources and by Government appointment say \$6,000 or \$8,000 for the performance of duties no more arduous, and requiring no higher order of preparation or of ability, than those for which another officer receives not more than one-third or one-fourth of that sum, that it is surprising that such an anomaly should have been permitted under popular government to exist so long. The only available argument in its support, so far as we can see, is that derived from the greater inducement to efficiency and faithfulness offered by the fee system. But this argument proves too much. Its logical result would be such an enlargement of the fee system as would not be contemplated for a moment by such an administration as that of which Mr. Mowat has so long been head. It is surely a libel upon public officials as a class to imply that they cannot be trusted to perform faithfully the duties of any position to which they may be appointed at fair salaries. We observe elsewhere, as well as in Ontario, some disposition to reform this old system gradually out of existence. A Bill has been introduced in the U.S. Senate to pay the district attorneys of the United States by regular salaries, instead of by fees. This is regarded as the beginning of a movement in that direction among our neighbours. We shall hope to see Mr. Mowat's measure taken advantage of to ventilate the whole question.

AS we expected, though to a greater degree than we expected, the Government has thus far been successful in the bye-elections. Up to date the Conservatives have lost but one seat of those formerly held, the Liberals four. The former anticipate, on apparently good grounds, further triumphs in those elections which are yet to come. Some of the causes of this change in the verdict of the constituencies are not far to seek, though we doubt whether it can be referred mainly to any one cause, or to the same cause or causes in the different constituencies. As a matter of course the too familiar cry of bribery of individuals and of constituencies is raised by the defeated party. Nor are the victors any less ready to account for any advantage gained by their opponents as due to the same kind of argument. It would be a happy thing for

the country were the indications such that the onlooker could safely ascribe these mutual accusations to party prejudice or malice. To do that is well nigh impossible. But leaving out of the question the uncertain operation of corrupt methods and influences on either side, it is not difficult to trace some of the more legitimate influences which have contributed to the result. Two are especially prominent. In the first place, there can be no doubt that the taint of disloyalty which the Government has, whether justly or unjustly, succeeded in fastening upon its opponents and their policy, has had a powerful and probably the most powerful effect in bringing about the changes. As an old-time Liberal observed the other day, the Liberal party has got itself into a position which is one of the most unfortunate conceivable for a political party, that, viz., in which its exponents find themselves obliged to place themselves upon the defensive the moment they take the platform. The second sinister influence, and one which has operated with scarcely less power, is that of the Mercier alliance of last election, viewed in the light of the recent revelations. No doubt the feeling of disgust, and in many cases of strong religious antipathy, which was stirred up by Mr. Mercier's Jesuit Estates Bill, and by his masquerading as the champion of Roman Catholicism and French Nationalism combined, intensified the effect, otherwise the prompt repudiation of him and his "boodling" by the leading organs of the Liberal party might have had more weight in the mind of the ultra Protestant portion of the electorate. Some of our readers may be disposed to think that in thus speaking we are ignoring the chief cause of the Government triumph, viz., its National Policy. They may possibly be right, but we cannot think so. The very fact of the presence just now of representatives of the Government at Washington for the purpose of ascertaining the terms on which a reciprocity treaty could be obtained is a convincing proof that the members of the Government themselves do not feel that they can rely on a policy of protection to secure the popular favour. Any other inference with reference to their object in going to Washington must be drawn at the expense of their sincerity and veracity. The loyalty cry and the Mercier revelations have been the chief forces in increasing the Government majority, and these forces will almost surely still further swell that majority in the contests yet to come.

THE decisive day is drawing near in Quebec. With its approach both parties are redoubling their efforts, and the contest is waxing hotter and hotter. We have not from the first concealed our opinion that the defeat of Mr. Mercier under the circumstances would be no easy matter, even with the damning evidences of his guilt before the electors. For that reason, as well as from a conviction that the spirit of the constitution was violated and an unfair advantage taken—unfair we mean from the party point of view—we have never ceased to regret the course which Lieut.-Governor Angers saw fit to take. We observe that some of those who most strongly approved his action on the ground that desperate diseases demand desperate remedies, are beginning to admit the possibility of Mr. Mercier's success at the polls. He himself declares that he has no doubt on the point, though that may be but the common expedient, used for effect. But suppose for a moment that he should win, what would follow? Mr. Angers would be placed in a most embarrassing position. Would he accept the situation, confess that his resources were exhausted, his usefulness gone, and retire, discomfited, from the field? Or would he strain the constitution still further by some other and yet more violent exercise of arbitrary power? To take the latter course would be to run a serious risk of civil war. The moral is that it does not pay to do even political evil that good may come. An English governor would, probably, have retained his faith in constitutional methods, even in the face of such a betrayal of trust as that perpetrated by Mr. Mercier and some of his colleagues. He would not have put the members of one political party into a position in which they would be compelled to choose between submitting to what they regarded as a gross outrage to thrust their party from power, and seeming to condone a great political and moral crime. If it be true, as cur-