

means that the Assembly must either grant the request or take a more real responsibility in supplying the needs and controlling the affairs of the University. This latter course we believe to be impossible, therefore the other issue ought to be faced calmly and generously. Even then we believe that a real and living connection can still be maintained between the Church and the University, and as the Assembly has never exercised effective control over its affairs the change is not so radical in fact as it appears on paper. Those who cannot accept this view have the opportunity and duty of propounding some scheme that will meet the difficulties of the case.

POPULAR GOVERNORS.

The announcement that Lord Grey will remain in Canada till the end of 1910, thus completing his full term of six years as Governor-General, will be received with unalloyed satisfaction. No person occupying the position has come into closer touch with the Canadian people, and has shown a greater interest in all that concerns the welfare of this country. The success of the Quebec Tercentenary, the greatest historical celebrations which Canada has ever witnessed, was largely due to Lord Grey's energy and enthusiasm; and in many other ways he has fulfilled the requirements of his position as representing the King in the most important of the British colonies. It is a satisfaction to know that His Excellency's experience has been of such a pleasant character that he is willing to extend his stay to the limit provided for under the constitution.

Speaking of the occupants of Government House, Canada is to have the opportunity of welcoming shortly a former resident at Rideau Hall, in the person of Lady Aberdeen, who comes in June to attend the meeting of the International Council of Women at Toronto, an organization in which she has always taken a very warm interest, and of which, if we mistake not, she was the founder. Lord and Lady Aberdeen when in this country were exceedingly popular, and were distinguished for the sympathy and support they were ever ready to give to all charitable and benevolent enterprises.

In the position they now occupy as the representatives of royalty in Ireland, they are no less popular. A writer in the Belfast Witness speaks of them as "beneficent fairies" "fitting about the country doing good," and places them first among the viceroys who have represented the sovereign in Ireland. To have so completely gained the confidence of the Irish is no small tribute to the qualifications which Lord and Lady Aberdeen possess. Lady Aberdeen, who will be accompanied by other prominent members of the Women's Council, is sure of a warm welcome at Toronto, Ottawa, and any other places she may visit during her stay.

"The Natural History of the Cuckoo," which bird lovers and students will find in *The Living Age* for May 1, is full of out-of-the-way and little understood facts relating to one of the most peculiar of birds. It is delightfully written, in a style free from technicalities.

FUNERAL REFORM.

Among the many meaningless tyrannies of conventionality, lavish and costly funerals are among the most apparent. The absurdity and wickedness of much of the expenditure connected with them is conceded on all sides, and yet such a potent thing is fashion that little or no effort is made to bring about an obvious and much-needed reform.

Well-to-do families have their resources taxed if one of their members has been called away. Retrenchment in expenditure is necessary to make up for the inroads occasioned by the costly demands of a fashionable funeral. What must it be in the case of hard-working and respectable mechanics and others who find that rigid economy must be a daily and a constant practice if they are to enjoy the ordinary comforts of life, and to live honestly. To them a lingering illness is a double sorrow. Much might be done if not to save the imperilled life, at all events to alleviate suffering and smooth the passage to the grave, had they the means; but their means are limited and their desires to benefit the sufferer are often unfulfilled. The end comes. Death has done its work, and the saddened home has an additional burden needlessly placed upon it, by the tyrannous dictates of fashion.

Relatives and friends are generally willing to be helpful in the time of trial. It would be shameful were it otherwise. Then comes the lavish display of ghastly funeral decoration, from the costly coffin with its cheap tinsel, the barbaric crape, the conventional mourning attire, and all the artificial display of the trappings of woe possible. The average funeral of the day is at variance with good taste, which in times of deep distress is always simple and unostentatious. It is no evidence of respect for the memory of the dead and esteem for the living to make a funeral procession as nearly as possible a histrionic spectacle. As long as there is a desire for vulgar display, these barbarous funeral customs will continue. In country districts the respectability of the funeral is sometimes estimated by the numbered vehicles in the procession.

The religious exercises in connection with funerals are it is to be feared to some extent responsible for the bad taste and expensiveness of existing funeral customs. Of course a faithful minister will avail himself of every opportunity of preaching the gospel. It is fitting that the consolations of religion receive prominence on such occasions. How often are these religious services looked upon as a necessary part of the funeral ceremony, in fact as necessary as the gorgeous hearse in which the remains of the deceased are borne to the grave. Then the temptation to extravagant eulogy of the virtues of the deceased and an unwarranted anticipation of the final judgment is one which some preachers of funeral sermons have considerable difficulty in resisting. The chief reason why so many funerals take place on Sabbath is because a larger procession can be had on that rather than on any other day.

The principal difficulty in securing reform in our burial customs lies in making a beginning. Those in humbler circumstances of life cannot so effectively take the initiative. It requires courage to break the bonds of custom. Working people are not lacking in courage, but their efforts might be misunderstood. It might be imputed to want of proper feeling and respect for the memory of the dead, to have a plain funeral, or it might be attributed to stinginess, imputations people, especially in their circumstances, do not like to incur. Those occupying more prominent social spheres have it in their power to bring about a much-needed reform in the manner of burying the dead. Let a few such have interments conducted with a moderate and decorous simplicity, and many others would be found willing to follow their example. Christian principle and Christian feeling alike countenance the committing of "earth to earth and dust to dust" with becoming reverence and simplicity.

SERVED HIM RIGHT?

A writer who signs himself "Presbyterian" says in an exchange, that while attending one of the Episcopal churches the other Sabbath evening he "was astonished and annoyed, in common with many other Presbyterians who are in the habit of appearing there at evening service, to hear the young clergyman who officiated raise the old and feeble cry of the Episcopalians that there should only be one Church in the world, and that by reason of its purity, the Anglican." "Presbyterian" thinks that it was "the very opposite of fairness and good taste" for the young man to assume such a self-glorifying and ostentatious tone, knowing, as he did, that there were many present who belonged to "dissenting denominations." "Presbyterian" evidently feels hurt. Most people will say, served him right. Had he and the others been in their own churches their feelings would not have been wounded. Besides the young man could not reasonably be expected to leave the offensive paragraphs out of his sermon because some strangers dropped in who should have been in their own places of worship. He prepared his sermon for an Episcopalian congregation and if Presbyterians or Methodists were there they had no right to complain. The remedy for this kind of grievance is simple—worship in your own church.

The introduction of old-age pensions in Great Britain has been the means of incurring financial obligations which are not easily met. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his budget speech, announced a probable deficit of \$78,810,000. The old-age pensions and expenditure on the navy is responsible for most of this. New taxes will have to be imposed, and they are being arranged to fall as far as possible on the wealthy classes. Land values will be taxed, no doubt to the satisfaction of the single taxers. The national debt now amounts to \$2,770,506,545. Can it be a good thing to have such a large public debt? It is not considered well for individuals to be deeply in debt, and why nations?