

thought of in Quebec, and that on account of Riel the Half-breeds are damned in Ontario. Yet until Riel's trial is over Riel himself should not be hanged, even in the latter Province. I have hinted at a parallel between Riel and Lyon Mackenzie. This may be considered grossly unjust to Mackenzie by many to whom two apparently very lurid distinctions will suggest themselves at once. One, that Riel was a murderer at large before this last pose as a patriot. A second, that he has incited an Indian war. As to the first, if his guilt was unmistakable, the leaders of English-speaking Canadians in the Dominion condoned the crime. As to the second, it is an offence greater than was Lyon Mackenzie's call upon citizens of the United States, inasmuch as the Indians are inhuman foes. It is an offence the enormity of which possibly half-Indian Riel did not realize more than did the English-speaking generation preceding Lyon Mackenzie when it fought our white neighbours across the line with the help of Tecumseh.

While numbers of French-speaking Canadians may passively, and some actively, countenance Riel, it is not excusable and much less justifiable for English-speaking Canadians to therefore fling upon the whole race the onus of desiring to shield the arch-rebel from punishment. No respectable French-Canadian paper, to the best of my knowledge, has hinted at this. None of our volunteer battalions responded more cheerfully to the call to arms than the only two (I think) distinctive French Canadian battalions we have, the Montreal 65th and the Quebec Voltigeurs. What the French-speaking Minister of Militia has done the country knows. In return for this, many of us have accepted and advertised sectional and hare-brained utterances as representative of French-Canadian feeling and have retorted with insult to a million and a-half of people who are our countrymen, and the descendants of men who shed as much of their blood for the Union Jack as ever did their English-speaking fellow-Canadians.

This may seem an overdone way of putting things. It is the outcome of a keen realization of the harm that is being forced upon Canada by such throwing about of firebrands as noted at the outset of these remarks, and it is the outcome also of a keen admiration of much of the character of French-speaking Canadians. In the towns, where the French-speaking Canadian comes still in contact with the charitable idea rampant about Waterloo-time that one Englishman is as good as three Frenchmen, he may become more or less bigoted himself. But there can scarcely be to my mind a peasantry anywhere in the world more simple, manly, hospitable and whole-souled than the French-Canadian habitants of the country districts, still remote from friction with the ignorance and bigotry of many of the lower English-speaking classes of Canadians. In the United States, where the French-Canadian emigrant meets a more liberal-minded people, he becomes rapidly merged among his neighbours.

I cannot realize that in any public question in the last few years in our country, French-speaking Canadians, when not apprehensive of aggression themselves, have been less patriotic, less loyal to the Dominion or less grasping than the English-speaking Canadians who out-number them two to one, but who have in the Dominion Cabinet, which governs both races, ten representatives to the French-Canadian three.

Surely it is the sacred duty of every Canadian, whether French or English-speaking, to make the broadest allowance for the inborn prejudices of his neighbours of different tongue, to be sure that his own inborn prejudices are not his master.

P. D. Ross.

ECCLIESIASTICAL PARLIAMENTS.

For two weeks past the various ecclesiastical bodies have been prominently in public view. The annual assemblages of the different denominations have been held and their proceedings have attracted more or less public attention. The Anglican Synod of the Diocese of Toronto met in All Saints' Church, and was well attended, considerable interest attaching to various questions that came up for discussion. In the report presented by the Bishop it was stated that possibly owing to incomplete returns and other temporary causes, the progress made in recent years was somewhat interrupted during the year just closed. There had been a falling off in contributions to the Mission Fund. Attendance on public worship, at Sunday school, the number of baptisms and marriages had fallen slightly below the average. If there were dark shadings in the report they were relieved by indications of encouraging progress in other directions. The number of communicants and of those confirmed had largely increased. Contributions for parochial purposes had also been largely augmented. The unexpected diminution in Mission Funds and attendance has set people thinking, and not a little newspaper correspondence has been the result. According to individual opinion writers have been offering possible explanations for the recorded deficiencies. Evangelicals are confident that High Church proclivities are mainly to blame for the unsatisfactory state of

things, and they are calling for a sacrifice of form and staid routine, and a closer sympathy with the people. Churchmen of altitudinarian tendency are disposed to blame the too obtrusive spirit of democracy they describe in certain quarters where there is a disposition to trample on ecclesiastical authority and push individualism unduly.

Perhaps the most noteworthy new departure on the part of Toronto Synod was the experimental adoption of the system of itinerancy. It is significant that a move in this direction should be made by the Church of England. It is none the less significant that the proposal received the support of such men as Rev. John Langtry and Mr. S. H. Blake. Both spoke of it in almost identical terms as a cure for what they described as "the despicable system of starving a man out." It has been resolved to try the system in Mission Stations.

If there has been a falling off in Toronto Diocese, matters are represented in a flourishing state in that of Huron. The recently consecrated Bishop of that See has met with much encouragement and finds his work progressing satisfactorily. A somewhat exciting episode was occasioned by the frantic interruptions and non-canonical language used to the secretary by a reverend gentleman whose name for obvious reasons had been dropped from the roll. The Council of Huron College unanimously confirmed the nomination of Rev. R. G. Fanell, M.A. of Cambridge University, as Principal and Professor of Divinity in that institution.

The Diocesan Synods of Montreal and Ottawa also met last week when favourable reports of the progress of the Church were presented. The Montreal Synod were cordial in their greetings. Friendly communications were sent to the Synods of Hamilton and London, and to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church meeting at the same time in the City of Montreal. The same body also discussed a resolution of condolence on the death of Archbishop Bourget, which was withdrawn on technical grounds.

While other religious bodies were passing strong resolutions favouring the Scott Act and condemning the Dominion Senate for enacting amendments intended to modify it, the several Church of England Synods declined to pronounce emphatically either for or against the Canada Temperance Act, though they gave general expression in favour of the promotion of sobriety.

The Methodist District Conferences completed their work last week. Gratifying progress was reported in most departments. The Union effected some time since has proved most satisfactory and harmonious. The different sections of Canadian Methodism have blended to such a degree that microscopic inspection would be requisite to find traces of former dividing lines. In addition to the regular and ordinary work coming up for review, much time and attention were devoted to the discussion of University Federation. Three of the Western Conferences decided in favour of the principle, while in the Toronto Conference a vigorous and animated debate took place, Dr. Dewart, the genial, yet stalwart, editor of the *Christian Guardian*, and Dr. Sutherland being the chief opposing speakers. The debate was ably sustained and the general impression before a decision was reached was that a majority in favour of Federation might be counted upon. To the surprise of not a few, however, when the vote was taken it was found that the opponents of the measure had gained the day. The amendment of Dr. Sutherland was carried by sixty-six, while the motion secured only forty-five votes. This, however, does not quiet the agitation. It is not a final decision. From now till the meeting of the next General Conference in 1886 in Toronto the subject will be discussed with increasing animation. Each side will be anxious to make the most of the time and opportunities remaining to obtain the victory for which it strives. There is no question that in the Methodist Church the feeling in favour of confederation is on the increase, and there is little doubt that the discussion in the Toronto Conference will operate in its favour.

On the Temperance question the Methodist Church may almost be regarded as a unit. In the ranks of its ministry are to be found some who speak out boldly in favour of individual freedom and against the enactment of sumptuary laws; but the great majority are pronounced supporters of the Scott Act, and the deliverances in Conference were strong endorsements of that measure.

Montreal was the city selected for this year's meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. Representatives from the Maritime Provinces sat side by side with those from Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Professor McLare opened the proceedings with a vigorous and thoughtful discourse, and was succeeded in the chair by Rev. Principal McKnight of Halifax. From the various subjects submitted it is apparent that in most respects the Presbyterian Church is blessed with a growing prosperity. Financially and numerically considerable increase was reported. The most interesting debates, apart from those relating to regular business