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## The Journal of Commerce

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### Special Articles

India and the Empire.

By W. W. Swanson.

Conditions in the West.

By E. Cora Hind.

Banking in Belgium.

Special Supplement.

The Mining and Metallurgical Industries of  
 Canada.

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## The Bi-lingual School Question

MR. Charles Langlois, in a letter which we publish to-day, plunges into the most contentious part of the Ontario bilingual school question. He warmly champions what may be called the French side of it. Defenders of the Ontario laws probably would take exception to some of his statements and dispute his interpretation of the policy which, it is well to remember, has the support not of the Ontario Government only, but of an almost unanimous Legislature. But into these thorny paths we have not entered, nor shall we do so now. While endeavoring to inform our readers of the general character of the difficulty, we have not deemed it necessary to sit in judgment between the two parties. Our purpose in discussing the question, besides informing our readers of its nature, has not been to sharpen the points of dispute, but rather to invite attention to the desirability of seeking a ground upon which the two parties could come together. We urged that the question cannot be happily settled by the legal proceedings now pending, or by either party insisting upon what it may regard as its legal rights. We have presented the question as one on which the views of extremists in both parties should be set aside, and which moderate men should approach in a conciliatory spirit. In the particular article to which our correspondent refers, our expressed purpose was to emphasize the fact that, apart from a few extremists, both parties to the dispute profess to have in view the same object, viz., the teaching of French along with English in the districts settled largely by French-Canadians. It has seemed to us that, this being the case, it is most desirable that representatives of both sides should be brought together, aided by experienced educationists, with a view to the framing of regulations which will, beyond question, carry out that common purpose. Discussion along these lines may possibly be helpful in the good work of finding a solution of a troublesome problem. Discussion along a different line, where each party insists that it is right and that its opponents are wrong, may be interesting to those who love a fight, but it is not likely to promote the "peace, order and good government" of our country.

There is one thing in Mr. Langlois' letter with which we very cordially agree, though we are unable to see its bearing on the Ontario question. It is his statement as to the superiority of the French members of the Dominion Parliament over the English members in their knowledge of languages. It is a fact most creditable to the French members that they all understand English, and most of them are able to speak it well, while but few of the English members speak or understand French. In a country where such a large proportion of our

people are of French origin and justly devoted to their language, it should be an aim of the English speaking population, to a larger extent than it has hitherto been, to know both languages.

## The Quebec Elections

THE success of the Provincial Government in the election just held was a foregone conclusion. Sir Lomer Gouin's Government had given the Province a vigorous and progressive policy, which had left their opponents not much room for criticism, and it cannot be said that the Opposition campaign was very energetic. The return of a large number of Gouin supporters by acclamation on nomination day was in itself a widespread vote of confidence in the Ministry, and an intimation to the electors everywhere that Sir Lomer was to be entrusted with the management of the affairs of the Province for a further term. The victory is one of which Sir Lomer and his colleagues may well feel proud, for the popular verdict in their favor is unusually strong. But it is doubtful if, even in the interest of the Government, such a sweeping victory is a good thing. The party system under which we live assumes that there will be, along with a strong government, a substantial Opposition to watch the movement of affairs and offer such criticism as hardly can be expected from the Government's own friends. The weakness of the Opposition in the new House makes the responsibility of the Ministers to the public all the greater.

## Ireland

THE best news that has come over the cable for a considerable time is that which tells that, in response to a patriotic appeal from Mr. Asquith, all parties in the British House of Commons have united in approval of the new effort which the Government are to make, through the instrumentality of Mr. Lloyd George, to find some ground for common action in the solution of the Irish problem. The divisions among the Irish people and their representatives have been the gravest obstacle to the efforts of English statesmen to give Ireland a satisfactory system of local government. These differences took on their most dangerous form very shortly before the outbreak of the war, when the two bodies of volunteers—one favoring the Home Rule Act and the other opposing it—were armed and drilled for conflict. The situation at that time was so alarming that one wonders what would have happened if there had been no war. Dreadful as the European war has been in many respects, it seems to have