

PUBLIC OPINION.

Toronto Mail: When Mr. Laurier explains to the Winnipeg Catholics his policy on the school question they will realize that there are some things in this world much more difficult to understand than a Chinese puzzle.

Toronto Globe: But it cannot be fair to hold Mr. Laurier responsible for the judgment of a Quebec court in a case in which he was not engaged, and it cannot be necessary that the incident should be made an issue in national politics in order to discredit the leader of the Liberal party. The strenuous assertion of civil and religious liberty is a duty that rests upon every citizen, but it is no less the duty of the citizen to seek by calm counsel and wise forbearance to moderate racial feuds and allay religious antagonisms. Our political literature is full of the exaggerated rhetoric of the professional loyalist. The press and the platform ring with cries of treason for sinister purposes. But in a country like this there is no worse treason to the commonwealth than the inflammatory clamor of the politicians who would make party capital out of racial and religious prejudices and hatreds.

Montreal Gazette: Mr. Laurier's visit to the West will be something more than a picnic. The Manitoba Catholics are going to wait on him to ask him his opinion on the separate school question. A non-committal statement such as Mr. Laurier has hitherto contented himself with will hardly satisfy them. When he gets to this part of the business Mr. Laurier may be sorry that he cannot put up Mr. Tarte to speak for him. How would it be to have Mr. Tarte on view, especially "for this occasion only" and leave Mr. Joe Martin behind?

Montreal Witness: Mr. Laurier cannot promise to do anything without in effect bidding for support, which he will abstain from, judging by his exemplary career and high character; but he can, as he has done before, express his views upon the situation and indicate his policy. Mr. Laurier might, we think, if asked, offer his services as a friendly intermediary between the Manitoba Government and the Manitoba Roman Catholics, and it is just possible he might in conference with both suggest a compromise which each could accept without yielding any essential principle. A friendly settlement of the question with the Provincial Government of Manitoba would seem to be the only practicable solution of the problem, and this perhaps Mr. Laurier might bring about in a friendly way.

Toronto Mail: It is because we recognize the great value, dignity and importance of agriculture that we do not wish to see its ranks decimated by a hopeless exodus to the cities of young men who come to further crowd avenues already crowded, and to seek for employment where at present there is not employment enough for the numerous competitors.

Halifax Chronicle: It is one of the almost inexplicable mysteries of modern life, that while thousands of men in the great cities of America (Canada and the United States) are either going idle or dragging out a precarious existence on starvation wages, farmers often find it difficult to secure the necessary help on their farms. Why men would rather face periodical idleness and starvation in the city or manufacturing centre, in preference to steady employment on the farm and at least comfortable exist-

ence, is a question that requires serious attention; for if the tendency of people to abandon farm and rural life and drift into the cities and towns continues at the ratio which has prevailed for some ten or fifteen years past, it will be a most unfortunate thing for our country.

Hamilton Spectator: The English House of Lords must be composed of a lot of bad old men. If Dr. Tanner and his friends are to be believed, they evict their Irish tenants; they have undoubtedly evicted the Irish tenants' William, and now they have evicted the Evicted Tenants Bill.

Halifax Chronicle: A British officer, who appears to know whereof he speaks, says that it "would be as reasonable to charge brave men armed with pitchforks against brave men armed with rifles as to pit, man for man, the Chinese against the Japanese. Of all native and colonial troops I have seen, and I have seen most of them, I would next to Goorkhas, prefer a regiment of Japanese. They are brave, temperate, patient and energetic, and at this moment the Chinese, whatever might be done with them, are 200 years behind." There is a gymnasium in every Japanese barracks.

Winnipeg Free Press: A bill to impose a general tax of half a cent per acre on all lands in the Territories was introduced in the Northwest Assembly by Mr. Oliver, of Edmonton, but it was rejected in committee by a large majority. The object of the bill was to raise a revenue for public works in the Territories which cannot be undertaken with the small subsidy received from the Federal Government. No doubt the majority of the Assembly regarded the measure as a step towards direct taxation, or an adoption of the single tax theory, for both of which they evidently have a horror. The discussion on the measure, however, will awaken public interest in the question, and Mr. Oliver will perhaps bring it up at a future session if the electors of Edmonton give him the opportunity.

Halifax Chronicle: According to the Montreal Star of Monday, Senor Pereira, Spanish consul-general for Canada, has been enquiring into the matter of the treaty between Spain and Scandinavia, which is to give Norwegian fish free entry into Spanish West India markets. On Monday, in reply to his enquiries, the Star says: "He received a despatch from the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs informing him that the Spanish Government was prepared to agree to a reduction in customs duties, and to grant similar privileges to Canada to those enjoyed by Sweden and Norway, if Canada on her part would make concessions equivalent to those made by the Scandinavian kingdom. Senor Pereira will communicate at once with the various commercial bodies interested and with the Dominion Government." Now, here is a chance for the Dominion Government to do something tangible for our West India trade, and if ordinary vigor and promptitude, guided by a reasonable amount of common sense, are brought to bear, a treaty might be negotiated between Spain and Canada in time for ratification at the next session of Parliament. Free trade, or even a measure of freer trade, with the Spanish West Indies, will be of far more value to Canada, and particularly to the Maritime Provinces, than half a dozen treaties with the Antipodes. Here is an opportunity for Messrs. Foster and Bowell to win knight-hoods that may never again present itself.

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Montreal Gazette: Most people have an idea that the use of opium as a stimulant is a degrading vice, which ought to be discountenanced by all right thinking people and prohibited by Christian Governments. Here is "the other side of the question," as presented by no less an authority than the correspondent in India of the London Times: "Well may those who are responsible for the welfare of India dread a policy which would tend to spread the curse of alcoholism from the British soldier to the general population. The most careful European observers of the habits of the people believe that any prohibition of the use of opium would have this result. The Indian press is convinced of it. The natives of India have slowly selected for popular use the form of stimulant least harmful to the Indian peoples; a stimulant which does not act as a cause of crime, insanity, or disease among them. The unwise interference of a number of well meaning people in England would practically substitute alcohol for opium—the fire-water which is the chief cause of crime, misery and disease among the British nation, and which means absolute ruin to tropical races."

Vancouver News-Advertiser: We think that the manner in which this cable scheme has been handled so far by the Conference and the Dominion Government, the latter apparently acting as agent for all the Governments represented at the Ottawa meeting, has been such as to give everyone confidence that the scheme will be carried out in a practical and businesslike manner. Should it be found that the ownership and operation of the cable by a private company appears to be the most favorable method, as regards the cost and liability entailed on the various Governments concerned in the scheme, there will doubtless be ample guarantees taken against the evils which might follow from the amalgamation or pooling of interests with the Eastern Telegraph Company and its subsidiary companies, which under the clever management of Sir John Pender now control telegraphic communication with Australasia. There is also another noteworthy feature in the specifications referred to. The Hawaiian Islands are to be abandoned as a landing place for the direct or main cable. Strategic and political reasons doubtless account for this. It is probable, however, that a branch line to the Islands from a point on the cable will not meet with any objection.

Minard's Liniment Lumberman's Friend.