

It is not improbable that under an elective system, they would be no better off today. The result is, perhaps, more the effect of relative wealth than innate bigotry. Under the nominative system the Ontario minority has not only been justly but generously treated. If the Catholics claimed their "pound of flesh," all they could ask would be four, they have been given six.

The Catholics of the Maritime Provinces are not likely to forget the lesson taught them at Confederation. They had any amount of promises but nothing in "black on white," where only it availed them—the statute book. So when their school difficulties had arisen, they discovered that they had been left, and that "promises like pie-crusts, are made to be broken." In any rearrangement of the Senate, it is hardly likely that the minority will, on the principle of a burned child, dreads the fire," forget the lesson taught or the precedent set in providing protection for the Irish minority, in the event of "Home Rule," becoming law. The Senate should choose its own president. Whatever curtails patronage broadens liberty.

#### The Departments.

Then the departments of the public service, badly need overhauling. For corruption and incapacity there is nothing in the world's recent annals comparable to the construction departments, (railways and canals and public works) of this government. Going back no farther than confederation, it may confidently be affirmed, that not less than 60 million dollars, have been squandered on construction, over and above the value, for which there is not a dollar's worth of return, and which might, for public benefit, as well have been thrown into the St. Lawrence. Think on it. Sixty millions would build and equip three thousand miles of railroad, from Ottawa to Daw-

son (Klondike.) Indeed every department in the public service needs rejuvenation, complete shaking up from the bottom. It is gratifying to be able to bear testimony that two of the departments, the justice and post office, are awake to the claims of reform. The postmaster general is making laudable efforts to put his department on a sound basis. Mr. Mulock deserves the thanks of every Liberal for the bold, manly and courageous stand he has taken in grappling with this vexed and delicate question; and he will have his reward in the esteem of all true Liberals. As for Mr. Mills, he is instinctively a Reformer. To be aught but a Reformer he would have to be born anew. But unluckily the field for reform in these departments is very restricted. The construction departments are those in which great reforms could profitably and efficiently be introduced. I doubt not that, without stinging or cheese-paring, Mr. Mulock at the head of the construction departments would in a few years save the tax-payers twenty millions. That is a prize well worth trying for. I know whereof I speak.

I must cry halt. Enough for one session's programme, has already however, imperfectly, been sketched, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." The government, it is to be hoped, will not let the golden opportunity slip. Liberals are prone to judge their stewards by their deeds. When the day of reckoning, and it is not far off, comes, there will be little mercy for the servant who buried his talent in the ground, and still less for him who squandered his in idleness, riot and frivolity.

Of all human affairs government is the most serious.

J. L. P. O'HANLY.

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