

nored or treated lightly without creating grave disquietude. The new Bill is regarded as not sufficiently protective to these convictions. The new official created by the Act, a Minister of Education must be a member of either one creed or another, and of one political party or another. He cannot avoid having personal convictions of a religious and a political nature, and naturally, inevitably, he will be under their influence and the influence of his associates, which will be a strong temptation to give the views and the interests of the majority an undue weight in educational arrangements. The new Inspectors would be required to be in sympathy with the Minister of Education; he would practically dictate their policy and actions; every teacher would feel his "bread and butter" in danger if he showed any sign of independence of the Inspector; thus every teacher would be practically a government official, and bound at his peril to promote its interests. This is not a question between Liberals and Conservatives, for members of both parties who are cognizant of the educational needs and the conditions of this Province are opposed to the idea of a political Minister having absolute control over the public schools. It would be fraught with danger to the harmony of the people, and could not avoid inciting jealousies, suspicions, distrust, and grievances inimical to the educational and other interests of the Province.

## Obituary.

### THE LATE MR. S. C. STEVENSON.

A most worthy and eminently useful citizen has been lost to this City and Province by the death of Mr. S. C. Stevenson. This sad event occurred suddenly on the 2nd inst. Although for several weeks an invalid last year there was no apprehension of any serious failure in his health. He had taken his usual walking exercise after dinner, when, on returning home, he was suddenly called to the bourne from whence no traveller returns. Born in Montreal in 1848, he was educated at the High school, afterwards matriculating at McGill University, and graduating with the degree of B.A. In 1872 he was assistant secretary of the first large provincial exhibition, and has been identified with all held here since. In 1876 he attended the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, as Commissioner of the Province of Quebec. He was chosen Secretary of the permanent exhibition committee of the Province. In 1889 he organized the Montreal Exposition Company under whose auspices, and under the management of Mr. Stevenson, all the local exhibitions have since been held. In 1886 he represented Canada as commissioner for the Province of Quebec at the Colonial and Industrial Exhibition in London, England, and in 1892 was appointed a member of the provincial commission in

connection with the World's Columbian Exhibition, held in Chicago. He also acted as Secretary of the Council of Arts and Manufactures of this Province, in whose evening classes he showed great interest, and did much to make them successful. He had served also as a director of the Northern Railway of Canada. In 1866 he served in the front as one of the Victoria Rifles. He afterwards received a commission in the Prince of Wales' regiment, from which he retired with the rank of Major. Public duties so onerous and so varied brought the deceased into close contact with a large number of persons of all classes, races and creeds, by one and all of whom he was extremely popular for his courtesy, and highly respected for his energetic and able discharge of public duties. Montreal will find difficulty in replacing so public-spirited a citizen. The bereaved family have our condolences in their over-whelming trial.

## Notes and Items.

**The New England Mutual** has withdrawn from Kansas, which seems a State the insurance companies think a good one to get out of.

**Fire at Ottawa College.** On the 5th inst. a serious fire occurred at Ottawa College, which was damaged to the extent of \$60,000.

**St. John, N. B.,** had an increase in exports last year over 1896 of about 2 millions. The total imports were \$3,440,000, on which the duties were \$740,560, both being lower than in 1896.

**The Mayor of Montreal, Mr. R. Wilson-Smith,** is to be honoured by a public banquet to be given by his fellow-citizens at the Windsor Hall.

**The New York Life Insurance Co.** has announced its intention to adopt a three per cent. reserve on all its policies in force and to make no increase in rates. It has been holding and reporting a three per cent. reserve on its accumulation policies, which were first issued in 1892 under President McCall's administration.

**Agents' balances.**—Several States have advised the fire insurance companies that agents' balances will not be considered a credit in annual statements unless guaranteed. With a significant timeliness the notification was promptly followed up by solicitors of surety companies offering the guarantees.—*N. Y. Bulletin.*

**Ostrich feather quotations** are so rarely seen we give an item from a South African prize list as a curiosity. The prices for "white-primés" range from \$15 to \$70 per pound. Other qualities run as low as \$7.50, \$5.00, \$1.40, and some styled "snadones" range from 25 cents to \$3 per pound. The range from 25 cents per lb. to \$70 is wide enough to call for very special expert talent in judging feathers.