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Our Ottawa Letter.

Whether a general election is near at hand or not the government and its supporters are leaving no stone unturned to secure a full and complete revision of the electoral lists now in the hands of the revising officers. The interest that has been aroused in this respect among the Tories is phenomenal. They realize that their only hope of securing another lease of power is in cramming the voters' lists with good Tory voters, and in doing this they have thrown an energy into their work that our Liberal friends may well take pattern after. Let me draw your attention to the way our Tory friends are throwing themselves into the work in this city. Over the signature of nine active and enthusiastic young Tory barristers the following notice is published, and it will be well for our young Liberals of the legal profession to imitate it in other cities, towns and villages where the same idea has not already been adopted. The notice reads: "The revision of the Dominion voters' lists being about to be made, the undersigned Liberal Conserva- tive barristers and commissioners for taking affidavits have consented to pre- pare the applications of persons desiring to have their names placed upon the lists and who may apply at their offices; and on and after Monday next, the 3rd Sept., one or more of them will attend for the same purpose every evening from 7.30 to 10 o'clock, at premises which will be secured, for the convenience of such persons who may be unable to attend in the day time."

These young men are earnest in their work; they are the kind of workers who keep their party in power and the Liberals out. They are workers who do not stand by and watch others work and when victory comes shout "We won!" You may talk politics all day; you may write column after column condemning your opponents' policy; you may prove to be delusive and dishonest, but when the day comes for counting up the ballots, if your electoral lists are not all right, "you are not in it," but find your party elected to remain in the shades of opposition for another five years. If you could only realize what is at stake, how much depends upon your putting forth an extra effort just now, you would throw a little more energy into the work. Col. Ouimet, Minister of Public Works, has been all this week in Montreal working up Conservative organization in that city and district, with a view to having the voters' lists got in proper shape. When asked why this unusual enthusiasm just now, the Minister of Public Works said: "We are going to see that our friends do not suffer in the revision of the voters' lists. It is practically the same precaution the Liberals are taking, for we cannot be caught napping any better than they can." Well, it is true that in certain districts the Liberals are already actively at work with a determination to win, but unfortunately this interest in their work has not reached many districts where it is known the Liberals can capture seats with a little extra exertion. So impressed am I of the importance of this work that I cannot refrain from drawing attention to it at every opportunity.

In this connection I will now lay a few interesting facts before you, figures bearing on the result of the last general election, which I have obtained from official sources here. According to these figures, at the general election in 1891, there were 1,132,200 names on the voters' lists, an increase of 138,287, or 14 per cent over the number on the list at the general election of 1887. The total number of votes polled was 730,056 which, according to the official figures stood 378,355 for the government candidate, and 352,101 for the opposition. For Ontario the total number on the list was 568,799; Quebec 301,668; Nova Scotia 90,045; New Brunswick 70,521; P. E. Island 24,065; Manitoba 46,669; N. W. Territories 16,044; British Columbia 14,400. The number of votes polled by provinces, during the last general election was, Ontario, Conservative 181,593; Liberal 178,871; total 360,464. Quebec, Conserva- tive, 97,652; Liberal 94,063; total 191,715. Nova Scotia, Conservative, 36,694; Liberal, 31,131; total 67,825. N. Bruns- wick, Conservative, 30,094; Liberal, 23,694; total 53,743. P. E. Island, Conser- vative, 8,994; Liberal 9,433; total 18,427. N. W. Territories, Conservatives, 6,752; Liberal, 3,579; total 10,331. Manitoba, Conservative, 10,450; Liberal, 9,059; total 19,509. British Columbia, Conserva- tive, 6,176; Liberal, 2,267; total 8,443.

What deduction do you draw from the foregoing facts? It is certainly pointed out to you that the Liberal party at the last general election, with all the popular- ity and personal magnetism of Sir John Macdonald arrayed against you; with the combined influence of a government in power, and with the contractors' and man- ufacturers' bank account placed to the credit of the government to defeat you the Liberals secured 48.2 per cent of the total vote polled or only a fraction under one-half the total vote recorded. Had

the voters' lists been in proper shape the result would have been reversed. What our friends have now to ask themselves is, has the government strengthened its position and itself in the confidence of the people since 1891. Those who have watched the developments of the past few sessions would probably say certainly not unless renewed confidence has been inspired by a complete and unbroken record of reckless and dishonest administra- tion of our public affairs. The Curran bridge scandal should, in itself, have aroused sufficient indignation among the tax-payers of Canada to wipe out of existence a government who could have been so criminally guilty of allowing its political friends to rob the treasury to the extent the Curran bridge job has depleted it. Haggart, as Minister of Railways says he was ignorant of what was going on in his department. Is that the sort of man to entrust the expenditure of your hard earned wages to? Within two or three months a work involving the ex- penditure of nearly half a million dollars can go on under his direction without his taking the trouble to ascertain whether or not the money was being properly ex- pended. What is a Minister placed at the head of a department for anyway? Certainly not to play "seven up" at the club and throw the whole responsibility of running the machine upon subordinate officials. It is the worst case on record, and Haggart knows it. It is for this reason I say the Liberals should take courage for the country is ready to resent the maladministration of its affairs for the past sixteen years. It is only en- couragement you want to incite you to greater efforts you will find it the records of Conservative governments during the past five years without going further back into their history.
Ottawa, Sept. 8th, 1894.

Reading Aloud.

To the Editor of THE LIBERAL:

Sir,—Is reading neglected? An editorial question in last week's LIBERAL is one worthy of consideration, especially when you state on good authority that "of all the candidates for one district at the recent entrance examination not one could be looked upon as having a good knowledge of reading," and that Inspector Fotheringham says "reading is too rapid, monotonous and lacking in true expression."

The reference, I suppose, is not so much to reading in the abstract as to the art of reading aloud.

It might be observed that in the last few years reading in the presence of others has almost entirely gone out of fashion, except by those who make it a profession. Perhaps it may be partly accounted for in the floods of literature within the reach of all, to compass which requires much silent reading.

To the praise of our young people be it said they all belong to the reading public, yet there are many families where a book or a chapter is never read aloud from one year's end to another. The individual members of the family all read: father reads the newspaper; mother reads the Bible; John the book from the Institute; Mary the one from the Sunday School; Tommy devours a dime novel, and Charlie reads the Buffalo Express. All read but no one reads aloud. There is no grouping of the members of the family, no reading circles, no profitable evenings spent with authors. This is very much to be regretted because reading aloud is one of the best of educational disciplines. No one can read aloud with careful regard to punctuation, modulation of voice, and proper emphasis, without thoroughly understanding the aim of the author, and even when reading silently the force of habit is such that it prevents mental slurring over what is read, resulting in the memory having a firmer hold on the instruction received. Clear enunciation that makes speaking pleasing to the ear, and conversation agreeable, is an attainment that only can be obtained by the practice of reading aloud.

Whatever may be the cause, that there is a scarcity of good readers is evident. Although surrounded by students who are getting loaded up with science, math- ematics and classics, how difficult it is to obtain material for a literary entertain- ment. Conscious inability makes cowards of us all.

Outside of professionals there seems to be a growing carelessness even in those who do read before the public. Our pulpits are sometimes occupied by "monoto- nous and inexpressive readers." The Bible, the most dramatic of all books, filled as it is with exquisitely beautiful literary varieties, is sometimes read so prosily that were it not for the subject matter selected it would not be tolerated by even a sleepy congregation. If an actor at the Lyceum were to appear before the foot-lights and render his part with no more realism, force and vim than some of those who read portions of the most stirring and vivid descriptions of Holy Writ, his exit from the stage would be sure and sudden.

St. Paul's sage advice to the youthful Timothy to give attention to reading, is as valuable to the young people of to-day as to those of 18 centuries ago. Very few intelligent young men pass through life without being called upon to read some- thing before others, if it is but the minutes of the lodge room. They should be able to acquit themselves well. A young man's greater abilities are calculated by how he performs in minor matters. If he reads well he is credited with a greater knowledge. If he scrawls and misspells in his writing it detracts from whatever else he may know. A former high school student who came from Caledon, although he could solve a difficult proposition in Euclid, was twitted with ignorance because he addressed his letters home with a small k.

If this general indifference to the practice of this very essential branch of edu- cation is to be traced to the negligence of the teachers in our high and public schools, our educationists are making a serious mistake, a blunder that will tell lamentably in the future. If those who graduate from our high schools to take upon themselves the responsibility of teaching others, know comparatively nothing of the principles of elocution, what may we expect from their scholars. A boy's ideal of perfection is his teacher's ability. A stream cannot rise higher than its source. I question if there are twenty-five per cent. of the teachers in the province of Ontario who, if called upon to read in public a selection historical, poet- ical or conversational, that could do so with the appropriate gesture, pleasing modification, proper emphasis and clear enunciation that would elicit the plaudits of an ordinary gathering, much less the approbation of a critical listener. Some- thing should be done to save elocution from becoming a "lost art."

Without depreciating in the least any other branch that helps to make up an educated man, I think that elocution should have a wide space among them. Almost as soon as they are mastered the higher branches will begin to be forgotten, but reading to the satisfaction of ourselves and others will be a joy as long as sight and hearing lasts. There should be more time devoted to practice, and more attention to faults. A kind but severe criticism should be brought to bear on the pupil so that he may early learn that "rapid, monotonous and in- expressive reading" cannot be tolerated, and that drawing tendencies, incoherent expression and nasal twang do not indicate an educated gentleman.

It would be a great incentive to stu- dents to acquire greater proficiency in this and other scholastic attainments if there was an annual contest before the public. Subjects national, patriotic or historical could be chosen three months before, with judges to decide, and prizes awarded for oratory, elocution, essays, writing and spelling. The management could be under the Board of Trustees as- sisted by the teachers. It would create a laudable ambition to excel and prove red letter days in the history of our young people.

Mr. D. Fotheringham, or any other in- spector, will confer a favor on society if by agitation they bring about a revival in the study of elocution.
Richmond Hill, Sept. 11, 1894.

Executors Sale

—OF VALUABLE—

FARM - PROPERTY.

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At the hour of one o'clock in the afternoon, on the premises, by Salem Eckardt, Auc- tioneer, lot number 30, in the 1st Con. of the Township of Vaughan, in the County of York, containing 210 acres, more or less.

This valuable farm is the property of the late Edmund Seager, and is situated on Yonge street, 12 miles from Toronto, and 14 miles from Richmond Hill, where are the High school, Union Public schools, and churches of the several denominations. The soil is clay loam, partly un- der-drained, and watered by two spring creeks. On the front part are the homestead residence, farm house (frame), outhouses, carriage house, granary, carpenter's shop, two barns, three driving sheds, stables for horses, cattle and pigs; wells at the house and stables. There is an orchard of fine fruits, apples, peaches, plums, &c., and the grounds are laid out with ornamental trees. On the rear part are a frame house, a log house, barn, stabling (new) for horses and cattle, and several acres of woods. This part of the farm has been used for dairying for upwards of thirty years. The lands are well fenced. The property will be offered in two parts, each sub- ject to a reserved bid. The line of the projected Street Railway from Toronto will pass this prop- erty. It is well adapted for a stock farm, and is a desirable location for a gentleman's country seat.

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