

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

Dominion
Day.

On Monday next, the 1st July, we Canadians will celebrate the twenty-eighth anniversary of the birthday of the great Dominion. It has been the privilege of THE WEEK to hail the glad day with all honour now for twelve successive years. During that time this journal has noted with interest how great has been the progress of the country from year to year, and how marked has been the development of national sentiment in the hearts of the people. The growth of this sentiment is quite compatible with loyalty to the British Crown and all it signifies. Indeed, as we but recently remarked in these columns, the fact that the Dominion forms part of the British Empire was never so vividly realized nor so highly prized as it is to-day. Even those to whom worldly gain is everything and public spirit and national sentiment nothing recognize that the Dominion has little to gain and much to lose by any change in Canada's allegiance. Especially is the thought of annexation to the United States as a possible future for the Dominion viewed with great and intensifying dislike. If such a catastrophe were once deemed a possibility, it is no longer deemed so. It is never even the subject of an academic discussion save as a joke. As Mr. George Hague remarked the other day, in a speech published elsewhere in this number, "with all the defects of our Government and our institutions, there cannot be a question in the minds of any who have impartially considered the subject, that the Dominion of Canada is the best governed portion of the American continent, having the best Constitution, the most equitable laws, the best judicial system, the most solid prosperity, and the most rational liberty." The only trouble with Canada is that her people do not think enough of the Dominion or of themselves. They want more active faith in the country and more national pride.

The Canadian
Flag.

In response to many and repeated requests we reproduce to-day the striking design suggested by Dr. Sandford Fleming for the national flag of Canada. We were the more ready to accede to these requests inasmuch as it gives THE WEEK an opportunity of recognizing and observing in a definite and pleasing manner our great national anniversary, Dominion Day, which in a few more hours all Canada will be joyously celebrating. The publication by THE WEEK of Dr. Fleming's design for our national flag attracted great attention, and has started a discussion, the importance of which cannot be easily overestimated. We have welcomed to our columns letters from all parts of the Dominion on this subject, and to-day publish several more, regretting that our limited space forces us to exclude a number of others of quite equal interest. Though these letters differ widely in opinion it is most gratifying to note that in one great essential—the chiefest—they are all strictly in accord: intense love of country animates and informs everyone of them. The letters in to-day's issue will provoke further discussion. All will welcome another communication from Dr. Sandford Fleming. He has something fresh to say. He points out, among other things, that while the maple leaf is the accepted floral em-

blem of Ontario it has erroneously assumed to be peculiarly Canadian; that six, and eventually nine, other Provinces have to be considered, and that to meet their legitimate claims to representation on the flag, some new emblem has to be found.

Downfall of the
Rosebery
Administration

Once more the unexpected has happened. Perhaps we should rather say the expected has happened in an unexpected manner. It has been manifest for many weeks past that the end of the Rosebery Government was near, but that end was not expected to come in a fashion so unimpressive, one might almost say, for both parties, ignominious. We looked for a pitched battle on some great issue, skilfully chosen by the leaders of the Opposition, on which the Government forces would finally meet defeat, and thereupon, in a spirit of dignified resignation, dissolve Parliament and appeal to the people. Instead, we have the Government whips caught napping and its forces defeated by a vote snatched, whether by accident or as the result of a shrewd but not very magnanimous artifice, on a mere side issue. Then, further, we have, instead of the expected dissolution, resignation of office, with the result of handing over the reins to a leader who is obliged at the outset to stipulate for the forbearance of his opponents. Nevertheless, the members generally, and the leaders of the defeated Government in particular, must be heartily glad that the long struggle is at an end. We assume, though the fact is not definitely known at the time of writing, that Lord Rosebery and his colleagues will grant the desired pledges of assistance in passing the estimates and facilitating other necessary legislation, preliminary to adjournment or dissolution. They have so much to gain by shifting the responsibilities of administration to the shoulders of their opponents, pending the electoral struggle, that they can scarcely afford to be contentious in regard to the matter.

The Retiring
Cabinet

Whether the existence of the Liberal Government would have been prolonged, and more of its measures carried, had its veteran leader remained in office is a question upon which it would be idle to speculate. It can hardly be denied that Lord Rosebery's leadership has not, for various reasons, fulfilled the expectations of his friends. In the first place, he was handicapped from the outset by the misfortune of being a peer. This has never been forgiven or forgotten by the Radical wing of the Liberal party. Then, again, it cannot be denied that a tinge of seeming superciliousness in his style, and some grave blunders in speech at the outset of his career, seriously injured his prestige, or rather prevented him from gaining that prestige which is a *sine qua non* of the highest success in a political leader. Add to these that his fondness for fast horses and his connection with the race courses have fatally discredited him with the Non-conformists, who are becoming increasingly influential as a factor in politics, and whose semi-Puritanic conscience is making itself felt in a corresponding degree, and we have an array of self-caused hindrances sufficient of themselves to mar the prospects of the most brilliant statesman in the position of Premier. When to these faults is added the very serious misfortune of bad health, which has prevented him from demonstrating his undoubted ability as a leader for weeks