

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

Remedial Legislation Ordered.

The Governor-General in Council has passed an order calling, it is understood, upon the Manitoba Government to enact such legislation as may be necessary to redress the grievance caused to the Roman Catholic minority in that Province by the School Act of 1890. The issue thus joined with the Government and people of Manitoba is a momentous one. The outcome will be waited for with intense interest. Will the mandate be obeyed? That is the first and crucial question. In all probability the Provincial Legislature is too near prorogation to admit of any action being taken this session. Everything, therefore, depends for the present upon Mr. Greenway and his colleagues. They can scarcely in courtesy do less than acknowledge the receipt of the order, and promise to take it into serious consideration, but any remedial legislation they might consent to attempt could not, of course, be passed until next session. Should they, on the other hand, as is quite possible, meet the Dominion Government with a prompt refusal to introduce any such legislation, the struggle would be precipitated. In either case Premier Bowell can hardly avoid doing one of two things without delay. He must either call a session of Parliament at the earliest practical moment, thereby giving the people of Canada an opportunity to pronounce at once upon his policy in the case, through their representatives; or he must promptly dissolve Parliament and give the people an opportunity to give a verdict upon it directly, at the polls. It is always unsafe to prophecy, but in view of what is already known of the temper of the people of Canada, as a whole, one could not risk much in predicting that neither the present moribund Parliament, nor any new one which might be created as the result of a general election, would venture to sanction and undertake to enforce any legislation designed to over-ride the right of Manitoba to full control of her own educational system.

Some of the British authors are using very-vigorous adjectives in regard to the Canadian Copyright Act. That the Act is a pretty strong measure cannot be denied, but the authors in question cannot be complimented on their ability to put themselves in the other man's place. They speak, for in stance, with undisguised contempt of "a few Canadian printers and publishers," in whose sole interests they conceive the Act to have been framed. They forget that "few" and "many" are relative terms and that if any weight is to be attached to the number and extent of personal interests affected, this fact must be kept in mind. The truth is, we suppose, that the "few" in this instance really covers all the publishers and printers of the Dominion. Hence, in order to get a fair conception of the magnitude of the issue by comparison, they would need to suppose a case in which the interests of all the publishers and printers of the United Kingdom were involved. We may readily admit, however, that the number of persons, whether publishers or authors, whose interests are at stake has really nothing to do with the question of right and wrong. Have the British authors and publishers ever stopped to ask themselves whether it is exactly accordant with any very high conception of right to invoke the aid of the British Government to enable them to take advantage of the accident of location to compel the readers of their books in a British colony to purchase them from a foreign people, thereby compelling their patrons and fellow-subjects to aid them in building up the industries of that people at the expense of their own? Have they ever considered how exasperating it is for them to say virtually to five millions of their fellow-countrymen, "You must purchase our books from the American publishers or you shall not be permitted to read them at all?" Have they ever shown any disposition to discuss the matter in a friendly spirit with the Canadian people or Government with a view to reaching some mutually satisfactory arrangement? We trust we should be as unwilling as our transatlantic cousins to defend any legislation or practice of doubtful morality, but it so happens that in this case the first question is that of the right of Canada to enact and control her own copyright legislation. Let this be clearly conceded and then we shall be in a position to discuss the question of the morality of this or that particular act on its merits. See Mr. Lancefield's letter, which came to hand after the foregoing was in type.

The Tramp Problem.

In a few weeks the "tramp" season will have returned. A great army of able-bodied mendicants will be leaving their winter quarters and swarming all over the land. What shall be done with them? It is high time to ask this question in downright earnest. With the horrors of the last summer still fresh in the public mind, it is surely not only most desirable but necessary to the public safety that some stringent measures be taken to abate at the same time a great nuisance and a source of great danger to life and property. In the absence of some preventive action it is highly probable that the number of wandering loafers will be largely increased the coming summer. Some one with a fondness for statistics has computed that there are no less than forty-