

THE WEEK.

Vol. XII.

Toronto, Friday, August 23rd, 1895.

No. 39.

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Current Topics.

Toronto and Montreal.

The Montreal *Star* of Saturday last contained an excellent article by Dr. Beers, of that city, on a trip which he took recently from Toronto to Niagara Falls. In this article the writer devotes considerable space to contrasting Montreal with Toronto, and the contrast is unfavourable to Montreal in several important respects. Dr. Beers says that "there must be quite a number who directly or indirectly benefit by the boodling and bad management of our [Montreal's] public affairs, because the number who seriously resent and try to remedy them are so few and far between. What Toronto has largely to show for civic extravagance is monumental development of its loins and its limits. What Montreal has chiefly to show for its share in the same direction is monumental rascality and coöperative fraud." Dr. Beers goes on to say that Montreal has "produced local boodlers whose genius in thieving and concealing theft would out-vie that of the expert who 'broke the bank at Monte Carlo.'" To this is added the statement that "at any time Montreal has been nearly twice as expensive to live in as Toronto," and that "an income of two thousand dollars a year in Toronto will go as far in securing the comfort and luxuries an ordinary family desire as four thousand in Montreal." According to Dr. Beers, one of Montreal's "most eminent city bankers" declares that in proportion to the average increase of the people, Montreal is the most expensive city in the world to live in. "Put on top of this," adds Dr. Beers, "the fact that while we have, it is true, more millionaires than Toronto, we have very many fewer men who are comparatively well off; that we are very much more cut up and curtailed as to extent of surrounding land per house, and that we are the peers and princes of long credit, and I venture to believe that most of us are burning the candle at both ends." What Montreal does not license it tolerates. "We tolerate dirt, noises, foul language in the streets, municipal and legislative boodling, the desecration of Sunday, the degradation of our parks, the inefficiency of our police, and it is becoming so like second-nature that we tolerate the despair that they cannot be bettered."

Ottawa Separate Schools.

The report of the Commissioners appointed by the Education Department, at the request of the Board of Separate School Trustees of Ottawa, to inquire into the condition of schools under their supervision, has brought to light facts which show that constant vigilance is essential to the efficiency of the schools conducted under that system. The

schools were found to vary widely in efficiency. Those taught by the Sisters have been found to be almost uniformly quite superior to those taught by the Christian Brothers. This is a fact worth pondering by those among us who seem to think that pupils are much better off in the care of almost any male teacher, than in that of the most efficient woman. The fact cited above does not, of course, prove that the woman is necessarily the best teacher. The superiority of the Sisters' schools is, in this case, evidently due more to the utter incompetency of many of the Brothers than to any special excellence on that of the Sisters. The obvious inference to be drawn from the report is that, as a rule, the Brothers in question either grossly neglect the work they undertake to do, or that their own education has been so exclusively theological and ecclesiastical that their minds are left without either the general and professional training or "the practical knowledge" which are prime requisites for the true teacher. While many of the schools taught by the Sisters are excellent and most of them fairly good, or at the worst, passable, those taught by the Brothers were all very inferior, and many of them unworthy the name of schools. In other respects, too, the facts brought out fully justify the unfavourable report of Mr. White, the Inspector, which led to the investigation. In fact, Mr. White would have been grossly remiss in his duty, had he failed to make known to the Department the state of things in his inspectorate. The matter for regret is that such a state of things has been permitted to continue so long. It is to be hoped and expected that the facts being now known the Department will act vigorously in applying the remedy. To do so will be a special boon to Roman Catholic parents who desire, as many of them no doubt do, that their children have the benefit of a sound, practical education.

International Regulations.

The Conference held at Ottawa the other day, between representatives of Canada and New York State, respectively, with a view to the adoption of uniform international regulations for the preservation of the fisheries of the St. Lawrence, was a most sensible and hopeful proceeding. If each party to the proposed compact will but avoid any manoeuvring to get the better of the other in such an arrangement, and both will look only to the promotion of the best interests of all concerned, there can be no great difficulty in coming to an agreement which will be mutually beneficial. Only by some such agreement will it ever be possible to preserve from destruction the valuable fisheries in any of the boundary waters between the two countries. It is well that our neighbours are taking the initiative in the matter, for it is, we believe, beyond question that the tendency to the use of destructive methods is much stronger on their side of the line, and that Canadian regulations have hitherto been much more rigid, or more strictly enforced, than those of the States. Should the present state of things continue it will no doubt become increasingly difficult to enforce the Canadian regulations, even if it were worth while to do so. "Seeing that the fisheries are being destroyed anyway, we may as well have our share of the products while they last," is a rough and ready argument which is sure to commend itself powerfully to our fishermen. It is not easy to convince them of its weakness. It is to be hoped that, now that our neighbours seem to be awake to the folly and danger of in-