

THE WEEK.

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THE WEEK: C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

Current Topics.

The Sault Canal.

A recent conversation in Parliament brought to light the fact that Canadian vessels do not make use of the new Canadian canal at Sault Ste. Marie to the extent expected. Two reasons were assigned for this, each of which seems to be well founded. One is that in order to save expense in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway bridge across the canal a pier has been erected in the middle of it, which greatly impedes navigation; the other is that as Canadian vessels have to coal at the Sault they prefer, as a matter of convenience and expense, to pass through the United States canal, the terminus of which adjoins their coaling station. The duty on coal of course prevents them from coaling on the Canadian side. As the Canadian canal has been a very expensive public work it is much to be regretted that its usefulness should be thus incidentally demonstrated. Our national credit demands that whatever is possible should be done to remove the disabilities resting on our own waterway, and it is well that these revelations have taken place.

The Vice-Regal Tour.

The Earl and Countess of Aberdeen have during the past three weeks made an extensive tour throughout the Province of Ontario, the occasion being the fall exhibitions held at various centres of population. No better way of getting a fair idea of the resources and industries of this great Province could be devised. These exhibitions are mainly agricultural, but by no means entirely so; in fact, agriculture does not get any more prominence than its comparative importance should secure for it. That their Excellencies have heartily enjoyed their tour there is no reason to doubt. The Governor-General is well known to be deeply interested in agriculture, and difference of conditions under which it must be carried on here as contrasted with his own country would only add a scientific zest to his economic motive. Lady Aberdeen's practical and intelligent interest in all that relates to the

social side of woman's life in this and other lands is so well known that it has secured for her the entree to the hearts of benevolent and thoughtful people everywhere, while the entire absence of affectation in her manner charms women of all classes. It is not easy for one in her position to actively promote a movement without some appearance of condescension in her manner, but this difficult feat she has accomplished with complete success. Be their stay in Canada long or short, Lord and Lady Aberdeen will always be kindly remembered by those with whom they came in contact during this tour.

The Queen's Park.

If making so-called "improvements" in the Queen's Park means that pedestrians are to be warned off the "improved"

grass by unsightly sign boards, then the City Council would do well to stop before it begins, to use an hibernicism. It is enough that the eight or ten acres in front of the Parliament building are thus "improved" out of public use, without restricting in the same absurd way the freedom of those who so thoroughly enjoy the thirty or thirty-five acres in rear of that edifice. It is quite possible to spend money advantageously on the Park, but it will not do to prevent people from walking just where they please. The Queen's Park belongs to the people of Toronto, who pay to the University a rental of \$6,000 a year for its use; it does not belong only to the few who are content to look at green grass; it belongs also to the vast multitude who feel a real pleasure in strolling, or even rolling, about on the sward. Plant more trees by all means, but take proper scientific precautions to secure vigorous growth. Level up the surface of the Park and enrich the soil so as to secure a more abundant growth of grass. Make proper footpaths and plenty of them, so as to accommodate pedestrians who like artificial walks. But after all this is done, leave to those who prefer the grass unrestricted liberty to enjoy a stroll over it.

The Fast Steamship Scheme.

The discussion which took place on this subject in the House of Commons has done something to clear the air, but this only enables one to see that the whole project is not yet on a strict business basis. In order to interpret aright Sir Richard Cartwright's statement that the British Government is not committed to any particular amount of subsidy, one must remember that he spent a day quite recently in conferring with Mr. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and that he must have talked over this matter along with many others in the course of that interview. The net result of the discussion may be summed up as including, besides the above statement from the Minister of Trade and Commerce, a caution from him to the country not to hasten too recklessly or expect too much. His words were words of warning rather than of encouragement, and as he has not been during this session in a pessimistic mood, his warning is entitled to careful consideration. It would be a colossal blunder to commit Canada to a subsidy of three-quarters of a million annually for ten years, only to find that the result is a service far short of what has been expected.