

THE WEEK.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th, 1891.

\$3.00 per Annum.
Single Copies, 10 Cents.

Eighth Year.
Vol. VIII., No. 42.

THE WEEK:

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND ART

TERMS:—One year, \$3.00; eight months, \$2.00; four months, \$1.00. Subscriptions payable in advance. Subscribers in Great Britain and Ireland supplied, postage prepaid, on terms following:—One year, 12s. 6d.; half-year, 6s. 6d. Remittances by P.O. order or draft should be made payable and addressed to the Publisher. ADVERTISEMENTS, unexceptionable in character and limited in number, will be taken at \$4.00 per line per annum; \$2.50 per line for six months; \$1.50 per line for three months; 20 cents per line per insertion for a shorter period. No advertisements charged less than five lines. Address—T. R. CLOUGHER, Business Manager, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

TOPICS—	PAGE
The New Frauds Bill	667
The Frauds Act Should Begin Higher	667
H. W. Party Funds are Replenished	667
The Sunday Laws in Canada	667
The Trend Toward Sabbath Legislation	668
The First Constitutional Question	668
The Second Constitutional Question	668
The Drift to the Cities	668
Is this Drift Necessarily an Evil?	669
The Dardanelles Question	669
ATHLETIC CULTURE	669
ABBE LAFRAMME ON UNIVERSITY EXTENSION	Principal Grant. 669
THE RIVER TOWN. (Poem)	Duncan Campbell Scott. 670
DIFFERENTIAL DUTIES AND IMPERIAL FEDERATION	G. C. C. 670
OTTAWA LETTER	X 670
WOLFE'S CHARACTER AS SHOWN BY HIS CORRESPONDENCE	T. C. L. Ketchum. 671
A SNOWDROP AND A FANCY. (Poem)	Hugh Cochrane. 673
JOTTINGS ON THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION	J. M. Le Moine, F.R.S.C. 673
PARIS LETTER	Z 673
THE RAMBLER	674
A YACHTING SONG	William T. James. 674
ART NOTES	674
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	674
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	675
LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP	676
READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE	678
SCIENTIFIC AND SANITARY	678
CHESS	679

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THE Bill to prevent frauds on the Government, which Premier Abbott has prepared and is passing through Parliament, has no doubt been carefully and skilfully drawn up in the light of the revelations of the Session and with a view to prevent the repetition of fraudulent practices, such as those which have so greatly shocked the moral sentiment of the community. Without going into the details of the measure, it may be said that in two or three respects the Bill introduces new principles which, while commending themselves to our sense of justice, can hardly fail to be practically serviceable. The first and most important of these is the recognition that in all cases of bribery, commissions, betrayals of trust, and other dishonest or dishonourable practices, the giver is equally guilty with the receiver and should be a sharer in the punishment. Morally there may be grades of guilt, varying now in favour of the one party, now of the other. For instance it can hardly be denied that the act of a Murphy, urging and almost forcing a valuable gift upon a public officer, differs considerably from that of a dealer in printing materials in yielding to the earnest solicitations of a "hungry" Senecal. But legally both alike should be held sharers in the guilt of the transaction. And both are to be so treated under the new Bill, as we understand it. If this be so the plea so often put forward, that a man has a right to do what he pleases with his own money, will be of no avail. In order to make this new and somewhat stern legislation effective, Mr. Abbott's Bill also proposes another innovation upon ordinary legal procedure. Recognizing the difficulty that often occurs in proving connection between the business transaction and the gift, which may be subsequent to it, the new Bill is so framed as to require no substantive proof that the intention of the person giving the remuneration was not perfectly innocent. The fact of the gift is to be taken as *prima facie* proof of wrong intention. These and other stringent provisions seem adapted to make the Bill about as strong within its own scope as it is possible to make it. But is that scope as wide as it should be? Is the Bill likely to reach the source of the evil? We cannot think so. In the first place the Act can be operative, its penalties can be inflicted, only when the wrong-doing has been found

out, and it is clear that in every such case the parties act in the belief that the objectionable transaction never will be found out, since it is in the interest of both parties that it be kept secret. It is quite possible, not to say probable, that after all these investigations are closed there will remain in the Departments other offenders who have not been, and may never be, found out, and the severer the penalties the stronger will be the motives for secrecy. It is true that there is another side to the argument. Many persons will refuse to do an act which they know to be illegal, when they would not have hesitated to do it otherwise. Thus a stringent law often becomes an educator of the conscience. Moreover, the fact that to bestow a gift or commission is, under the circumstances, a penal offence will often be of advantage to a merchant in giving him a strong ground for refusal.

BUT the point we wish to reach is the necessity for beginning higher up with the strict legislation. Let the legislators and Heads of Departments be required to set the example for their subordinates. What is the difference in principle between such acts as those forbidden and that of a member of the Government who accepts personally, or through a political club or agency, a subscription for election purposes from a man with whom the Department has dealings? Premier Abbott says, forcibly, that there is not "one man in ten thousand, or one man in the Dominion, who would believe that a person desiring to sell or habitually selling goods to a department who makes presents to the person who, from time to time, buys them for the department, has not a desire to ingratiate himself with the person and procure larger prices or more frequent purchases, or purchases unusually large in their magnitude, or some other thing inconsistent with the interests of the Government he represents." *Mutatis mutandis*, may not exactly the same thing be said in regard to the man who, having sold or wishing to sell goods to a department, makes a contribution, voluntary or solicited, to the electoral fund of the Party to which the Minister belongs? It is vain to plead that in the one case the gift benefits the individual, in the other merely strengthens the Party. For, in the first place, whatever helps to retain the Party in power helps to continue the Ministerial emoluments. Further, aside from any mercenary motive, the Minister's Party may be as dear to him as the official's bank account is to him, and hence the corrupt inducement be quite as strong in the one case as in the other. For our own part we have no strong hope of any radical improvement in the morality of the public service, so long as the twin evils of Government patronage and an unlimited collection and use of money for election purposes are the order of the day. While these are permitted and flourish, the axe is not yet laid at the tap-roots of corruption in public life.

ONE of the strangest and most significant bits of testimony that have been brought out before any of the Parliamentary Committees was that given by Mr. Dansereau before the Public Accounts Committee, touching the purchase of presses for the Printing Bureau. That he should have been commissioned by Minister Chapleau to call on the managers of two of the leading firms dealing in such materials, in New York, for the express purpose of warning them beforehand that in case they should be favoured with orders they must not pay commissions to anybody, is indeed most suggestive. What could have put such a suspicion of danger into the head of a Minister who, we are expected to believe, had no knowledge of the sharp practices of his chief subordinate? Had he not confidence in the man of his own appointment? If not, why not? Should he not have put in so responsible a position a man above suspicion of taking bribes? And then how strange the coincidence that in both cases the managers should have been seized with a sudden desire to contribute to the funds of the party of whose existence they probably scarcely knew before the hope of an order for goods dawned on them. Could it have been that these men were so struck with the singular virtue of a Minister who could thus anticipate the possibility of wrong-doing and checkmate it in advance, that they felt that such a man ought to be kept in office at all hazards? But even more signi-

ficant still was the fact that Mr. Dansereau, on giving this evidence, seemed to be quite unconscious of anything wrong and actually indeed to suppose that he was helping the Minister by bringing out facts that were creditable to him. No argument is needed to show that to virtually ask from the dealer with whom one is about to do business, in advance of placing an order, a contribution, whether for personal or party purposes, is to be guilty of an act not in the least distinguishable, morally, from that of a McGreevy, an Arnoldi, or a Senecal. The investigation is not yet completed, and we have no wish to pronounce judgment in advance. But we are surely justified in saying that unless Mr. Chapleau can discredit or rebut the testimony of his friend Dansereau and prove himself innocent of what is so clearly implied in that evidence, his position will be such that it must be impossible for him to remain in the Government, if it is indeed honestly bent on a radical reform.

BUT in Ontario fast walking is prohibited, and a "Sabbath-day's journey" (all vehicular traffic being forbidden) must be short indeed. Even "total immersion" (in the form of bathing) is interdicted. Canada is the least literary of the British Colonies, and Thomas Hood's "Epistle to Rae Wilson" is probably unknown to it. Would it not be worth while for the Sunday Society, or some other enlightened association, to export the poem, which, if bound in pamphlet form, might be mistaken for a tract, and thereby have a chance of being read? Surely Sir Andrew Agnew, who endeavoured to prevent beer from "working" on a Sunday, must have been a Nova Scotian baronet!

Our readers, belonging as most of them do to "the least literary of the British Colonies," cannot, of course, be expected to know a literary gem when they see it. We hasten to assure them that the above is one of the first water, the guarantee being that it is from the pen of Mr. James Payn, and printed in the columns of the *Illustrated London News*. If any specially ambitious colonist desires to make a study of it, as a specimen of the *genus* "sneer," we scarcely know whether to cite his attention first to the graceful and effective mode of disguising the dull facts, or to the charming delicacy of the two-edged innuendoes. But, as other English writers, who lack Mr. Payn's fine genius for invention, seem to have formed wrong conceptions of the character and aim of Canadian Sunday legislation, a word or two in regard to the matter may not be amiss. Attention has of late been drawn to the subject in the Mother Country by the publication of summaries of certain reports which have been sent by the Lieutenant-Governors of the Colonies, in answer to official enquiries. These reports no doubt indicate that the day of rest for man and beast is somewhat more carefully guarded in these Colonies than in England. Nevertheless, a great majority of Canadians are, we venture to say, very well satisfied with the result, as shown in the health, sobriety and general morality of the law-abiding population. But if our friends on the other side of the ocean would take the trouble to study our Sunday laws a little more closely before discussing them, they would, perhaps, conclude that we are not quite so Puritanic in the matter as they seem to think. It is true that all general business, traffic, public entertainments, games, excursions, etc., are prohibited on Sunday. Such prohibitions are, to some extent, no doubt, a survival from those days when the great majority of our sober forefathers desired—as happily a large proportion of their descendants still do—to attend public worship throughout the day, and exercised their right to prohibit whatever in the way of work, or bustle, or revelry, would tend unnecessarily to interrupt their devotions. It is true that the great majority of our people still love a quiet Sunday, and object to have their rest on that day broken in upon by the carousings of drunken men, and hence have decreed the closing of the saloons upon that day, greatly to the comfort of all lovers of good order and sobriety. This is, we suppose, a modern experiment, but it is one whose results commend it to lovers of decorum. But if anyone supposes, as some of our English contemporaries seem to do, that these prohibitions are conceived in such a spirit or carried out in such a manner as to make them the agencies of a petty tyranny, or to interfere with the freedom of the individual to walk, or drive, or row, or visit