

# THE WEEK.

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## Current Topics.

The Conservative Manifesto.

On Tuesday Sir Charles Tupper issued the Government programme in the shape of an address to the electors signed by himself.

It is a clear, straightforward document concise and decisive with which little fault can be found—that is, by the Conservative party. The National Policy, Preferential Trade within the Empire, and the fast Atlantic Steamship service rightly take precedence in the address to the tiresome and disturbing Manitoba School business, but Sir Charles does not hesitate to say that it is the patriotic duty of the Government to adhere to their remedial policy. So we shall have Remedial Bill the Second to consider before long—provided the Government is sustained. This will not please the Anti-Remedialists among the Conservatives of whom there are a goodly and active number. "The only weak point in the manifesto," says The Toronto World, "is the Government's determination to go on with the Remedial Bill in the face of the strenuous opposition that has been developed in Ontario against the measure." But it is difficult to see how the Government could do otherwise. They have committed themselves too deeply in the matter now to turn back. It is clear, too, that the Premier has no misgivings about the Bill for all the new Ministers he has taken into his Cabinet are extreme "remedialists." The greatest and most commanding force in Canadian politics is the Roman Catholic Church. It is clear that the Government consider that its support will be more than enough to carry the country in spite of any "kicking over the traces" by anti-remedialists and other displeased adherents of the party. The Roman Church will very likely issue a *mandement* bidding its members support the Government. Should it take this extreme and unwise course it may arouse such ill-feeling in Ontario that the Liberal gains in the premier Province will wipe out their losses in Quebec. Sir Charles will be well-advised should he point out this possibility to the hierarchy in the event of their seriously considering such a suicidal course. Though Mr. Laurier has politely refused to do the bidding of the Roman Church when what it bids is contrary to his sense of the fitness of things, it is difficult to understand what course he will pursue with respect to the Manitoba difficulty should he become Premier of the Dominion. He has said that he thoroughly sym-

thizes with the Manitoba minority. Mr. Greenway maintains that there is nothing to sympathize about. So far as we can see Mr. Laurier may go quite as far as the present Dominion Government towards re-establishing separate schools. He has said nothing that will prevent him from doing so. He objects to coercion. But what course would he follow were he Premier and had failed to effect a peaceful settlement with the Manitoba Government? This information is needed before the elections take place.

A Question of Fact.

The Toronto Globe took exception to our remarks on the wonderful difference between the Conservative and the Liberal reports of Mr. Laurier's Sohmer Park meeting, and said we should have referred to the independent papers of Montreal for evidence as to which side was trifling with the facts. Not only were the independent papers carefully examined, but a representative of THE WEEK visited Montreal and made it his business to discover the truth. After making this examination we see no reason to modify our statements. We gave it as our opinion that the meeting was a success and that it was a splendid tribute to Mr. Laurier. But at the same time we pointed out that the meeting had been magnified by the Liberal papers, and that it was not quite the great success they had made out. We also intimated that the belittling on the part of the Conservatives exceeded by some degrees the magnifying on the part of the Liberals. But neither party was accurate in its statement, and that was the point of our remarks.

The Fast Atlantic Service.

According to the cable dispatches of yesterday tenders for steamers to be used in the new Trans-Atlantic service between England and Canada were advertised for in the London newspapers on Wednesday morning. It is reported that in response to the advertisements a number of interested persons applied at the Canadian office at once for information as to the conditions governing the acquisition of vessels by the managers of the new enterprise.

Sir Oliver's Letter.

Great interest has been manifested throughout the Dominion in Sir Oliver Mowat's letter to Mr. Laurier announcing his decision, after much consideration, to join the Liberal leader in what will be the second Reform Government since Confederation. Sir Oliver, however, is not so bold a man as Mr. Taillon and will not resign the Premiership of Ontario until after the elections. If the Liberals do not win Sir Oliver will not resign. If they win he will be appointed to the Senate, and given, it is said, the portfolio of Minister of Justice. Contrasted with Mr. Taillon's readiness to abandon his high office and to run the risk of a defeat, Sir Oliver's course appears eminently cautious and free from any touch of self-sacrifice or undue confidence in the success of the Liberals in the elections. But it is hardly fair to compare Sir Oliver with Mr. Taillon or to smile at the caution he displays. His age is great and his strength not equal to the strain and worry of a severe campaign. He has held the office of Premier of Ontario for so many years that we can readily understand his unwillingness to break with all the old ties and associations which endear the office to him.