

# THE WEEK.

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## Current Topics.

**Newfoundland and Canada.**  
Sir William Whiteway, the Premier of Newfoundland, has thought it necessary to cable to London a denial of the statements made in press despatches about the financial position of the Colony. He admits, however, a considerable falling off in revenue for the first month of 1895 as compared with the first month of 1894, and attributes this, not to the recent financial crash, but to "reduced purchasing power owing to the limitation of the market for exports." In one of Sir William's statements Canadians have a special interest, for according to him, the loss of revenue would have been much less "had the Imperial Government ratified the Bond-Blaine convention with the United States." If this assertion is true it is a severe reflection on the Canadian Government, for it was at their instance that the convention was disallowed. A correspondent of the *Montreal Gazette* expresses the opinion that the Whiteway Government have not yet adopted any policy for the future of the colony, but he repeats the already widely entertained opinion that the inevitable alternatives are union with Canada or the status of a crown colony, and expresses his belief that a deputation will soon be sent to Ottawa to negotiate terms of union. The time mentioned will be very inopportune if it turns out that Canada is herself to be then on the eve of a general election. Though the case is undoubtedly urgent it will be useless to raise the question in Canada with any hope of speedy settlement until it becomes known which party is likely to be in power for the next five years.

**The Hawaiian Situation.**  
Recent news from Honolulu is to the effect that President Dole has commuted to heavy fines and long terms of imprisonment the death sentences passed by the military court on five of the "rebels" engaged in the recent *emeute*. This, if the facts are as reported, will relieve the provisional Government of

danger from serious international complications, but it will not do much to make its tenure of office more certain. The future of Hawaii is still to be determined, and it is likely that, so long as Mr. Cleveland is President of the United States, the Hawaiians will be allowed to work out their own national destiny in spite of the propagandism of those who favour annexation. The best evidence of this is the fact that the Senate at the last moment was forced to withdraw an amendment it had tacked on to the diplomatic appropriation bill for the purpose of constraining the President to assent to some provision for furthering the construction of a submarine cable to Hawaii. The withdrawal was the result of an intimation that the President would veto the diplomatic appropriation bill if it contained any such provision. It is better for all parties that the Hawaiians should be left to settle their own affairs to their own liking.

### The Czar and Autocracy.

The hopes that had been built, no doubt on very slender foundations, that the new Czar of Russia was disposed to Liberalism, and would proceed gradually to enfranchise his subjects and train them for representative government, was rather rudely dispelled by his blunt announcement to the delegates from the representative councils who lately were assembled in St. Petersburg, from all parts of the vast Empire, to congratulate him on his marriage. To one hundred and eighty-two of these representatives whom he received in a single day, he took occasion to say that any vague expectations of having a share in the Government which they might have been led to entertain were bootless; and that, while ready to devote all his energies to the task of promoting the well-being of his subjects, he was firmly resolved to carry out the policy of his lamented father, to tolerate no encroachment upon his prerogative and to maintain intact the autocratic power which he has inherited. It is a strange and humiliating spectacle, that of one man thus declaring to the representatives of a vast host of men, that they can have no privileges in the way of freedom and self-government since he is determined to do all the ruling himself. Yet it is now said that the Emperor is chagrined to find that seventy per cent. of his subjects can neither read nor write, and that he is causing to be prepared an extensive and elaborate plan for extending public education. Misguided man! It is to be hoped in the interests of human freedom and progress, that no one will show him that to educate his people is to emancipate them, and that in no way can he so surely make it impossible for himself or his successors to retain their autocratic powers as by extending popular education.

### Clericalism in Germany.

It is surely by some subtle irony of the Fates it happens that it is in Germany, the motherland of modern rationalism, that a member of the National Parliament soberly proposes, as an amendment to an anti-revolution bill, that a penalty of fine and imprisonment shall be inflicted upon any person who dares, in speech or writing, to deny certain religious dogmas. It goes without saying that the proposer of such a measure is a Clerical. We are often disposed to scout as the offspring of fanatical prejudice the assertion that if certain religious