

# THE WEEK:

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## SALUTATORY.

WITH this number THE WEEK enters on its second year, and with a most encouraging prospect for the years to come. Its early difficulties have been surmounted; it is now firmly established; its circulation fully answers the expectation of its proprietors, and is steadily increasing. The union which it presents of the Magazine with the Weekly Journal appears to be recognized as the thing needed, and Independent Journalism is evidently growing in favour with the most enlightened and patriotic portion of the community. The literary talent of Canada, having an organ offered to it, is being drawn forth, and our staff of Contributors is constantly increasing. We are thus enabled to improve from time to time special departments, such as those of Commerce, Education, Art, Science, Music, and Chess. The lovers of music have we trust of late been sensible of our desire to promote the interests of that great source of happiness and refinement. The second year of our enterprise opens in hope, which we shall do our utmost to fulfil.

## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

SOONER than could have been expected comes a negative explanation of Sir John Macdonald's wish for some new form of connection between Canada and Great Britain. A direct representation of Canada in the House of Commons he now, the Empire Club being his audience, sets down as "entirely impracticable." While this is satisfactory as far as it goes, it throws no light on the main point to which repeated references by him have directed attention: a closer connection between Canada and England. Colonial representation in the House of Commons, even if not impracticable, would be useless or worse than useless to Canada. If it did not bear an approximate proportion to population it would, even if there were no other objections, be rejected by the colonies; if it did bear a direct relation to population, it would prepare the way for a transfer of power from the centre to the extremities of the empire. A nominal representation, such as the French colonies have in the Chamber of Deputies and the Spanish colonies in the Cortes, is merely a warrant for the central power to do what it likes with the dependencies, on the assumption that they are, through their representatives, consenting parties. To them it is not a pledge of freedom but a badge of slavery, all the worse for wearing a

disguise intended to conceal its real character. The expression of a wish for "a closer connection" seems little consistent with the transformation of Canada into an "auxiliary kingdom," which, if it has any meaning, means independence. The distinct averment that the position of an ally would be preferable to that of a dependent can have but one meaning. This is a repetition of the language used by Sir John when he returned from England after settling the Confederation Act. Then, as now, it is probable that he had caught the spirit of his surroundings, and that his utterances were the unconscious echo of the thoughts of others. When he returns to Canada, Sir John is likely, if not to forget what he said in England, to neglect to take any steps looking to the setting up of the "auxiliary kingdom," which, like a phantom, passed for a moment before his mental vision.

THERE has been another Imperial Confederation Conference in London, at which Sir John Macdonald was present, along with a representative—if self-appointment can ever confer the representative character—from Australia. The members of the conference, seeing the shadow of the group on the wall, came to a pause expressive of an ill-defined emotion, in which were present timidity and a fear of criticism; and so hastily filling two bottles with smoke and labelling them "Strength of Empire," they despatched one to Canada and the other to Australia. If this is not a literal report, it fairly represents what was done. The conference then separated, each member swelling with the conscious pride of having performed an act of statesmanship which will carry beneficial results to the remotest corner of the British Empire. But, and this must not be forgotten, before they separated Sir John Macdonald made a display of courage which was in striking contrast with the general tone of the meeting. He undertook to guarantee that to the next war in which England may engage, whenever and wherever it may be, Canada will contribute both of men and money. Volunteers for any war, in which the name of England was not even heard, it would not be difficult to get in Canada; but in saying that Canada is prepared to enter on a system of subsidies in support of whatever wars Great Britain may engage in, is to take much for granted about which there is the gravest doubt.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT, in his Montreal speech, was scarcely less vague in his forecast of the future of Canada than the Imperial Confederation Conference. He is willing to discuss Imperial Confederation, in the meantime, as a stepping-stone to political Pan-Anglicanism in the distant future. The significance of his speech is in the evidence which it affords of unrest, the consciousness that some new development, the shape of which cannot be realized, will alter the political fortunes of this country. But while politicians speculate vaguely, the strong hand of destiny is shaping the future, and things tend to the natural course into which they will fall almost automatically.

COMPLIMENTS are not like curses, apt to come home to roost, but some compliments which Sir John Macdonald recently let down in a gentle shower on the French Canadians were hurled back at his head with notable signs of vigour. Cartier used to tell his friends that the sons of France in Canada could never look back to the country of their fathers with a longing for political reunion, because they were repelled by a fear of a repetition of the revolutionary movements of which France has been the theatre since the conquest. Sir John, who must have heard this often, thought he might say something of the same kind on his own account. A dinner at the Beaconsfield Club naturally furnished a favourable occasion for offering some vouchers for the loyalty of Canadians. The loyalty of the French Canadians he attributed to the "mortal horror" they have of "the spirit of Atheism and Communism which now exists in France." This, objects the *Canadien*, means that the guarantee for the fidelity of the French Canadians is to be found in their hatred for the France of to-day, and a very emphatic denial of the correctness of this view of the facts follows. The filial affection of French Canadians for France, Sir John is assured, is unshaken; if Atheism or Communism raise their heads where we are