

# THE WEEK.

Vol. XII.

Toronto, Friday, December 28th, 1894.

No. 5.

## Contents.

	PAGE
CURRENT TOPICS	99
THE PURIFICATION OF POLITICS	101
MAX O'RELL'S LATEST BOOK	101
EVOLUTION	102
RECENT FICTION	103
THE ANGEL'S VISIT (Poem)	Fidelis. 104
SOCIOLOGY IN EDUCATION	Wm. Houston, M.A. 104
THE ETHICS OF THE SIDEWALK	C. M. 105
ON THE DEATH OF SIR JOHN THOMPSON AT WINDSOR CASTLE (Sonnet)	106
PARIS LETTER	Alfred Thorold. 106
CAIRO VIGNETTES: KASR-EN-NIL BRIDGE. I	Z. 107
THE AULD HAME (Poem)	Pastor Felix. 108
CORRESPONDENCE:	
Victor Dumy as an Historian	Prof. Goldwin Smith, LL.D. 109
The Distress in Newfoundland	Justice. 109
A Plea for Discrimination	Robert Field. 110
Congratulations	British Canadian. 110
SUMMER IN WINTER (Poem)	Jas. A. Tucker. 111
WHAT IS A SNOB?	Snoblet. 111
To "CRITIC" (Poem)	B. D. 112
LITERARY TABLE	112
LITERARY AND PERSONAL	114
PERIODICALS	114
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	114
ART NOTES	115
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED	115
PUBLIC OPINION	116
SCIENTIFIC AND SANITARY	117
MISCELLANEOUS	118
QUIPS AND CRANKS	119

For Terms of Subscription and Advertising Rates see last page.  
Address all Literary and Business Communications to THE WEEK PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED, TORONTO, CANADA.

## Current Topics.

**The New Year.** Ovid tells us that among the Romans it was the custom for every man to do on New Year's Day a little work in the line of the occupation which he expected to follow during the year. Everyone thus took "a slight taste of his calling." The carpenter did some trifling job, the tailor and shoemaker took a few stitches, the farmer did a little work in the fields, even the pleader exercised his lungs for a few moments in the forum. This was done, the poet tells us, "lest the whole year might be spent in idleness from a bad precedent" at the beginning. Though there was a flavour of superstition about the usage, whose omission would have been regarded as an ill omen, it is not difficult to trace in it the same natural impulse which prompts so many of us to regard the first day of the New Year as the proper time for reviewing the past and making good resolutions for the future. The last days of the closing year very naturally bring more or less of retrospection, and every scrutiny of the past brings to memory so many mistakes and failures of various kinds, that the tendency to reproach ourselves for weakness and to resolve to do better next time is irresistible. Such a process, if honesty and conscientiously carried on, can hardly fail to be salutary. There are, of course, great variations in the degrees of steadiness and persistency with which men do their work and carry out their designs, but an honest retrospection will make it clear that the most purposeful and persistent do not pursue the even tenor of their way, but that the progress of the most successful along their chosen paths is rather a succession of spurts or sprints, alternating with intervals of relaxed energy, and weakened purpose. It is true that we learn the lesson of life to very little effect if we do not year by year approximate more nearly to a steady and sustained movement. Yet the strongest will always find it greatly wise to talk with their past hours, note the causes of weakness or failure, and deliberately resolve to make more of each succeeding year for the worthy fulfilment of their life-purposes. There are probably few who will not also find it well to seize the favourable time for asking themselves whether those purposes are those worthiest to be made respectively life's goal.

## The Crisis in Newfoundland.

If the choice of Newfoundland lies between insolvency and the surrender of their constitution, as The London *Times* puts it, her case is deplorable indeed. This alternative is based on the assumption that the loan of one million dollars besought from the British Government cannot be granted. The *Times* thinks the granting of it would be a cruel kindness, meaning, probably, that the loan would but prolong the agony, and and that there would be no hope of the Colony being able to recover its feet or make its way with that small amount of assistance. The fact, no doubt, is that the British Ministry would not dare, even if they had the right, to make such an advance without the approval of Parliament—an approval which it would no doubt be hard to obtain. The Colony is doubly discredited in the Mother Country, first by reason of its exceeding obstinacy and impracticability in the matter of the French Treaty Rights, and second by reason of the appalling political corruption which has been brought to light in connection with the late general election. If the Colonists meet with no sympathy or help from England, and are coldly left by her to choose between the alternatives mentioned by the *Times*, it would not be surprising were a strong party to turn their eyes towards Washington, but it is in the last degree likely that the Americans would see anything sufficiently tempting in the proposal to repay them for possible trouble with Great Britain, on the one hand, and with France on the other. It is possible that the British Government may seize the opportunity to urge the colonists to apply for admission into the Canadian Confederation, but even that application could hardly be warmly received, save on the condition that the French shore question should first be definitively and satisfactorily settled.

"We cannot do everything at once; but as regards the principle upon which these appropriations (for canals, improved mail service, etc.,) are made, I would answer that the Government follows the same rule that determines the action of individuals. If any of you had a legacy left you to divide among the people you would most naturally begin with your friends."

## An Indefensible Principle.

The above words appear in the *Globe's* report of a speech made by the Hon. Mr. Ouimet, Minister of Public Works, at Guysboro, N.S., a few weeks since. The selfsame words have been several times since attributed to the Minister by the *Globe*, and we have looked in vain for an indignant denial from the Minister or some of his friends. We read them at the first with incredulity, because, in the first place, we were loth to believe that any minister of the Crown in Canada would admit for a moment, even to himself, that he could act upon such a principle in the administration of the public funds of which he was trustee, and because, in the second place, we could not believe that if there were, unhappily, a Minister who could be so forgetful of administrative honour, he would be so ill-advised as to publicly declare the fact. We are well aware that it would be folly for a Minister or his friends to attempt to correct every misrepresentation which may appear in Opposition journals. But when words containing the enunciation of an utterly indefensible principle are repeatedly attributed to the responsible head of