

THE WEEK.

Eighth Year.
Vol. VIII., No. 20.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, APRIL 17th, 1891.

\$3.00 per Annum.
Single Copies 10 Cents.

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.

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

COMMENTING on the interchange of pulpits by the ministers of the different denominations in the city on Sunday last, one of the morning papers remarks that he would have been an acute theologian indeed who could have discerned the peculiar denominational tenets of most of the preachers from the sermons they delivered. This was, perhaps, scarcely remarkable under the circumstances. Few preachers are, it may be hoped, so blinded by sectarian feeling, or so regardless of the claims of Christian courtesy, as to choose such an occasion to bring denominational dogmas to the fore. But the remark recalls a somewhat similar one recently made by the editor of one of the largest and most widely circulated religious weeklies in the United States, to the effect that it would be well-nigh impossible for a stranger visiting the leading churches of the various Protestant bodies in the Republic, to discern from the sermon in any case the denominational connection of the worshippers. That the minor lines of doctrinal division are becoming so obscured, or so overshadowed by more important issues that they are seldom visible in the discourses which the abler preachers prepare for their own people, is indeed a notable sign of the time. Very different was the state of things which the memory of the man of middle age will recall as existing in the days of his youth. Deeply as some distinguished theologians of the straiter sects may deplore what they regard as indicating a "down-grade" tendency, a growing carelessness in regard to aspects of truth which they deem of vital importance, there seem to be at least equally valid grounds for regarding the change as eminently hopeful. Notwithstanding all that is said about the religious degeneracy of the age, and the alarming growth of heterodoxy and agnosticism, it may well be doubted whether there has ever been, in any era, more of profound and open-minded search for truth, on all subjects coming within the range of human thought and investigation than at the present day. The Poet Laureate spoke as a philosopher when he declared:—

There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

"The truth shall make you free" was the utterance of a diviner philosophy. But may it not be that many who

believe themselves the Heaven-sent champions of the highest truth, too often forget the complementary side of that great saying, which is presented in so many inspired passages, as was pointed out by the late Dean Alford, viz., that only the free man can rightly and lovingly apprehend the truth? And yet, can any candid and thoughtful mind doubt that it requires a higher reverence for truth to question an old-time dogma and bring it to the test in the clearest light that modern science and criticism can shed upon it, than to hold fast to some old, perhaps lifeless form of words, with blind, traditional reverence? In a word, may not loyalty to truth be both a higher and a rarer virtue than the loyalty to dogma which is too often mistaken for it? Only he who has a profound faith in the immortality and eternity of truth itself can fearlessly bring every form of old belief to be focussed in the clearest rays of light which stream upon it from every quarter. What is it but that truer loyalty to truth which is killing old sectarian prejudices and drawing the earnest searchers of different names nearer to each other in the bonds, not of a hollow uniformity, but of that genuine unity which is attainable only along the myriads of distinct yet ever-converging paths of honest diversity?

THOSE who had been looking forward with expectancy to the foreshadowed discussion of trade questions by the Toronto Board of Trade must have been somewhat disappointed by the narrow range of the debate which took place on Thursday evening, 9th inst. It may be hoped, however, that this was merely introductory to a series of such debates to be had in future meetings. The present crisis is one which demands that the men who have had the largest business experience, and who, from the nature of their occupations, must have given much study and thought to economic questions, should shed all the light possible upon the various trade policies in which the future of Canada is so deeply involved. The particular question dealt with on this occasion was that of closer trade relations with Great Britain. It is certainly suggestive in regard to the direction in which the eyes of a good many of our people are just now being turned that the following resolution should have been carried by a practically unanimous vote:—

That this Board is of the opinion that the time has come when closer trade relations should be entered into between Great Britain and her Colonies, and that a duty imposed by Great Britain on the food products of other nations with tariffs against her own productions will not enhance the value of the food products of the Empire, but will materially increase the production therein and place her in an independent position for her food supply in the near future.

The speech of Mr. Chapman, the mover of this resolution, showed marks of careful preparation, and presented many interesting facts and statistics. To what extent it was adapted to carry conviction to the minds of the sceptical in regard to its main contention, viz., that embodied in the second part of the resolution, is another matter. Though it was well supported by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Blain, the speeches of Mr. Bertram and Mr. Jaffray were far from admitting its conclusiveness. Yet, strange to say, both these gentlemen seem to have voted for a proposition which their arguments were directly aimed to disprove. Were both these gentlemen converted by Mr. Chapman's closing speech, or how is their assent to the resolution to be explained? As we have, in recent numbers, given some space to the discussion of the main question, we need not now go over the ground, though we are bound to confess that many of the reasons adduced to show that a tax on foreign food products would not increase their price in the British market seem to us to point in the opposite direction. At the same time it seems tolerably clear, too, that this increase in price is the very thing needed to make the proposed new policy practically beneficial to Canada. But, may we not venture to ask, with all respect to the Board of Trade, whether it was not a little unfortunate that their first discussion and resolution should have taken the shape of an expression of opinion touching a matter regarding which the statesmen and people of the Mother Country may naturally think themselves in a much better position to judge than we? Can we reasonably hope that a Colonial opinion in such a case will carry much weight with

those who, on a previous occasion, rejected with some disdain the advice of the Canadian Parliament in regard to a matter in which the welfare of Canada was believed to be involved? Be that as it may, no such objection can be felt to the request that a conference of representative men from the Colonies be summoned to meet in London to discuss the question of closer trade relations with Canada, which formed the subject of the second resolution. We earnestly hope that the request may be complied with at an early day. Would it not be well that other Colonies, or at least Australia, be asked to join with Canada in preferring the request?

AN elaborate article, evidently "inspired," in a recent number of the *Globe*, conveys the intimation that the Minister of Education has decided to establish a "School of Pedagogy" for Ontario. We have not seen as yet any Bill or other official document in which the plan of the proposed institution is detailed, and must, therefore, for the present, depend upon the *Globe* article for our information. We have no hesitation, however, in expressing the opinion that such a school, properly organized and equipped, will better supply the need of the Province in this respect—a need to which we have more than once referred—than any other arrangement. We may observe, in passing, that the idea is by no means a new one, Dr. McLellan, for one, having, if we are not greatly mistaken, conceived and advocated the plan not less than six or seven years ago, though the *Globe*, in its historical retrospect, fails to remind its readers of the fact. We ourselves have, we think, urged on one or more occasions that while there are, in our opinion, serious objections to the endowment of faculties of Law or Medicine, or other professions in connection with the Provincial University, out of the public educational funds, the weight of those objections is greatly lessened, if not entirely wanting, in regard to an Educational Faculty. A mere Chair of Education would be, as the *Globe* rightly argues, quite inadequate to the requirements of the case. Why the Minister should have preferred to establish an independent School of Pedagogy, instead of making it a department of the University, does not appear. We admit, however, that if sufficient funds are provided, the independent college is on the whole the preferable arrangement. We congratulate the Education Department and the Province on the great advance proposed. An efficient School of Pedagogy will be the cope-stone of our educational system. We shall watch the development and progress of the scheme with much interest. Still we must not forget that it would be easy to expect too much, even from such a school. There is, too, some danger of over-rating the efficacy of the study of psychology, of so-called educational science, methods, and so forth, in promoting national education. The public schools are really at the foundation of our educational system. It is in them that the masses of the people receive their training. The great want of the Province is that of a better class of teachers in these schools. The School of Pedagogy, by providing better teachers for the high schools, who in their turn are the educators of the public school teachers, may indirectly aid in accomplishing the desired result. But the reform must proceed from the bottom upwards, as well as from the top downwards. The chief desideratum is higher educational qualifications in the public school teachers. Something is being done in this direction in the proposal to make third-class certificates valid only locally. The next step, it may be hoped, will be their total abolition. No one, we make bold to say, whose educational qualifications are measured by the requirements for a third-class certificate is fit to be a teacher even of primary classes.

THE Ontario Government has introduced three Bills affecting the terms of ownership, or lease, of mining and mineral lands within the Province. The details of these measures are matters for careful consideration and thorough discussion by those qualified by special knowledge for such a service. There may be room for serious question as to whether these Bills go far enough in certain directions to accomplish the purpose intended. But the general principles underlying them, as outlining the new mining policy of the Government, are such as must, we