

THE WEEK.

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Contents.

	PAGE.
CURRENT TOPICS.....	696
LEADERS—	
The Toronto Bond Muddle.....	702
CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES—	
The National Celebration of the 400th Anniversary of the Discovery of America.....	703
Colonial Clubs.....	704
Bradlaugh, the Atheist M.P.....	705
nada from an Artist's Point of View.....	706
POETRY—	
" After Long Years ".....	703
MISCELLANEOUS—	
Parisian Affairs.....	707
At Street Corners.....	708
Montreal Affairs.....	709
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR—	
The Canadian Flag.....	710
A Proposed Canadian Flag.....	711
The Leak in the Barrel.....	711
The Memoirs of Barras.....	711
Newfoundland.....	712
BOOKS—	
Birdcraft.....	712
Recent Fiction.....	713

Current Topics.

The Queen

Yesterday, the 20th June, was the fifty-eighth anniversary of the happy day when Her Gracious Majesty, Lady Queen Victoria, began to reign over her vast dominions. Each year of her long and remarkable reign has but endeared her the more to all her subjects, but in no part of the Empire is Her Majesty more revered than in Canada. Our people feel for her a personal loyalty and affection which is not only a tribute to the Queen's beauty of character and impressive personality, but also an evidence that the people appreciate the ideal which Her Majesty has ever set herself steadfastly to follow.

Mr. Gladstone and Welsh Disestablishment.

It would be unsafe, without further particulars, to estimate the full meaning of Mr. Gladstone's withdrawal from his pairing agreement with Sir Charles Villiers. The reason assigned by *The Times*, viz., that he wishes to be regarded as having an open mind on the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, seems insufficient. Mr. Gladstone's mind must surely have been made up long since in regard to that question, seeing that his Ministry were fully pledged to the policy of disestablishment. True, it is possible that there may be questions of detail, especially in connection with the disendowment features of the measure, on which he may not be in full accord with the more advanced members of the present Government, though it is more likely that the Bill is, in the main, but an embodiment of the policy to which his own administration was fully committed, if it were not actually drawn by that administration. Be that as it may, *The Times'* inference that it must be that he extends his disapproval to the general policy of the Administration is, surely, a very wide one, seeing how closely that policy is in line with his own. Few great men have been readier than Mr. Gladstone to confess that they are wiser to-day than they were yesterday, but hitherto his changes of opinion have always been in the direction of Radicalism. It would be singular should his thinking now begin to run in the opposite direction. It is more probable, we fear, that fuller information will discredit *The Times* as an interpreter of his mental processes.

Manitoba's Reply.

The manifesto which has been submitted to the Manitoba Legislature by Mr. Greenway, on behalf of his Cabinet, and which will, no doubt, be adopted as the reply of the Government and Legislature to the Order-in-Council of the Dominion Government, is a moderately written, yet forcible paper. Its two strongest points are, perhaps, its statements with regard to the alleged inefficiency of the Separate Schools under the old system, which, it is understood, the Province is ordered to restore, and the serious difficulties with which the Province has to contend, even under the present law, in the education of its youth, in consequence of the sparsity of population in most sections of the country—difficulties which would be greatly increased were it obliged to keep up two sets of schools instead of one. These are matters of fact. Mr. Ewart has denied the facts in his published letter criticising the manifesto. There are other serious questions of fact at issue, as we have before pointed out, such as that touching the alleged interpolation of the Separate School question in what is called the fourth bill of rights. All these point directly to a thorough inquiry into the facts as a necessary first step, if any attempt is to be made at a settlement of the question by mutual consent, or by compromise. Another point, which is presented with becoming modesty, viz., that of the powerlessness of the Federal Government to provide for the sustentation of any system of Separate Schools without the consent and aid of the local Legislature, is evidently meant to stagger the Dominion authorities. To those who think it desirable or necessary that the purpose of the Dominion Government's mandate shall be carried into effect in some form, an inquiry into the facts must seem proper and necessary. To another influential class who object to the re-establishment of Separate sectarian schools, on any terms, these questions of fact are immaterial.

International Arbitration.

Considerable impetus will, it may be hoped, be given to the movement in favour of the formal adoption of the principle of arbitration in the settlement of all difficulties between civilized nations, by the action of a Conference on the subject which was held a few days since at Lake Mohonk, a place already famous for the conferences on the Indian question which have been held there year after year by the friends of the Indian in the United States, the recommendations of which conferences have been largely embodied in the recent legislation which is doing so much for the permanent settlement of that question on the humane and beneficent basis of civilization and citizenship. The conference now referred to was composed of a number of the most influential men in the United States, who had paid special attention to questions of international law. We have not yet seen a full report of the proceedings, but a declaration of principles which was adopted has been published. This declaration contains some very interesting statements of fact as well. In support of the affirmation that the feasibility of arbitration as a substitute for war is now established, we are informed that "in the last seventy-nine years at least eighty important controversies between civilized nations have been peacefully adjusted in this mode. Thirteen of these were controversies between the United States and Great Britain." Arbitration, it is