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## THE WEEK:

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### CURRENT TOPICS.

It is not easy to get a clear understanding of the causes of the riots and barricadings which have, within the last week or two, reminded the world, that the old Paris still survives in some of its least admirable characteristics. The trouble seems to have had its origin in the feud between student and civilian, and especially between student and policeman, which is unfortunately but too common in all university cities. The want of tact and general brutality of the policemen, intensified the bitterness of feeling on both sides. The anarchists who swarm in the less reputable parts were not slow to perceive their opportunity and array themselves on the side of disorder. Had the Premier the presence of mind and the nerve to adopt the Napoleonic plan for putting down mobs—bullets and grape-shot first and blank cartridges afterwards—order might have promptly restored. Probably—and this is perhaps one of the off-setting weaknesses of democracy—the

near approach of an election increased his hesitation and timidity, and gave the rioters time to get their courage up and lay their plans. The result has been a series of street conflicts marked by the carnage characteristic of Parisian riots, which have seriously impaired both the good name of the city and the prestige of the Government.

It is greatly to be regretted that the ill-advised remark of a Hindoo delegate, at one of the meetings of the Young People's Convention in Montreal should have served as a pretext for an attempt by a body of worthless roughs, aided possibly by others whose ignorance made them the ready dupes of the designing, to interrupt the peaceful progress of the meetings. No intelligent people would think of holding any deliberative body responsible for the remarks of a single individual member, especially after such responsibility had been formally disclaimed. No member of the Convention, endowed with a particle of right feeling, could for a moment countenance anything in the speeches or proceedings calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the Roman Catholic population of the city, seeing that they were to a certain extent the guests of the latter as well as of the Protestant section of the city, and had received a special welcome from its Roman Catholic mayor. Indeed the spirit in which they were received by the Roman Catholics of the city is not the least gratifying among the many indications of a growing spirit of liberality among our French-Canadian fellow-citizens. It is a pity that anything should have occurred to mar in the slightest degree the cordial good feeling that had previously existed, but the spirit in which the explanation was accepted by the leading French papers shows that the situation was pretty well understood by the more intelligent of the Catholic population. The promptitude with which every attempt at disorder was repressed by the police amply protected the good name of the city, while the free speech and fervent spirit of the Convention can hardly fail to bear fruit both before and after many days.

The marriage of Prince George, the Duke of York, to Princess May of Teck, which was celebrated with royal magnificence on the sixth inst., was an event of national importance by reason of its connection with the line of succession to the throne. The enthusiasm with which it was heralded by the people of England shows that the senti-

ment of attachment to the throne and constitution is still strong in English bosoms, while the fact that, in deference to the interests and supposed wishes of the working masses, the day was not made a national holiday shows, on the other hand, a degree of consideration for the common people which is probably unique in the history of the nation. The fate of the heir to the throne is ordinarily a hard one, restricted as he is by a thousand impassable barriers from the freedom of choice which is cherished and insisted on by the meanest subject, in the most momentous of all the movements which affect the happiness of the individual for life—the choice of a wife. But there seems good reason to hope that in this instance the union which was dictated by national considerations was also in accord with the personal wishes of both the parties most deeply concerned. Little credence can be given to the gossip which concerns itself with the affairs of royal princes and princesses even more than with those of private individuals, and is even less likely to be in accordance with fact in the former case than in the latter. Just to what extent the marriage is one of mutual affection and to what extent it was dictated by considerations of family or State will never, we suppose, be certainly known, or at least will not be so known until later history shall have put the public in possession of sources of information which are denied to contemporaries. Meanwhile it is pleasant to know that the probabilities are that the newly wedded pair are enjoying their honeymoon with all the zest which attaches to that month of months in the history of those more favoured individuals in private life who can choose each other "for better for worse," without consulting the traditions of the court or the interests of the nation.

Such scenes as those which have been enacted within the last week or two in the British Commons are sadly out of keeping with the reputation of "the most dignified deliberative assembly in the world;" but they were, we suppose, inevitable under the circumstances. It was impossible that such a measure as that now being forced through the House, in the face of so many powerful hostile forces, could be put on the statute book of the nation without evoking much intense feeling on both sides. So far as one can judge from the reports the honours for strong language and abusive epithets are pretty evenly divided between the hot-headed Irish members and some of their