

THE WEEK.

Vol. XI.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, JULY 27th, 1894.

No. 35.

THE WEEK:

A Canadian Journal of Politics, Literature, Science and Arts.

TERMS:—One year, \$3; eight months, \$2; four months, \$1. Subscriptions payable in advance.

Subscribers in Great Britain and Ireland supplied, postage prepaid, on terms following:—One year, 12s. stg.; half-year, 6s. stg. 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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CURRENT TOPICS.

The remarkable letter of President Cleveland, addressed to Mr. Wilson, on the tariff question, has produced something like a crisis in Congress. Whether the Constitution of the United States favours or admits such an attempt on the part of a President to influence legislation, by bringing his own personal influence and logical acumen to bear, is a question which we need not now discuss. To an onlooker such action seems quite in harmony with the system which admits of the election of the Chief Magistrate on strictly party principles, and as the leader and exponent of the policy of the party which elects him. The strong opinions expressed on almost every question of home and foreign policy by the

President in his annual message seems to point to the same conclusion. Why should he not argue the case in subsequent papers as well as in the annual message? It would be obviously premature to discuss Senator Gorman's very serious charges of duplicity until the President has had opportunity to reply, if he sees fit to do so. In any case, this seemingly irreconcilable split in the Democratic party probably settles the fate of the Wilson Bill and the Senate's Amendments at the same time, and makes it certain that no tariff bill will be passed this session. As the Senate will be scarcely more likely to vote for trusting themselves to the uncertainties of a popular election than the British House of Lords to vote for its own extinction, it is not likely that anything will come of the resolution of the representatives in favour of direct election of Senators by the people, immediately, though it may lead to an effective popular campaign in that direction.

A general election is approaching in Norway, and the event will not fail to be awaited with a good deal of interest throughout Europe, as well as in the two countries more immediately concerned. Public feeling is greatly excited in Norway, notwithstanding the habitual moderation and self-restraint of its people. The causes which threaten to bring about a rupture of the political union with Sweden have been explained in previous numbers. The Norwegians show no disposition to abate one jot from their previous demands for separate Norwegian consular agents and other modifications of the existing arrangement. The tension of the situation has been increased of late by the report of a plan or plot on the part of King Oscar for robbing Norway of its power of resistance, and by the rumour that he has been asking advice as to the best means of bringing the refractory partner to terms. The radical party among the Norwegians are said to be determined to push their claims at all hazards, and to be ready to bring about a separation, even at the cost of a sanguinary struggle, if necessary. The election will show to what extent the people are prepared to follow them. The temper of the Swedes is said to be also giving way under the strain. Should the result of the election be to show that the radical policy is favoured and supported by a popular majority, a war may be precipitated at any moment. Although a separation which would increase the number of small states in Europe would be deprecated on general principles, there is no doubt that Norway's cause would win a large share of

sympathy as the defence by a brave and high-spirited people of what they regard as their constitutional rights, and their essential freedom.

We are glad to note that the preparations for the Toronto Industrial Exhibition are said to be even more forward than usual at this season of the year. This annual fair deserves to rank among the important educational institutions of the Province. It would be difficult to conceive of any other arrangement which would enable a diligent and observant student to learn more of the agricultural and industrial resources of the Province, its mines and minerals, fauna and flora, etc., within the short space of a few days, than that which is furnished in the annual meetings of this fair, while he who attends it with his eyes and ears open from year to year, will find that it furnishes an excellent means of measuring the progress of the country, not only in all departments of agricultural, manufacturing, mining and other industries, but also in the arts and sciences. The facilities for the exhibition of every kind of product are being steadily increased. The grounds have been enlarged and improved from year to year until the accommodations in almost every department are now excellent. In particular, the accommodations for the exhibition of live stock are believed to be now the best on the continent. Among other specialties, we are informed that particular attention is being paid this year, in the department of natural history, to the display of the varieties of fish in which Canadian waters are so rich. Living specimens in great numbers, as well as prepared specimens, will add greatly to the interest and educational value of this important department. The number of entries in various departments of the exhibition is, we are informed, unusually large, and there is every reason to hope for a most successful season. This is only what was to be expected from the energy and excellence of the management.

The series of triumphs won last year in American waters by the American yacht "Vigilant" over the British "Valkyrie" seemed to many, other than Americans, to go far to establish one of two conclusions, viz., either that the American designers and builders of boats are more scientific and more skilful than the British, or that the centre-board device employed by the former enables the boat so constructed to attain a higher average rate of speed than can be attained by the boat with the ordinary style