

of the Chinese, it seems certain now that the action of the British Columbia Legislature is wise, and most of all in the interests of the hundreds and thousands who, if permitted, would continue to crowd upon our shores only to swell the bill of destitution and crime.

IN the administration of justice it is of the utmost importance that the bounds of the law should be strictly adhered to. This canon is particularly applicable to police magistrates and justices of the peace, who in the vast mass of cases which come before them—mostly of too trivial a nature to be worth appealing—are practically responsible only to public opinion. A practice, which there is reason to fear is becoming increasingly common, has grown up of allowing certain classes of criminals (particularly fallen women) to go without punishment upon promising to leave for parts unknown. A case of this kind occurred in Toronto last week. Among individuals it is conceded that no person has a right to dump his rubbish on the premises of his next-door neighbour. Is not a community subject to the same moral rule? Alleged criminals of the class referred to are either guilty or not guilty. If not guilty, they should never have been arrested, and should be discharged *unconditionally*. If guilty, they should be convicted and sentenced *as the law directs*. We have yet to learn that the powers possessed by our police magistrates include that of sentence to banishment; and it is certainly not desirable that our municipalities should enter into a competition to see which can get the best of the others in the game of deporting their criminal population to prey upon their neighbours.

Now comes a despatch to the effect that Hicks Pasha has not been annihilated after all, but is safe at Hirkett with two-thirds of his army. We are also told that El Mahdi is finding it impossible to keep his forces together, and is becoming somewhat insignificant in his capacity of bug-bear to Egypt. Egypt declares that she will never withdraw from the Soudan, and reposes implicit confidence in the opinion formerly delivered by the doctors of El-Azhar, the great Mohammedan college at Cairo, to the effect that the Mahdi is a false prophet and a liar, and his prospects of drawing after him any great following of true believers exceedingly slim. The Mahdi stands a poor chance of being recognized by the Faithful as their expected prophet, because he has neglected the most ordinary precautions to ensure his recognition. The expected one is to appear after the death of one Caliph and before the nomination of another. But El Mahdi has put in a decisive appearance at a time when the Caliph is not dead. The true prophet is to be offered the supreme power, which he will promptly refuse. This Mahdi scarcely gives one cause to suspect that he would despise the Caliphate if offered him. Hence it follows that the Soudan Mahdi has rendered himself doubly ineligible. He is not the true prophet, of which fact he is probably quite aware; and the Faithful will receive him with this verse from the Koran: "He who lies knowingly and with premeditation will have hell for his permanent abode."

REPRESSIBILITY is not a characteristic of Butler to any marked degree. He is organizing a boom peculiarly his own which is to result, if he does not miscalculate, in the capture of the presidency. Lately in Boston he expressed his satisfaction at having polled so many votes, in spite of the prayers of the clergy. He considered that the largeness of his vote is pretty satisfactory evidence that "the clergy of Boston have very little influence with the Almighty." Butler's devoted allies are now the trades-unions. The Workingmen's Association of Lynn, Massachusetts, has issued an address calling for the formation of a National party, whose object shall be to "unfurl the banner of labour" and to nominate a candidate (Butler) for the presidency. Whom the Association will choose for the vice-presidency is, we believe, not yet decided. Butler is very happy in anticipation of his approaching triumph.

THE ORIGINATOR OF THE BANK OF ISSUE.

VERY shortly after reading in the first number of THE WEEK a reference to a work which, if my life be spared, I hope to complete ere long, and which will have for its title "Reminiscences of My Public Life," I found in the London *Times* an interesting obituary notice of the late Lord Overstone, in which it was claimed for his lordship that he was the author of the Bank of Issue measure which became law in 1844, Sir Robert Peel having obtained the sanction of Parliament to the amendment to the Bank of England Charter, by which the Issue department of the Bank was separated from that of Discount and Deposit. I had but a few days previously written my reminiscence of the attempt made by Lord Sydenham, in 1841, during the first session of the Union Parliament, to establish a Canadian

Bank of Issue, and it at once occurred to me that the present would be a suitable time to bring under public consideration the respective claims of Lords Sydenham and Overstone to the origination of what I have always considered a valuable measure.

It is stated in the obituary notice in the *Times* that Lord Overstone's pamphlets were published in 1837 and 1840—I am clear that I had read one, and I think both of those pamphlets at the time of the publication, and I was of the same opinion as the writer of the *Times*' obituary notice, until a few years later when to my great surprise I read the "Life of Lord Sydenham." On the 11th July, 1841, Lord Sydenham wrote to Lord John Russell, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, as follows: "There is one of my Canadian measures on the anvil now, in which you will feel an interest, and wish me success I am sure. But, as it involves private and *class* interests, and not political questions, upon which I am sure of my majority, I do not feel certain of getting it through; but if I can I shall rejoice more than at any other work, which I have been able to perform; for it will not only be good for this country, but will set an example to England, by which she may profit in a year or two when the Bank Charter is to be renewed. For it is the establishment of a perfectly sound paper currency by means of a single State Bank of Issue, based upon the pure principle of the issue of paper against bullion or coin, to the exclusion of any other paper whatever, payable on demand; the principle, in short, for which I contended in the Cabinet in the first instance in 1833, and which Sam Loyd (Lord Overstone) has since so ably advocated in a pamphlet."

Lord Sydenham, it will be observed, claims to have advocated the Bank of Issue scheme in the Cabinet in 1833, four years before Lord Overstone's first pamphlet. He made a grave mistake in Canada, which is noticed in the same letter. Adverting to the expiration of bank charters, he wrote "They (the banks) are therefore at my mercy." In the Appendix to the Life are "A Memorandum on the Paper Currency," and the resolutions introduced into the House. It seems to me that the weight of evidence is in favour of Lord Sydenham having been the originator of the scheme. If Lord Sydenham could have been induced to consent to the existing banks retaining their average circulation, as the English, Scotch, and Irish banks were permitted to do by Peel's Act of 1844, it is not improbable that the Bank of Issue scheme would have been carried in 1841, three years before the English Act. With these prefatory remarks I shall submit my Reminiscence, or rather a brief extract from it.

"It was very gratifying to me that in my first session I was chosen by the Select Committee on Currency and Banking to be its chairman, and that on the recommendation of that Committee important reforms were effected, especially the limitation of the use of the British silver tokens, which had previously been a legal tender to an indefinite amount. It may be interesting to give the names of the other members of the Committee as recorded in the vote on the resolutions in favour of the Bank of Issue. For the resolutions, Messrs. Moffatt, Quesnel, Simpson, Harrison, Dunn, Dunscomb (late Collector of Quebec), and Cameron—7. Against them, Messrs. Holmes, Cartwright, Neilson, James Morris, Buchanan, Merritt, and Burnet—7. The resolutions were carried by my own casting vote as chairman." I have given a very brief extract from my remarks on the Bank of Issue scheme, which could not be treated satisfactorily in a brief article, which I have written merely to call attention to the claim of a statesman, long since deceased, to have been the originator of the Bank of Issue.

F. HINCKS.

CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

THERE is again talk of reciprocity at Washington. The United States are so much the greater power, that without loss of dignity they may move first. It has always been the conviction of the present writer that the one thing necessary to secure to Canada her full measure of prosperity and enable her people fairly to reap the fruits of their industry was the abolition of the customs line, which cuts her off commercially from the rest of the continent. Few perhaps would deny this on commercial grounds; at least a man must be a Protectionist of the purest breed if he can persuade himself that the Canadian farmer or lumberer is benefited by exclusion from his natural markets. The real ground of opposition is political; but if the tendency to Continental Union exists, its existence is due to the identity of race, language, institutions and general interests, against the attractive force of which a customs line cannot for ever, or even very long, contend. If Reciprocity does not weaken the political barrier, why should Free Trade overturn it? Free Trade is merely Reciprocity carried to its full extent, as Reciprocity is a partial measure of Free Trade, and it cannot be said that either, any more than the Postal Union, in itself affects the question of separate nationality. If loss to the