

## The Week.

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EXTRAORDINARY bitterness was imported into the contest for the Mayoralty of Toronto by the violent and denunciatory language which was used on one side. People do not deserve and they will not bear to be branded as morally infamous and children of Satan, because of two perfectly respectable candidates they support the one whom they prefer, or because they wish the affairs of the city to be managed on business, not on religious principles. Ministers of religion who permit themselves to forget the rules of charity, and to take part in assailing the character of half the community, do not consider what feelings they are exciting against themselves or their churches, or how deadly and lasting are the social enmities of which they are sowing the seeds in the community. Things have been said which are likely to rankle long in many hearts.

WE welcome the appearance in Toronto of large stores on the ready-money system. Co-operative stores, though they have been immensely successful and are doing an enormous business in England, have, for some reason, which we find it difficult to ascertain, not been successful on this continent. Their good effect is twofold; they not only redeem the working classes from the bondage of debt, but they make them commercial proprietors, thereby giving them an interest in property, and at the same time familiarising them with the operations of trade, and fortifying them against economical fallacies, and the infusion of socialistic venom. A store of the ordinary kind, conducted on the ready-money system, does not make the artisan a proprietor, but at all events it redeems him from the bondage of debt. We noticed the other day in one of our journals a letter on some point relating to the constitution of our debt courts, which seemed to assume that debt was almost the normal condition of the artisan. A more miserable or degrading condition there cannot be, nor could anything be more dangerous to society than to have large masses of the people in this state. Once more, then, we welcome the appearance of large ready-money stores, as an improvement, not only economical, but social, of the most important kind. It is only to be hoped that they will steadily adhere to the ready-money rule. The worst of it is that a great change in any department of commerce or industry throws out of employment those who have subsisted by the old system, and the introduction of large stores will be hard on the small retail tradesmen. Many, however, of these, we may hope, will find employment in the large stores as clerks, and their subsistence in that capacity will be less precarious and anxious than we fear it often is in their present.

If half of what the *Globe* has been saying is true, the Conservative party of this Province must, during the last month, have been committing or abetting infamies, in depicting which the English language breaks down, and a new and portentous vocabulary is required. Supposing the *Globe's* own party to be sinless, such a demoralisation of nearly half the community would furnish a sufficient answer to the charge levelled by the *Globe* against THE WEEK of showing a want of proper spirit by wishing not to have a faction fight oftener than is needful. But if the *Globe* will attend to some other phenomena which fall immediately under its notice, if it will consider the language which the leading instructors of the people have used in the course of this contest, their treatment of vanquished opponents, their encouragement of letter-stealing and of the betrayal of confidential documents, it can hardly fail to admit that there are grounds for doubting whether the effects of a faction fight on the character of the community are altogether elevating and wholesome. If such is the temper into which the highly educated, and even clergymen, are betrayed by the excitement of the scuffle, what must be the temper of the masses? War, to which Sir Richard Cartwright compares politics, is barbarous; but it is not unmanly; it calls forth noble qualities—courage, fortitude, self-devotion, even humanity; and it is often graced by chivalrous generosity and courtesy towards a gallant foe. A faction fight calls forth qualities the reverse of noble, and of the chivalry displayed in it towards opponents we have some attractive specimens before us. Could a better instrument than a quick succession of these slandering matches be devised for degrading the political character of a people?

THE Farringdon Debating Club, at Brantford, has attained the very respectable antiquity of twenty-five years, and has given to Ontario a great number of speakers and politicians. On Thursday last it celebrated its success by a banquet, followed by speeches, in which the advantages of debating societies were eloquently set forth. Advantages debating societies undoubtedly have, when the world is largely governed by rhetoric, and the art of speech is as necessary to all who take part now in public life, as the art of fencing was to a gentleman in former days. Facility of speech, however, is apt, as was remarked at the banquet, to become a fatal facility, and fluency is sometimes acquired at the expense of freshness of style. The best way of avoiding prolixity and flatness, probably, is to practise with the pen at the same time that you practise with the tongue.

A PROHIBITIONIST journal says that high licenses, where they have been tried, have not much diminished intemperance. We can well believe that if they have been carried to an extreme point, and introduced too suddenly, they may, instead of diminishing intemperance, have even increased it. This question must, like other questions, be dealt with in a practical way if any good is to be done. You cannot by legislation extinguish the demand for drink, and if you suddenly diminish the legal supply by suppressing a large number of licensed taverns, either directly or through the operation of excessively high license fees, unlicensed and unregulated drinking-shops will to a moral certainty spring up. The consequence of this again, as abundant experience shows, is an increase of intemperance, while the injury to health is also aggravated, since the liquor sold at these low places is of the worst kind. To say that in the Scott Act counties the law is inoperative would be a mistake, but its operation is almost entirely mischievous: it ruins the responsible trade, and calls into existence an illicit trade which is often plied in the most objectionable and demoralising ways. In reply to practical arguments, we are always told that this is a matter of principle; but surely no principle of a rational kind can enjoin us of two evils to choose the greater.

THE *Mail* has the good sense and fortitude to confess without disguise the magnitude of its defeat. It admits that its party is "almost annihilated." In truth, this was the most telling appeal that it could make to the sympathies of independent men. Whether Party Government in any case is the best, is a question upon which there is a difference of opinion; but every one, we presume, will admit that Party Government without an effective Opposition is about the worst. Where the fly-wheel is wanting how can the machine work well? No irresponsibility is so complete as that of a party leader with an overwhelming and docile majority. If a Dominion election were to take place, we should, on independent grounds, wish the Opposition at Ottawa to be strengthened; for the same reason we deplore the increased weakness of the Opposition in Ontario. But what grieves does not surprise us. We have said all along that the leader of a Provincial party could not possibly succeed on an Anti-Provincial platform. Mr. Meredith is rolling the stone of Sisyphus.

With many a weary step, and many a groan,  
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone;  
The huge round stone resulting with a bound,  
Thunders impetuous down and smokes along the ground.

The *Mail* says it will not, like the Grits when they were defeated, cashier the unfortunate general. Its resolution is magnanimous, but it will have to cashier the compromising connection and the ruinous tactics. The day might have gone better for the Conservatives than it did if the Prime Minister of the Dominion had not taken the stump in the Province.

In the Provincial Election the Catholic vote was cast almost solid for Mr. Mowat, and, of course, in *majorem Dei gloriam*. But it does not by any means follow that in a Dominion election the Catholic vote would be cast for Mr. Blake. The priests have already got what they could out of one side: there is nothing in their political morality to prevent them from swinging round and performing the same operation in the Church's interest on the other side. Nobody would be surprised to learn that they were already making overtures to Sir John Macdonald. They must be aware, notwithstanding their late victory, that they have gone about as far as it is safe for them to go, that a genuine spirit of resistance to their influence has been aroused, and that to make the Conservative party in the Dominion, as well as in the Province, their enemy, would be a policy fraught with peril to their domination. They will probably at once trim, and very soon begin to veer. It is probably the presentiment of this that makes some of the Conservatives still favourable to an early dissolution. Reciprocity being blocked at Washington, so that they will not have that inducement to hold out to the people, they think that nothing is to be gained by delay, and they are anxious, while they may, to reap the advan-