

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics

Mr. McNeill's
Resolution.

All Canadians agree with the sentiments expressed with such admirable taste and judgment by Mr. McNeill in the House of Commons on Wednesday afternoon: the unalterable loyalty and devotion of Canada to the British Throne and Constitution, her readiness to make substantial sacrifices to maintain the integrity of the Empire, and her desire to live at peace with our kinsmen of the United States. Mr. McNeill's resolution embodying these sentiments produced a magnificent outburst of loyalty in the House of Commons. Party differences were forgotten, and chief among those who enthusiastically supported the resolution was Sir Richard Cartwright whose eloquent and earnest speech made a lasting impression upon the House.

Cape Breton's
Decision.

By a majority of seven hundred and fifty four Cape Breton on Tuesday elected Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., to represent that important constituency in the Dominion Parliament. The significance of this victory for the Government can only be fully appreciated when we realize how disastrous the effects would have been had Sir Charles met with defeat. It is doubtful if the Government could have held together had the seat been won by the Liberals. We cannot easily imagine that Sir Mackenzie Bowell's joy at the result is altogether without alloy, but he can take comfort in the thought that had Sir Charles been defeated his own prospects would not have much improved. His cabinet would have probably been again in convulsions, and an appeal to the country under such circumstances would have meant certain defeat. As for Sir Charles himself his position now is very different from what it was when he left Ottawa. He returns to the Capital a duly elected member of the House of Commons backed by a substantial majority and with the honour of being the first to check a long series of Government reverses. Whether or not the election of Sir Charles is a good thing for Canada we are not prepared to say. Time will show. In the meantime Sir Richard will keep his eye on the Baronet.

"Hell-Inspired
Hypocrites."

It is to be hoped that Sir Charles Tupper had nothing to do with the unpardonable interference of Bishop Cameron in the election. The Liberals are pleased to note that in spite of the Bishop's most offensive pastoral to the Roman Catholic voters of Cape Breton, the Conservative majority was four less than the last election. It is said that this pretentious and coarse epistle actually won a large number of votes for Sir Charles. We should have thought that the document would have had exactly the opposite effect. It does not say much for the intelligence and spirit of the Roman Catholic voters that this was not the case. We can hardly conceive of people so weak-minded and flabby as to be influenced by one who can dare to speak of those who differ from him as "hell-inspired hypocrites." If separate schools produce this kind of man we can understand Manitoba's objection to such schools.

The Budget
Speech.

Though a large number of Liberal members listened to the Budget Speech of Mr. Foster on Friday last only two Cabinet Ministers, Messrs. Daly and Costigan, and a handful of Conservatives encouraged the Minister of Finance by their presence and applause. The galleries were practically empty. The interest in the speech was evidently small. It has been apologized for, but not explained, by saying that the Conservative members were absent by mere chance—that there was no expectation of any changes being made in the Tariff, and that no new line of policy was to be indicated. So the members felt free to enjoy themselves elsewhere. But the absent ones missed an excellent speech. Mr. Foster made the best of the not very satisfactory state of affairs, and rose superior to his somewhat chilling surroundings. The Premier who was present during the whole of the speech is said to have remarked that it was one of the best he had ever heard Mr. Foster make, and that he thoroughly endorsed its sentiment. At the close of his eloquent peroration the Minister of Finance sat down amidst much applause, and was speedily congratulated right warmly by the few Conservatives who were kind enough to be present.

The
Deficit.

Mr. Foster faced the big deficit with characteristic bravery. It was less by three hundred and fifty thousand dollars than he had anticipated when he delivered his Budget Speech last year. Deducting \$2,002,311, which had gone into the sinking fund for the redemption of the debt, the actual deficit was only \$2,151,564. But whilst we admire the effort Mr. Foster makes to take a cheery view of the financial situation we cannot get over the depressing fact that the total expenditure on account of the consolidated fund was \$38,132,005, and the total revenue only \$33,978,129. The national debt now amounts to the enormous sum of \$253,074,927, and nearly a quarter of the country's expenditure consists of charges on this great debt. These unpleasant figures loudly proclaim that no more "big schemes" can be undertaken by the Federal Government at present, a fact which cannot be too strongly impressed upon Sir Charles Tupper, Bart. A policy of the severest economy in every department of the State must be rigorously enforced. Mr. Foster hopes