

## CURRENT EVENTS.

The death of Queen Victoria overshadows in importance every other event of the month.

Saturday, February 2nd, the day appointed for the funeral, was observed as a day of national mourning in every part of the late Queen's dominions. With every circumstance of solemn grandeur, the body was borne from Osborne House to Windsor. The gathering of crowned heads, and the naval and military display, far surpassed those of the Jubilee; for, by her late Majesty's own desire, it was a military pageant.

Queen Victoria was the daughter of the fourth son of George III, Edward, Duke of Kent, who died when she was but a few months old. Her mother was the daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, and sister of Leopold, King of the Belgians. Two of her uncles preceded her on the throne, as George IV and William IV; another, Frederick, had died without leaving an heir; and in June, 1837, at the age of eighteen, she found herself called upon to rule as constitutional sovereign of the British empire. The events of her long reign, upon many of which she had a greater personal influence than her people knew, have been those that marked the progress of nearly two-thirds of the century.

The presence in England of the Emperor William, of Germany, the Queen's grandson, who reached her bedside in time to be recognized by her, has been very heartily welcomed by the English people; and it is not without significance that he was the first to recognize his uncle's accession to the throne by addressing him as King.

In the foreign relations of the empire, the sovereign is the treaty making power. Legislative sanction and ratification of treaties are not required with us; and the King can never be placed in the humiliating position of the President of the United States who unexpectedly finds his treaties disallowed by the Senate. In internal affairs, though the King cannot make laws without the consent of Parliament, neither can the Parliament do so without the royal sanction. The consent of the crown, given by the King's signature, is necessary to the validity of every important document. Another prerogative of the sovereign is that of choosing his advisors; and though he may not keep in office a cabinet that does not possess the confidence of the people's representatives, he is not obliged to retain one that no longer retains his own confidence. He has also the right to dissolve parliament and appeal to the country by a new election.

In all the splendor of Saturday's funeral pageant, in

which kings and emperors with their brilliant retinues rode behind the gun carriage that bore the mortal remains of the dead Queen, there was nothing more impressive than was the simple procession which on the preceding day followed those remains along the country lane in the Isle of Wight, to be placed on board the royal yacht and carried through ten miles of moticless war ships to Portsmouth. Behind the coffin of his royal mother, the King accompanied by his brother, the Duke of Connaught, his nephew, the Emperor of Germany, and other princes walked on foot; while behind this glittering group came ten women, deeply veiled and dressed in the simplest black, huddled shoulder to shoulder, as one correspondent says, just like the poorest, humblest widows in Christendom. Yet these women trudging along the muddy way, without sign of rank or hint of royalty, were the Queen of England and the other princesses of the royal family.

The immediate cause of the Queen's death was paralysis, and it is believed that she suffered a slight stroke before going to Osborne. The horrors of the Boer war and heavy family sorrows have made a great drain on her health and vitality. Her eldest and favorite daughter, Empress Frederick, is slowly dying of a particularly painful disease; her second son, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, died not long ago after the suicide of his only son, the Queen's grandson; another grandson, Prince Christian Victor, was a victim of the Boer war; Prince Henry of Battenburg, the husband of the Queen's youngest daughter, Beatrice, died off the coast of Africa a few years ago. Finally, the death of Lady Churchill, her chief attendant, who was found dead in her bed on Christmas morning was a great shock to the Queen. She has always carried the cares of her people on her heart. She has treated the great English race as if it were her family, and this is one secret of the almost unparalleled affection in which she has been held.

The news from South Africa is unsatisfactory. The Boers, since their invasion of Cape Colony, have been carrying on guerilla warfare, and in widely scattered bands manage to elude the British forces and appear in unexpected places, capturing small posts and damaging railways and other property. Lord Kitchener has asked for 30,000 mounted troops, to which Canada and the other colonies will contribute their quotas.

The Chinese plenipotentiaries in their meeting with the foreign envoys on February 5th, at Peking, submitted the names of twelve prominent Chinese officials for punishment, either by death or banishment, as a reparation for recent outrages and for connivance with the Boxers. Affairs in China have been quiet, and it is hoped that a peaceful solution of difficulties will soon be reached.

The first session of the ninth Canadian parliament was opened at Ottawa, Thursday, February 7th. Mr. Brodeur has been elected speaker. R. L. Borden, of Halifax, has been chosen by the Conservatives as their party leader.