

The Week.

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THE announcement that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had resigned sounded like a crisis in the British Cabinet. But the resignation appears to have been caused solely by ill-health. No change of policy seems to be involved. That the health of a British Minister, especially a Secretary for Ireland, should break down is not incredible. Break down or depart who will, there is nothing for it but to close the ranks, and move resolutely on in the defence of the integrity of the nation. Mr. Balfour has a high reputation, which it is to be hoped he will make good. Sir Michael is not personally a great loss: he gave the measure of his character and capacity in the Maamtrasna debate, when, in concert with Lord Randolph Churchill, he committed a base breach of the most sacred rules of public life, by repudiating the acts of Lord Spencer's Administration. Nor does he appear himself to have shown, as Irish Secretary, either resolution or temper in a high degree. The situation, however, is once more extremely critical, both in Ireland and in Parliament. The nation is, in truth, in extreme danger. As to this, private information tallies with the announcements of the Cable. The movements of the place-hunters show that they believe Gladstonism to be gaining ground. Lord Hartington remains unshaken, and, apparently, he still carries with him the main body of the Liberal-Unionists. But Sir Charles Trevelyan, if his utterances are reported with anything approaching to correctness, is evidently about to betray the Liberal cause. He gave signs of this inclination some time ago at the Unionist banquet, where it was remarked that the irresolute tone of his speech, and of that of Sir Henry James, presented a marked contrast to the resolute bearing of the audience. A restless and shallow ambition cannot bear a temporary exclusion from Parliament and office, even when the integrity of the nation is at stake. The exhibition which the politicians are making of themselves is abject, and its infamy is enhanced by comparison with the firmness and constancy displayed by the humblest ministers of law and order. The politicians have been trained in the school of faction; the soldier and the policeman have been trained in the school of duty.

To say that in the course of a trial of twenty years the Constitution of the Dominion has disclosed defects, and that it requires revision, is to say what would certainly be true of any work of man. Mr. Mercier's proposal of a Convention of Provinces is, therefore, perfectly reasonable. But Party will come in, and what a Liberal Premier of Quebec has proposed will be opposed as a matter of course by the Tory Premier at Ottawa. The British North America Act ought surely to have contained a provision for constitutional amendment, perhaps by Conventions of the Provinces, to be held at stated intervals. The British Parliament cannot watch the working of our Constitution. Nor can the Secretary for the Colonies move, unless he is prompted from Canada. And who is to prompt him? The head of a party Government in Canada? The Constitution would be gerrymandered, not amended.

THE North-West is suing to Mr. White for liberation from disallowance and the enjoyment of free railway construction, without which, weighted as she is by climate and distance from the seaboard, she must unquestionably be beaten in the race. If she had only been true to herself, and sent up a strong and independent representation in her own interest, she would not have had to sue to Mr. White. She would have been able to help herself to what she needed. Having bowed her neck to the Party yoke and elected Ministerial janissaries, she is not only compelled to go on her knees for her rights, but is likely to go on her knees in vain. Such a delegation as she has elected will be in the Ministerial pocket before it has been at Ottawa for a week.

OF the benefits of freedom of commercial intercourse between Canada and the United States, no serious doubt can be entertained. The vigorous and impressive speech made the other day by Mr. Wiman was scarcely needed to assure us of them, though it set them in the strongest light. They are as manifest as the benefits of free trade between England and Scotland. But we are asked in a reproachful tone whether we mean to

prefer the dollar to sentiment? The prosaic answer is that sentiment cannot be long separated from the dollar. It is the bloom, so to speak, on a sound and healthy state of things. The commercial isolation of Canada from the continent of which she is a part is not a sound or healthy state of things, nor will any sentiment which is bound up with it be lasting. As to the effect of reciprocity on our relations with England, has not Sir John Macdonald himself flung at England, in almost defiant language, a renunciation of commercial allegiance? Our sentiment towards the Mother Country happily rests on other and more abiding grounds.

THE *Globe* has dragged to light an election "dodger" circulated by the Conservatives among the Haldimand Indians, in the form of a proclamation signed by the Queen, and enjoining the Indians to vote for her great chief, John A., who will make them all happy; and for Mr. Montague, who is the Queen's agent. Such is Indian suffrage; and yet manhood suffrage, which would include loafer suffrage, might be lower. Do politicians really think that there is no danger in putting supreme power into the hands of utter irresponsibility and gross ignorance? They are not such idiots. What they think, and that about which alone they care, in dealing with the foundations of the State and the vital interests of society, is that the Indian vote will be cast at the next election for John A. and for Mr. Montague.

SURPRISE will be created by the statement of our Nova Scotian correspondent, for whose opportunities of obtaining the best information we can vouch, that the redoubtable Sir Charles Tupper had no share in bringing about the unexpected victory of the Government in Nova Scotia. A Nova Scotian journal estimates the bills drawn by Sir Charles on the Dominion treasury in promises at the poetic figure of twenty millions. Whatever may be the amount of his paper, Sir Charles's soul will not be appalled. The Government is in for a fresh term; parliamentary duns may be dealt with; and on the next occasion it will be found that the credulity of Provincial covetousness has not been exhausted.

THE vultures are again hovering over Upper Canada College, Mr. Waters with ominous cry and funereal wing leading the flock. If an institution is at all ancient and makes any approach to greatness, pull it down. Such, we fear, is the present mood of democracy, which the ages may hereafter temper and exalt. If the enemies of Upper Canada College are the High Schools, they may have the satisfaction of levelling what is obnoxious to them, but they will not be gainers themselves, at least in the way of spoil; for if the endowment is carried to their account, so much less will be voted them—that is all. If the College is removed from its present site, which seems in any case to be expected, to set it down again in another site will not be easy. It requires an open, healthy situation, with an ample playground. But it also requires churches for pupils of all the different denominations. A site in Toronto with a large playground would now be enormously expensive. It is suggested that the buildings of Victoria University, at Cobourg, will be vacated by the transfer of the University to Toronto; and if they are not at present very well suited to the purposes of a school, might be capable of adaptation. Cobourg would be a good place for a school; it would afford churches and all other conveniences, while it is not too large for superintendence. Plenty of land, we believe, might be had, and the Cobourgers would no doubt welcome the school with open arms. Toronto, however, would lose its great day school. A move, we are afraid, will be the end; but the College, however, has a strong body of friends, not only among its own *alumni*, but among those who do not wish to see the institution reduced to a mere political machine.

IN Mr. Ward Beecher the world loses, not a theologian, nor even a preacher, in the religious sense of the word, but a great orator of the religious platform. A great teacher he was not, for he had no religious philosophy or settled convictions of any kind. A vague and popular, almost demagogic, rationalism was his creed. He had remarkable gifts as a rhetorician, physical as well as mental, and was, in an eminent degree, what the Americans call "a live man." He had, also, a certain amount of moral force, though, since the Tilden affair, his moral authority had, with most people, been greatly weakened by the cloud which had settled on his reputation.

LORD WOLSELEY is taken to task for saying that the English people think the Fisheries not worth contending for. But, in calling the question a miserable squabble, he spoke not for the English people but only for himself. The English people think nothing about the matter, except that they are totally unconcerned in it; and they would at once upset any Government