

# THE WEEK.

Vol. XII.

Toronto, Friday, July 19th, 1895.

No. 34.

## Contents.

	PAGE.
CURRENT TOPICS.....	795
LEADERS—	
The Situation.....	797
CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES—	
Notes in My Library.....	799
Nile Vignettes: I.—Sakkarah.....	801
Nippon Transplanted.....	802
Criticisms of Some Magazine Articles.....	803
Parisian Affairs.....	805
At Street Corners.....	806
Glimpses at Things.....	807
Montreal Affairs.....	808
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR—	
The Maple Leaf, Its Form and Combinations.....	808
"Fairplay Radical's" Offences.....	809
"Fairplay Radical" Replies to Mr. Macdonald.....	809
Not a New Woman.....	810
The Koran or the Sword.....	810
BOOKS—	
Etchings From a Parsonage Verandah.....	810
Recollections of Ohio.....	811
Aesthetic Principles.....	811
DEPARTMENTS—	
Art Notes.....	812
Periodicals.....	812
Literary Notes.....	812

## Current Topics.

Mr. McCarthy's  
Amendment.

Mr. D'Alton McCarthy's amendment about which there has been considerable interest shown during the past few days came to a rather inglorious end early yesterday morning. It was an amendment calculated to embarrass not only the Government but the Opposition, and Mr. Laurier announced he would vote against it because he did not desire to see political parties divided into two religious camps. We think the sentiment eminently sound.

Swift Political  
Changes.

It is no wonder that the attention of newspapers and politicians in the United States is being attracted by the evidences just now given of the flexibility of the political system of Great Britain, and the swiftness with which great political changes are wrought, when once the will of the people, through the votes of their representatives in Parliament, has demanded them. The Rosebery Ministry was defeated on the evening of Friday, June 23rd. Next day the resignations of its members were in the hands of the Queen. Within four days a new Ministry, with the Conservative Leader, Lord Salisbury, at its head, was announced, and within a week this new Administration was in charge of affairs. Having spent a few days in passing necessary legislation, Parliament was prorogued July 9th. Since that date writs for the new elections have been issued and, as we go to press, the elections are going on, nearly three hundred of the total number of six hundred and seventy members having been elected up to midnight of the 16th inst. In less than a month from the fall of the Liberal Ministry, the Conservatives will be at the head of a new House of Commons, whose members are representatives fresh from the polls, and empowered to do the will of the people in their latest mood. Comparing this remarkable demonstration of the swiftness with which the electors of England make their will felt and operative at the seat of legislation and Government, with their own slow method, under which years may elapse before the changed will of the nation can make itself felt in legislation or administration, American politicians may well ask themselves whether their boasted system is, after all, so perfect a machine for the government of a democratic country as they have been accustomed to believe.

The British  
Elections.

If there had been any room for serious doubt as to the result of the elections now going on in Great Britain, the returns of unopposed elections and of the contested elections of the first day or two have settled the question beyond peradventure. As a matter of fact the only uncertainty for many months back has been regarding the size of the Unionist majority. It is now almost certain that it will be large. The task of analyzing the causes which have been at work during the last few years gradually bringing about the change of opinion and sentiment which has led to the present reaction will be an interesting one for the historian of the future. The events are still too near the eye to be seen with anything like distinctness, or in their true proportions. One thing which has, no doubt, contributed not a little to the fulfilment of the confident prophecies which have been so long current has been the prophecies themselves. It is a fact which reflects severely but truly upon the strength and character of the convictions of many ardent politicians that multitudes are so ready to give up of the struggle, and even to change sides and espouse the cause of the winning party, as soon as it becomes tolerably certain that their opponents are going to win. Hence it is pretty clear that the frank admissions which prominent Liberals have been making for some time past, that they expected to fight a losing battle, has had a disastrous effect upon the fortunes of the party. It is evident, of course, that these despondent admissions were not the prime factor in the coming defeat, since there must have been antecedent cause or causes for the despondency itself. Nor are we disposed to blame the Liberal leaders for their frank admissions of their forebodings. On the contrary we admire the moral courage of the great party leaders in England in admitting so freely that they anticipated defeat, albeit the very admission may have had much to do with bringing it about. We firmly believe the old motto: "Nothing needs a lie," even in politics. But we cannot conceive of party leaders, either in the United States or in Canada, making such an admission, or taking any other tone than that of "We are sure to win," on the eve of an election.

The Causes  
of Defeat

One is unwilling to leave the contemplation of this great change without offering at least a guess touching the causes and significance of it. The causes popularly assigned are many. Among those which have gained special currency are: The resignation of Gladstone and his subsequent alleged coolness towards the Government; the Irish Home Rule policy; the choice of a member of the Upper House as leader of the Government; the bad tactics of that leader and especially his lack of enthusiasm; the popular distrust of Home Rule; the disgust of its ardent advocates at its slow progress, on the one hand, and their distrust of the result on the other; the failure to pass any one of the great reforms to which the Gladstonian party was and is committed; above all, as appears from the defeat and abuse of Sir William Harcourt, the personal dislike of an influential portion of the party to the Local Veto Bill, or to any measure which aims to restrict the freedom of the liquor dealers and users. But as the