

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

The Joker
Defeated.

We appreciate humour, but not the kind of humour peculiar to Mr. Willoughby, and the electors of Cardwell appear for the most part to share our views. The Government has lost Cardwell by more than two hundred votes. It is a long step down from Mr. White to Mr. Willoughby, and the electors would not follow, though turkeys did sell for twenty dollars. The Liberals have been crushed in the constituency and Mr. McCarthy has scored a great and important victory largely at their expense. The significance of his triumph is very considerable. It will not tend to smooth matters. Let the Government beware. If they desire success they must pay more attention to the character of their standard-bearers.

Great Britain
and Venezuela.

The Monroe doctrine cannot be made applicable by the Government of the United States to the Venezuelan boundary dispute. There has been no forcible increase by Great Britain of her territorial possessions on this continent. The district in dispute has for years past been in peaceable possession of England and has enjoyed the benefit of her jurisdiction and protection. No arguments, good or bad, can affect the claim of effective and long-established possession. The territory within what is known as Sir Robert Schomburgh's line is absolutely an integral portion of British Guiana. British Guiana includes, as it did under Dutch rule, the whole territory up to the watershed of the Essequibo. With respect to the western districts, which have not yet been practically annexed by British enterprise, England is prepared to go to arbitration, and has been prepared to do so for many years. The London Times is right when it says that the mass of the Venezuelan population know little and care less about the district in dispute, but their national vanity is played upon by a brood of speculators and their hopes are encouraged by the tall talk of the American jingoes.

Principal Grant's
Points.

All this has been made clear by Principal Grant in his eloquent discourse in Toronto last Sunday evening— He showed that a nation gains the right of possession over territory by actual

settlement and possession for a long term of years, and he proved with a wealth of illustration that a nation cannot submit to arbitration the point whether a number of its subjects should be transferred against their will to the rule of a semi-civilized power. The Principal also pointed out that the two grounds on which the American Government claim the right to interfere—that (1) arbitration is a better way of settling disputes than violence, and that (2) the United States has a natural leadership of the weaker American powers and should protect them—have decided limits. "Would the United States," pertinently asked Principal Grant, "submit to arbitration the ownership of that tract of Canada which they added to Maine by suppressing Franklin's map?" With respect to the leadership plea, if used unwisely it might degenerate, as in this present case, into encouraging the weak to be insolent and arbitrary without sense of responsibility. In 1888 Britain notified the United States that she could not permit her right to occupy the territory in dispute to be arbitrated. After seven years' silence the American Government make a sudden and formal demand for arbitration. Why? Because, rightly hints the Principal, Venezuela last April gave a concession of fifteen million acres in the heart of the disputed territory to a combination of American capitalists. We know how much the attitude of the American Government in the Behring Sea dispute some years ago was determined by the fact that a wealthy syndicate had leased the Pribyloff Islands and was a large contributor to the campaign fund of the party.

Mr. Howland's
Suggestions.

Had any other Government done what the United States has done, says Principal Grant, Great Britain would have recalled her Ambassador and war would follow. "But Sir Julian Pauncefote will not be instructed to demand his passports. Britain will put up with almost any folly from the United States." There must not be war, declares the Principal, and adds that some settlement can be found by the two Christian peoples concerned. Mr. Oliver Howland, M.P.P., in the very interesting statement published in The Globe last Tuesday of his views on the international situation suggests a way out of the difficulty. He says that "by a curious and perhaps happy coincidence just before this perilous controversy arose the Governments of Canada and the United States had appointed the members of a joint commission to report to the two Governments upon the subject of international deep waterways, and that the scope of their instructions includes the reporting and submitting to the two nations of a draft of an international agreement securing the peaceful use forever of the joint enterprise. It is not for me, as a single member of the commission, to draw any specific deductions as to the possibilities which may grow out of the conferences of this commission. But it will be satisfactory to the people of both countries, I believe, that the head of the commission on the United States side is Dr. Angell, one of the ablest and most liberal-minded authorities upon the subject of international law."

Mr. Howland expresses his belief that the result of this hostility on the part of the Americans will be the completion of the federation of the Empire, and we are inclined to share