

# THE WEEK.

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## THE WEEK:

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### CURRENT TOPICS.

The hour at which we are obliged to get ready for the press precludes comment in this number upon the programme laid down by the local Government as a guide to the operations of the session upon which it is just entering. Though there is a marked absence of any really great issue, such as the tariff legislation in the Federal House, other causes have been at work which bid fair to make this a noteworthy session of the Ontario Assembly also. The sudden and remarkable development of the spirit of political independence introduced a large unknown quantity into the proceedings at Toronto as well as at Ottawa. This change, which has come so swiftly over public sentiment, is a remarkable phenomenon. We can hardly hope that it prefigures the doom of partyism in politics, but it certainly gives hopeful promise

that the strength of partyism will henceforth be seriously diminished. As we have before said, it seems improbable that such a question as that of payment of officials by fees instead of by salaries can be developed into a vital issue, however inconsistent the system, and the practice of nepotism and of rewarding party loyalty for which it affords tempting scope, may be shown to be with the avowed principles of Liberalism. The gerrymander, unless the repentance of the Government is shown by its fruits to be thorough, affords a much more hopeful ground for attack. To what the charges which constitute the reason for being, or at least the stock in trade, of the P.P.A. may grow, it is hard to foresee. That some portions of the soil are favorable is sufficiently apparent. Not for many years has the political atmosphere in Ontario been so surcharged with electricity.

So far from having been killed, the Louisiana lottery adder seems to have been hardly scotched by the refusal of the State to renew its charter and of the Government to carry its literature in the mails. As many, no doubt, shrewdly guessed, the reported removal of the headquarters of the Company to Honduras, turns out to be an unadulterated sham. The Florida Citizen, of Jacksonville, recently detailed a representative to inquire into the Company's new modes of operation. The result of its inquiries both at Honduras and at Tampa City, Fla., where the company is printing its tickets and advertisements, shows that in Honduras there is not even a pretence of maintaining a permanent office staff, or of receiving money and sending out tickets and prizes. All this work is really done at Tampa City, where the printing office, which is really a branch of the great printing and lithographing establishment which has carried on the business in New Orleans, is situated. This branch establishment is in the same building with what purports to be an office of the Central American Express, the company in whose care the advertisements direct all orders to be sent. But the investigation shows that this company, instead of forwarding the orders and money received, to Honduras, really opens the orders, supplies the tickets and sends the money to New Orleans. When a drawing is to be made, the lottery officers and printers are put on board a chartered steamer. The steamer puts out from port, the drawings are made, and a list of the winning numbers is set up on board by the printers.

This is brought back to port and sent out, under the sanction of the Honduras charter. All this evasion and subterfuge is, of course, quite in keeping with what was to be expected from a company which makes its wealth by craftily operating upon the ruling passion of gamblers, and the avarice of those who wish to acquire the property of others without rendering an equivalent. The laws of Florida, though severe against gambling, seem unable to circumvent this sharp practice. Nothing but specific legislation at Washington can do this. It is likely that such legislation will soon be forthcoming.

The movement for the abolition of the Legislative Council in Nova Scotia has just now reached a curious stage. The situation does not reflect lustre upon a number of the gentlemen who have recently been elevated to places in that august chamber. It has been for some years past the settled policy of the successive governments and legislatures of the Province to do away with the Council, as an unnecessary fifth wheel to the legislative coach. In order to carry out this destructive policy, which does not seem to have been contemplated or provided for in the Constitution, it has been, it appears, the practice to exact a pledge from each new appointee to the Upper House, previous to and as a condition of his appointment, that whenever the question might come up for decision, he would vote for an abolition bill. The time having now arrived, in the judgment of the Government, when the final action should be taken, an unexpected difficulty has arisen in consequence of the refusal of these gentlemen to fulfil their pledges. The excuses offered are various, and redound more to the cleverness of the Councillors concerned than to their regard for what would be considered by the unsophisticated, personal good faith. Some or all of them, having changed their minds with regard to the desirability of making the proposed radical change, have conveniently discovered that it is wrong and unconstitutional for Legislative Councillors to be hampered by pledges exacted in advance of their elevation. From this premise they have drawn the strange conclusion, fortified, we believe, by high legal authority of the local order, that they are absolved from those pledges. It is a pity that the discovery was made so late. There is certainly much to be said against the giving of any such pledges in regard to the future by one who is about to assume the duties of so