

The Week.

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND LITERATURE.

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A RICH field is offering in Canada to any Reform organ that will turn its exclusive regards from the corrupt practices of our rulers to the corrupt practices of the electors. A corrupt Government could not exist for a day if a majority of the electors were not equally corrupt; the one is an effect flowing from the other; and Reform should begin on the cause, not the effect, as seems to be imagined by those who are perpetually calling on the people to turn the rogues out. The rogues in the Government must very fairly represent the amount of roguery among the people or they would not be there; and if we would judge of the amount of political morality among a people, we should not look elsewhere than at the character of the men the people delight to honour. So when we see, as the *Montreal Witness* sadly remarks, that in Canadian politics "the Mackenzies, Massons, Blakes, and Jolys have to go to the wall, while the Macdonalds, the Tupperes, the Chapeaus, and the Merciers ride by in triumph," and reflect that these men do not arbitrarily force themselves into power, but are the popular choice, we must place the reproach where it belongs, not wholly on those who take advantage of the low state of political morality among the people, but chiefly on the people themselves.

In the county of Ottawa, at the last General Election for the Local House, the Nationalist candidate was defeated by three hundred and fifty seven votes; last week, with the same candidate against the same opponent, the Nationalist candidate triumphed by a majority of seven hundred and fifty-seven votes—a result representing a change of eleven hundred votes within a few months. What has caused it? A change of conviction, or the tenure of power during the intervening months by a Nationalist Government? Mr. Mercier, according to the *Witness*, has studied with profit the methods brought to a system by Sir John Macdonald and his lieutenants, of using largely in elections the local issues that prevail in every constituency, instead of relying for success on general principles and general policy; and he bids fair to outrun his models. In one constituency he uses the Jesuits; in another the commercial tax question; in another the timber due question (which appears to have been the bait in Ottawa County); while the Government is always represented as a possible benefactor in case it elects a supporter. This, though it is commonly countenanced by the party Press, which talks about a constituency alienating itself from the Government by electing an opponent, or discontinuing its attitude of "isolation" from the Government by electing a supporter,—is open bribery offered by the Government, the acceptance of which by the electors marks them as at least equally corrupt.

THE nomination of Sir John A. Macdonald as third British Commissioner (with Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Lionel Sackville-West) on the Fisheries Commission, is on several accounts the best that could be made. No one is likely to be so well acquainted with all the facts as he; he is probably as familiar with the American case as the Americans themselves; he has the astuteness requisite to satisfactorily deal with American diplomats; he may confidently be expected strenuously to contend for the advantage of Canada; and in short he is a colleague of ability, knowledge, and diplomatic rank worthy in every way of Mr. Chamberlain, who had a right to expect the most efficient support obtainable.

THE address of Sir Henry Roscoe, the President, to the British Association this year was almost confined to his own subject, chemistry, and is described as full of interest, though the *Spectator* expresses a natural wish that Sir Henry could have given a popular account of the arguments by which some of the conclusions he mentioned have been reached. He gave a very interesting account of the atomic theory and its development, referring to the conclusions arrived at by Dr. Loschmidt, of Vienna, that the diameter of an atom of oxygen or nitrogen is one ten-millionth part of a centimetre. But the writer in the *Spectator* objects that he had never been able to gather that the existence of this atom itself is more than a hypothesis; which appears to us to be the truth, for we cannot conceive of the existence of an atom, however minute—even the ten-millionth part of a centimetre—that may not be divided. Again, one would like to know

the kind of reasoning by which it is established that if a drop of water could be magnified to the size of the earth, we should then see that the coarseness of the graining of such a mass would be "something between a heap of small shot and a heap of cricket-balls;" or again, that "if we suppose that the minutest organism we can now see were provided with equally powerful microscopes with ours (microscopes that magnify from 6,000 to 8,000 times), then these beings would be able to see the atoms."

In spite of the favourable Report of the recent Royal Commission, the success of the Pasteurian method appears from every evidence to be limited to the case of dogs inoculated *before* being bitten by a mad dog. In such a case the dog has a considerably better chance of escaping rabies than if it had not been inoculated. And that is the whole net result of Pasteurism. It is not, indeed, likely that any disease once caught can be rendered harmless by subsequent inoculation; therefore to avoid rabies, or rather minimise the risk of rabies, among human beings, it would be necessary that inoculation against it should become as general as inoculation against small-pox. That would manifestly be too much, considering the great infrequency of cases of hydrophobia; men must first become mad as the maddest dog to generally adopt so heroic a preventive against a disease that in all human probability is not likely to affect one in a million. Yet that is what Pasteurism requires. If it came, however, seriously to a question of taking precaution we suppose all the dogs rather than all the men would be inoculated; but this again would be too much, for we believe our faithful friends are a much maligned race in this respect, and are almost as free from rabies as their masters. There is nothing in this controversy less satisfactorily established than the madness of most of the dogs whose bite has been supposed to be dangerous; if an unlucky dog but hung his tongue out in London a few months ago he ran great risk of having his brains knocked out as well by some nervous policeman. From the "scare" then prevalent, which by no means shows that the dogs were madder than the men, has sprung all this desperate clinging to Pasteur, whose influence, however is on the wane. The death of Lord Doneraile (bitten by a tame fox, not a dog) was the third death within a few days among M. Pasteur's patients; and the other day the Vienna correspondent of the *London Standard* told us:—"The Austrian Government has withdrawn the subvention that it granted last year to the Vienna General Hospital to defray the cost of the inoculation on the Pasteur system. The failures have been so numerous as to discourage competent judges from further supporting the method."

UNDER the government of intimidation exercised by the National League over Ireland, there were in the nine months ending March 31, 1887, 1,310 agrarian crimes. In 1,103 of these crimes no one was brought to justice. In the same period there were 132 incendiary fires, and in 126 of these cases no one was brought to justice. There were eleven murders; five persons were tried, and only one was convicted. Here is all that need be said to justify the suppression of this organised terrorism; its yoke removed from the neck of the people, law may be re-established, and justice again prevail in Ireland. Happily the Government seem resolved to do its duty: the Session of Parliament is practically at an end; and the process of re-establishing the authority of the Queen's Government in Ireland can no longer be impeded within the walls of Parliament by the treasonable practices of the Parnellites. In Ireland there may be a sharp tussle with the irregular Government, and the strict application of the law may offend many of the softer sort of Liberals in England; but the result of a contest between the Imperial Government and a body of political agitators who at most have not half the Irish people at their back cannot be doubtful; while nothing is more certain than that if the Government use the extra powers given it to cope with the Irish difficulty firmly and justly, it may confidently count on the approval of the sounder portion of the English people, who expect the Government of the day to act in a manly fashion, on its own conviction, and not to keep veering about, yielding to clamour, or following the vagaries of journalists.

It may be expected that as the contest with the National League proceeds, crime will increase in Ireland. As the League is compelled to relax its hold, such pernicious forces as it restrains—and we do not doubt it does exercise government over evil as well as good—will break loose. The cry that broke from Mr. Parnell on the eve of prorogation was one of almost despair; for he knows that his now manifest failure to obtain the recognition of the *de facto* government of the National League as the Government *de jure* of Ireland may cause a transfer of the control of the Irish conspiracy to the murder and dynamite wing, whose violent method has been unwillingly suspended during the recent Home Rule campaign and will probably be