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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the
editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to
any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE new volume of THE WEEK, which will begin with the
next number, will appear in a somewhat changed form.
The number of pages will be increased from sixteen to
twenty-four, the size of page being smaller, with a nar-
rower column. This form has been adopted by a
number of prominent weekly journals and has been
found more compact and convenient than the larger
sheet and wider column. The change has been often
urged by contributors and subscribers, and we trust it
will prove generally acceptable to our readers.

TORONTO is to be congratulated on the fact that the
Council has at last agreed on a policy for the removal
of the great danger to health which exists in the present
condition of Ashbridge's Bay. The plan recommended by
Engineer Keating and approved by the Council commends
itself to the good sense of the citizens, and we cannot doubt
that they will heartily vote approval of some means for pro-
viding the necessary funds. The scheme seems to have
the double merit of being neither too ambitious nor too
parsimonious. To have asked the citizens to vote a very
large sum of money for the carrying out of a grand scheme
of reclamation, in the present depressed state of business,
would have been to invite deserved defeat. On the other
hand, to palter with the nuisance by adopting some doubt-
ful, temporary expedient would no doubt have been very
poor economy, if not an absolute waste of money. So far
as inexpert common-sense can judge, the plan proposed, of
opening a clear and permanent channel through the whole
length of the marsh, through which the purifying waters
may freely flow, will not only have the sanitary effect
which is the crying necessity of the present moment, but
will constitute a necessary first step to any large filling-in
process which may be decided upon in future, when return-
ing prosperity shall have created a demand for more room.
For the present the city has enough of the filling-in busi-
ness on its hands in the Esplanade improvements. Even
these bid fair to cause the fishes, if any can survive in the
turbid waters of Toronto Bay, to begin to feel their
domains contracted, as did those of Horatian days, by the

encroachment of the moles built out into the waters. It is
wise for a time to set a limit to our City's too ambitious
designs. A strong and perfectly legitimate argument in
favour of carrying out the engineer's scheme without delay
is that it will afford useful employment to a large number
of labourers during the winter season.

MR. EDWARD BLAKE once told his followers, in the
course of a speech in Parliament, that he wished no
man to vote for his policy unless convinced that he was
right. His great opponent, the late Sir John Macdonald,
is said, on the other hand, to have sometimes declared that
he would not give a fig for the supporter who voted for him
only when convinced that he was right. Whether the latter
tradition is true, or the invention of an enemy, the two state-
ments serve to point a political moral—if those two words
are not wholly incongruous—which was illustrated in an
interesting manner in the recent debates of the "Young
Conservatives" of this city. It is, to our thinking, an
omen for good to Canada that a large majority of the young
Conservatives of the city have affirmed so unmistakably
that their party loyalty is rather of the type approved by
Mr. Blake than its opposite. We believe that it augurs
well, not only for the future of the country, but for that of
the party. Blind subservency to a few party
leaders, even though those leaders may hold the
reins of office and be the virtual rulers of the country,
is a very poor compliment to the men and a very
doubtful service to the party, while it is rank dis-
loyalty to the conscience of the individual and to the best
interests of Canada. There can be no doubt that in the
long run one supporter who acts from intelligent conviction
is worth more than half-a-dozen who follow blindly
whithersoever the party chiefs may lead them. It is evi-
dent that the young men of the city are bound not only to
do their own thinking but to maintain their right to free
expression of the results of it. This is the only attitude
worthy of those whose future is bound up with that of
their country, and any one of whom may cherish a reasonable
ambition to play an influential part one day in shaping its
destinies. We have seen no better augury for the redemp-
tion and purification of Canadian politics, than the inde-
pendent and manly stand taken by the "Young Conserva-
tives" of Toronto.

THE city of Toronto cannot be complimented on its dig-
nity, when its officers are employed in cutting down
the trolley poles erected by the street-car Company which
it has chartered. The act referred to seems to us to be
one which nothing short of a pressing and absolute neces-
sity could justify. It is not yet clear that it had that
justification. We are disposed to insist, as far as needful,
on curbing the presumption of monopolistic corporations,
but when such corporations exist by virtue of a city
charter and work under clearly defined conditions, it does
seem that there should be some better means of keeping
them up to the mark than the employment of brute force.
The whole question in this case, so far as we are able to
see, turns on the veracity of the representatives of the
Company. If it be true, as they assert most positively,
that they are absolutely unable to procure better poles in
time for use the coming winter, then the question was
simply whether it would be better to permit the temporary
use of defective material, or deprive many of the citizens
of the convenience of an electric service during the coming
winter. If the rashness of the City Engineer, acting as
we must suppose with the approval of the Mayor and
Council, shall have the effect of depriving those citizens of
such convenience, their brave and determined attitude
will scarcely bring those responsible for it much gratitude
or glory from the parts of the city affected. Of course, if
the Engineer or Council were unable to obtain from the
Company any binding engagement to have the objection-
able poles replaced by better ones at the earliest oppor-
tunity, their heroic measure may have better justification,
though even then it might be a fair question whether the
cutting down should not have been postponed until spring.
Let us hope that the quarrel may be speedily settled by
the court, and that some more dignified means may be

found for keeping the Company up to the mark in the
future.

WHERE are we? In what century are we living?
What kind of country do we inhabit? Such ques-
tions as these must have forced themselves upon the minds
of many a Canadian when he read the other day in the
papers that Archbishop Fabre had formally forbidden the
Roman Catholic citizens of the Province of Quebec to read,
buy, sell, or have anything to do with, two public journals
published in that Province which he designated by name;
and that he had enforced the prohibition by declaring that
those who should disregard it should be deprived of the
sacraments of the Church, with all the miseries in this life
and in the life to come which such deprivation might
entail. Two main questions are raised by this ecclesiastical
denunciation. First, Does it involve a violation of the
civil rights of the owners and publishers of said papers,
whose property in them the ban is intended to destroy?
Second, Would a legal decision, supposing that such could
be obtained, compelling the Archbishop to withdraw the
prohibition, be an interference with the freedom of worship
of the church which he represents and in whose name he
acts? The answer to the first question turns, it is evident,
upon the import of the threatened refusal of the sacraments.
No one would think of denying that a minister or eccle-
siastic is quite within his rights in denouncing, even by
name, any publication which he may deem to be pernicious
to the morals of those who are under his spiritual over-
sight, and advising or warning them against reading such
publications. The essential peculiarity of this case is such
as could not exist in connection with any other denomina-
tion save the Roman Catholic, because no other in this
land claims to exercise a jurisdiction affecting the destiny
of its adherents in the world to come. It is perhaps con-
ceivable that in some other churches a power of excom-
munication might be used in such a way as to raise a
question of civil rights, but even in such a case the issue
involved, relating simply to church standing or member-
ship, would be insignificant in comparison with the penalty
threatened in the present instance. It is quite immaterial
whether the deprivation of the sacraments really carries
with it all the terrible consequences suggested or not. The
vital point is that touching the nature and effect of the
threatened punishment as a *motive*, and its motive-
power depends entirely upon the belief of those
upon whom it is brought to bear. Assuming,
as is no doubt the fact in the case of the great
majority of those to whom the Archbishop's prohibi-
tion was addressed, the reality of the belief in the efficacy
of the threatened punishment in both worlds, it is evident
that the weapon is one of terrible effect, and that, if it
may be legitimately used, it places the property and means
of livelihood of the individual citizen completely within
the power of the ecclesiastical authorities wielding it. This
is equivalent to making them the virtual rulers of that
part of the State which comes within their ecclesiastical
domain, a consequence which reduces the claim to an
absurdity, in a free, self-governing country. That the laws
of Canada do not recognize such a stretch of ecclesiastical
authority as permissible has been made clear in the
decision of the courts that the dread of such spiritual
penalties may not be invoked as a political influence. The
principle involved is essentially the same in the case of the
journals. Hence the wonder is that the aggrieved
publishers do not seek relief in the courts.

TOUCHING the other phase of the question, it has been
claimed that to deny the right of the Archbishop to
wield the weapons of the church against the offending
journals and all who continue to patronize them, would be
to deprive Roman Catholics of their natural and treaty
right to the free exercise of their religion. But it surely
is involved in the idea of religious liberty as well as in
that of civil liberty, that it must respect the rights of
others. The most enthusiastic advocate of freedom of
worship would not claim that it should carry with it the
right to deprive any citizen forcibly or fraudulently of his
property or personal liberty, or to commit any act against
his person or property which would be deemed a crime in