

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

Manitoba Speaks.
 Manitoba has lifted up its voice on high and proclaimed to all Canada that it will not have separate schools for Roman Catholics. It is very fine, no doubt, to talk about constitutional rights and justice to the minority and all that sort of thing, but as Manitoba is practically united in its opposition to the schools, and quite prepared to snap its fingers at remedial legislation, what is to be done about it? We cannot force Manitoba in such a matter. It is absurd to think of it.

The Cabinet Reconstructed.
 It is a matter for general congratulation that the Dominion Cabinet has at last been reconstructed, and that the business of the country may now possibly receive some attention. It has been a very unlovely sight this internecine warfare in the Council of the nation, a very undignified and very humiliating sight, and it will take months of the most zealous devotion to the country's interests on the part of the leaders of the conservatives to reestablish their reputation for possessing the genius of Government. Sir Mackenzie Bowell's long statement in the Senate last week justifying his position, whilst it was interesting and even pathetic, unconsciously revealed why it was that the Ministers have not been altogether happy under his command. Sir Mackenzie is a man of no mean gifts, but he is not a leader of men. Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., has in abundance what Sir Mackenzie lacks; and we have no doubt but that the new Secretary of State will lead not only in the House of Commons but in the Government, the party, and the country. His accession to the Premiership appears to be only a matter of a few weeks, and it is altogether probable that Sir Mackenzie Bowell will be glad to be relieved of his weighty and perhaps uncomfortable office. To three of his Ministers, it is said, he declines to speak, and we must confess that we are not much surprised. Even Bishops have been known to cherish animosity. How much more then may a Premier be expected to do so.

The Charges Against Dr. Montague.

We have received a letter from the solicitors of Dr. Montague complaining of our topic relating to the charge made against him of writing anonymous letters in disparagement of Sir A. Caron. On turning to the paragraph it will be seen that we stated: "It is only fair to Dr. Montague to say that very few, even amongst his political opponents, are disposed to give the charge any credence whatever." Since our paragraph was written Dr. Montague has denied on his honour as a Minister of the Crown that he had either directly or indirectly anything to do with the letters in question. Dr. Montague is entitled to the full benefit of his denial, and the correspondence between him and Sir A. Caron and the letter from the Governor-General shew that Dr. Montague has satisfied both of these eminent persons as to his being innocent of the charge. Mr. Clarke Wallace's speech in the House does not advance the matter one iota. He does not say that Dr. Montague wrote the letters. He only says he was told that Dr. Montague wrote the letters. As the Doctor has commenced legal proceedings the real culprit who did write the letters may yet be discovered. If he is found, it will probably be a bad day for him. Meantime, we congratulate Dr. Montague on his escape from the charge of having committed such a despicable offence.

Anonymous Letters.

It is not very long since the Court of Berlin was grievously troubled by the circulation of slanderous anonymous letters. A man, afterwards proved to be innocent, was declared guilty and cast into prison; and, as far as we know, the real culprit has never been discovered. When this subject was occupying the public mind, we pointed out that others besides the writers of these infamous productions must share the blame. If men did as they ought to do, if they treated such things with contempt and neglect they would not be written, or, if written, they would be innocuous. So long as men are foolish enough to read and quote anonymous letters, so long unprincipled men will adopt this method of annoyance. When such disgraceful compositions are immediately consigned to the flames and forgotten, then they will cease to be written. We have no great hope that these counsels will prevail, or that people will cease from their folly; and so we suppose they must go on allowing themselves to be tormented; but we are quite sure there is no other escape from this species of annoyance. The recent case at Ottawa is a good illustration of our remarks—past and present.

The Boers and the Natives.

When interviewed by a reporter in Boston recently an American missionary, lately returned from a protracted sojourn in South Africa, affirmed what everybody feels, but which everybody does not care to admit, that it would be of immense moral and material benefit to Africa if Great Britain were to take possession of the entire continent. Compared with England, the rule of other peoples in Africa is a miserable failure. For one thing, and a most important thing it is, Great Britain is the only country that has any respect for the rights of aborigines, and any conscience in dealing with them. Even the Americans with their much-