

or who, by familiarity with his preaching and doing, and loving sympathy with the noble type of manhood he presented, may be qualified and impelled to sketch the man and the work for the readers of *The Week*. We are sure that such a sketch could not fail to be both acceptable and, in the highest sense, useful.

The speech from the Throne read by Lord Stanley on the reassembling of Parliament is a skilfully constructed document. It would not be easy to prepare a paper of the same length, at all suited to the purpose, with a more complete absence of reference to those questions which are really of first importance in the present state of things in Canada, and are occupying the chief place in public attention. The supreme subject of tariff reform; the constant drain of population from all the older provinces; the Manitoba school question, which is even now receiving the attention of Government in a new and unprecedented mode of procedure; the evident and widespread unrest of the people and their dissatisfaction with present conditions; all these are quietly ignored and the members of Parliament are congratulated upon an increase in the volume of trade which it is pretty well known has brought with it no increase of profits save to the few, and no diffusion of general prosperity. We are well aware that it is no longer considered necessary that the speech from the Throne should foreshadow the important legislation which the Government intends to introduce during the session, and it may be that the framers of this speech intend to surprise the Houses and the country with their far-seeing and bold measures for the relief of the business tension and the imparting of new life to Canadian commerce and industry. It more probably means, however, that their policy is opportunism; that they intend to watch the currents of opinion, especially amongst their own followers; and that the question whether they shall continue the process of "marking time," which, as Mr. McCarthy says with obvious correctness, was kept up throughout the Abbott regime, or shall strike out in some new departures, will be determined by the attitude of their own private followers, and by the amount of support the Opposition leaders may be able to gain for their various propositions.

In minor matters, it is true, the Governor-General's speech promises, in one of its later paragraphs, some useful and progressive measures. That the Franchise Act stands sadly in need of improvement must have long been obvious to all fair-minded men on both sides of the House. The only serious question is whether any process of amendment less radical than that of wiping it from the statute book can free the electoral machinery from the just reproaches with which the Opposition now assail it as an unfair and partisan measure. There is also abundant room for improvement in the laws relating to the civil service, if only the changes proposed are in the right direction. If the amendment of the laws regulating the admission of evidence in criminal cases includes the admission of the testimony of the accused person, as is, we presume, the intention, we cannot doubt that the interests of justice will be thereby promoted. The exten-

sion of the ballot in elections to the North-West Territories will be but a tardy act of justice to our fellow-citizens on the prairies, while whatever tends to the simplification of the processes regulating the holding and transfer of land, whether in the West or the East, without impairing the security of ownership, will be a public benefaction.

Perhaps the most remarkable, and as we should be disposed to add, most unfortunate paragraph in the "Speech" is that referring to the controversy with the Government of the United States in the matter of the canal tolls. We have never concealed our honest conviction that our own Government was in the wrong throughout this affair, and for that reason we are glad that they have at last wisely concluded to discontinue the objectionable discrimination in favour of Canadian ports. True, they have not frankly admitted their error. Perhaps it would be too much to expect that they should do so. But "thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just", and we may be sure, in view of the determination and persistency which the Administration has shewn in some other matters, that had they felt really assured that in maintaining their contention they were enfolded by this triple armor, they would never have consented, even for the sake of conciliation, to surrender or hold in abeyance their right to determine their own trade policy in this respect. At any rate, if the recently published abstracts of the correspondence on this question, from the American volume of "Foreign Relations", may be relied on, the Government are not wise in inviting attention to a discussion in which their Minister hardly shewed to good advantage. We say nothing of the wisdom or good taste of publicly intimating that the hastening of the completion of the Canadian canal is in consequence of this incident. There is a tinge of distrust, if not of jingoism in such an announcement, which does not harmonize well with the conciliatory spirit and intentions professed by Sir John Thompson in his recent public addresses.

The debate on the Address, which was the first crossing of swords of the session, in the Dominion Parliament, presents few salient points which have not already been commented upon almost ad nauseam. Sir John Thompson's statistics were rather severely handled by Mr. Laurier and Sir Richard Cartwright, but the manipulation of figures is evidently not the Premier's forte. It is a regrettable feature of these statistical debates that the Opposition leaders openly challenge the reliability of the census returns. One or both of the Globe's travelling commissioners, it will be remembered, did the same thing, positively declaring that after close investigation the number of industrial establishments assigned by the census to a certain town could not be found. The question is a serious one and the correctness of the census figures has been challenged in so many specific instances, that it is time the Dominion statistician came to their defence and made clear the principle on which the enumerators were instructed to proceed. Sir John Thompson took exception to Mr. Laurier's use of the last two census returns for purposes of comparison in respect to population, on the ground that the principle of enumeration was not the same in

the two cases. There is some force in this, but apparently a similar objection may be urged against the reliability of the census statistics as shewing increase in industries, for it is obvious that the last enumerators must have adopted some entirely new principle of identification or classification.

Mr. Foster's defence of the Government position was much stronger than that of the Premier, owing no doubt to the fact that he was much more at home in the statistical arena. It was satisfactory to find Mr. Foster boldly grappling with the discouraging figures of the exodus. There is undoubted truth and force in his contention that the two chief causes of the Canadian loss of population are the movement westward and the movement cityward, both of which are characteristic of the day in other countries as well as in Canada. In two particulars, however, his logic seemed somewhat at fault, or rather seemed to tell against his argument. What could be more unsatisfactory than his comparison of all Canada, East and West, in respect to loss of population, with the Eastern States, instead of comparing only those portions of Canada which were similarly situated? Again, is there not an obvious injustice in comparing the loss of population in Canada by the westward movement during the years preceding the opening up of our own North-West, with her loss from the same cause since her own North-West has been competing with so many advantages in its favour, with that of the United States? His implication that the blame for the absence of an accessible Canadian North-West lay with the Government during the MacKenzie regime was decidedly unjust to Mr. MacKenzie, since that statesman, when premier, did certainly make it a part of his policy to make the prairies accessible by rail, and did build a considerable stretch of railway with that object in view. On the whole it is questionable whether it was good generalship on the part of Mr. Laurier to challenge a division on the general question of protection in a want of confidence motion and so early in the session. Such a mode of attack could only have the effect of causing the whole party force to rally to the defence of the Government. To take the worst tariff abuses in detail, with the assured help of some of the Government's supporters, must be better tactics.

That the revolution in Hawaii was prompted and engineered by resident Americans, interested in bringing about the annexation of the island with the United States, is written too plainly on the face of the movement to admit of rational doubt. It by no means follows that the Government of the Republic is in any way responsible for the affair, though the suspicious readiness of the commander of its war-ship to land a force for the preservation of order, if really approved at Washington, would be hard to reconcile with any other view. Pending further disclosures it is better to assume that the action of the zealous individuals who brought about the deposition of the Queen, and started with indecent haste for the American capital, to sue for annexation, was wholly that of impulsive and not over-wise volunteers impelled by self-interest mingled, it may be, with a short-sighted