

# THE WEEK.

Vol. X.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, OCT. 27th, 1893.

No. 48.

## THE WEEK:

A Canadian Journal of Politics,  
Literature, Science and Arts.

TERMS:—One year, \$3; eight months, \$2; four months, \$1. Subscriptions payable in advance.

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

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## CURRENT TOPICS.

Every Canadian must feel gratified at the high stand which Canada as a whole, and Ontario in particular, have taken in the competitive exhibitions of certain classes of productions at the World's Fair. To stand easily first, with scarcely a second, in the manufacture of cheese, and in the very front rank in regard to various agricultural and horticultural products, as well as to those of the fisheries, mines and forests, is not only a thing to be proud of, but one which can hardly fail to be productive of benefit to the country. It must help to dispel some erroneous but persistent notions with respect both to our climate and the enterprise and progressiveness of our people. At the same time, it would be folly to fail to note failures as well as successes. It cannot be denied that while the success is very marked in the classes indicated, the range, though by no means

narrow, is not so broad as we could wish. Probably it is not so broad as it might have been made had greater efforts been put forth to send to the front the best in all departments of our industries. Success and failure has each its lessons. Both should prove alike stimulating; the success to still greater achievements along the same lines; the failures or partial failures to greater efforts to overcome disadvantages and make up deficiencies. It may be, for instance, that misdirected efforts have been made to develop and foster certain lines of manufacture for which the country is not well fitted, but it must be the fact, on the other hand, that there are some lines of manufacture to which our country is better adapted than any other. In these we should take first rank. The Great Fair will have been greatly beneficial to us if it reveals to us alike our strength and our weakness, with the causes of each.

It is hard to credit the cabled rumours to the effect that the Parnellite members of Parliament, under the leadership of the Redmonds, are threatening to withdraw their support from Mr. Gladstone unless he will consent to re-introduce the Home Rule Bill at the approaching session. It is still harder to believe that they will carry out any such threats in action. Such a course would be either suicidal for those who should follow it or fatal to Home Rule; possibly both. In spite of their eccentricities, the Parnellite faction have generally been credited with an honest desire to bring about the consummation which was the goal towards which the singularly strong and talented leader by whose name they call themselves steadfastly set his face during his whole Parliamentary career. That goal was certainly never so near as it is at the present moment. To prove unfaithful to the leader and the party by whose efforts it has been brought so near, by refusing, after a whole session has been given up to Home Rule, to let it stand in temporary abeyance while other Radical measures are being advanced a stage, would be as unreasonable as ungrateful. Should the Gladstonites be defeated while still heartily striving to bring about Home Rule, the chances are that their successors would be obliged to concede something very nearly approaching to it, in order to maintain themselves in power. But should the Gladstonites, on the other hand, be defeated through the unfaithfulness of a portion of the Irish representatives, for whose cause they have done and sacrificed so much, and

should they consequently be driven to the conclusion that Irishmen are too fickle and unreliable to be fit for such a measure, the cause of Home Rule would either become utterly lost and hopeless, or it would be relegated to a future so dim and distant that no living politician of middle age could hope to see it. It remains to be seen whether the Redmondite faction, and, as it is predicted, some of the McCarthyites, have been smitten with the madness which presages the destructive wrath of the gods.

We do not know what foundation there is for the rumour which has caused some dismay in newspaper circles and elsewhere, to the effect that Rideau Hall is inadequate to the requirements of the Governor-General's household, and that it must either be enlarged by the addition of an expensive wing, or superseded by an entirely new mansion. The customary annual criticisms of the expensiveness of this establishment are bad enough and it would be a pity should there arise any necessity for adding to the account which calls them forth. It is very probably true, as many maintain, that it would have been better economy, as well as have given more satisfactory results, had the large sums of money which have been expended upon the old hall during a number of years past been employed in the erection of a new one. No one would wish to see a cheese-paring policy adopted in such a matter. It is highly proper that any discussion with reference to the course to be pursued in the future should be kept as far as possible free from personal reference. Yet it is evidently desirable that some arrangement should be made by which the Ottawa Administration may be freed from the embarrassment which may at any time arise from the fact of one Governor-General requiring or fancying a larger retinue and more expensive equipments than another. To put the matter on a simple business basis, it would seem hardly fair that one incumbent of the office should receive a considerably larger salary than another, by reason of such requirement or fancy. This question involves one of much greater moment, as it seems to us, viz: that of the ideal we are to set before us as a people. Shall we aim at supporting a royal court in miniature at Ottawa which will naturally tend to increase with every change of occupant? Or shall we set before us an ideal of democratic simplicity, such as better befits both the status and the purse