

THE WEEK:

A CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND LITERATURE.

Vol. I., No. 50.

Toronto, Thursday, November 13th, 1884.

\$3.00 per Annum.
Single Copies, 7 cents.

CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

	PAGE.
TOPICS OF THE WEEK.....	785
CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES—	
CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.....	A BYSTANDER. 787
Here and There.....	791
A New Ontario Industry.....	A. A. 792
On the Importation of English Domestic.....	J. M. Loes. 793
Municipal Government at Washington.....	C. F. B. 793
CORRESPONDENCE.....	794
LITERATURE—	
Gentleman Dick, o' the Greys—Poem.....	H. K. Cockin. 795
Indian Summer—Poem.....	Seranus. 795
THE SCRAP-BOOK.....	796
BOOK NOTICES.....	797
MUSIC AND DRAMA.....	797
CHESS COLUMN.....	798

The Week,

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY AND LITERATURE.

Edited by W. PHILIP ROBINSON.

TERMS:—One year, \$3.00; eight months, \$2.00; four months, \$1.00. Subscriptions payable in advance.

Subscribers in Great Britain and Ireland supplied, postage prepaid, on terms following:—One year, 12s. stg.; half-year, 6s. stg. Remittances by P. O. order or draft should be made payable and addressed to the Publisher.

ADVERTISEMENTS, unexceptional in character and limited in number, will be taken at \$4 per line per annum; \$2.50 per line for six months; \$1.50 per line for three months; 20 cents per line per insertion for a shorter period.

All advertisements will be set up in such style as to insure THE WEEK's tasteful typographical appearance, and enhance the value of the advertising in its columns. No advertisement charged less than five lines. Address—T. R. CLOUGHER, Business Manager, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

In the United States they are still counting the ballots, but there seems to be no reason for doubting that Cleveland is duly elected. Nor is there much reason for fearing that if he is duly elected any resistance will be made to his installation, or that trouble of any kind will ensue; though the Irish supporters of Blaine, as a matter of course, are holding truculent language, and, on the other side, some of the Democrats are making a show of standing to their arms. The difficulty is confined to the State of New York, where law reigns, and it would be impossible to perpetrate such acts of fraud or violence as those the perpetration of which in Louisiana took the Presidency from Tilden and gave it to Hayes. The scene of political interest therefore shifts from the United States to England, where the Franchise Bill, unchanged, is now going up again to the Lords whose leaders have so far given no sign of surrender or compromise. The Lords will be encouraged in resistance by the result of the election in Warwickshire, where a Conservative has, by a large majority, replaced a Liberal. The Parnellites, after all, voted for the Franchise Bill, judging, and probably with reason, that the extension of the suffrage would add to their force, both by giving them more seats and by swelling the volume of Disunionism. The very fact, however, that Disunionists think the measure favourable to their designs, is likely to send not a few Unionist Liberals over to the other side. We may be sure that strenuous efforts are being made to bring about a compromise and avert the mortal shock between the Commons and the Lords, both by the moderate party among the Press and by any one who may specially represent the wishes of the Court. But the Warwickshire election will make their task less easy. It may prove a fatal victory to the House of Lords.

ANY one looking to the oscillations in the rate of discount charged by the Bank of England, which has now gone up to four per cent., would be at a loss to know whether, in a series of years, the rate of interest was falling or rising. But if he extended his observation further and took other criteria for his guidance, he would soon cease to be in doubt. Governments are able to refund their debts on more favourable terms. In this way France and the United States have lessened the burden of interest which they carried; and France, whose credit has not improved within the year, contemplates a further reduction. The Canadian Government now borrows at four per cent., and good municipal loans are placed on better terms than could be obtained ten years ago. The railway companies of Great Britain, in which every financial movement is maintained with great regularity, shows a reduction in their interest account within the last ten

years which is not the less significant because it is small, the average rate paid having fallen from 4.29 to 4.21. More perhaps than anything else these figures mark the real tendency to a decline in the rate of interest. But they do not represent the full extent of the decline, because many loans obtained at higher figures are still current. If the railway debts had been greatly reduced, the reduction would of itself have tended to raise the credit of the companies, but this is not the case. In ten years the debts have fallen only from the proportion of 26 per cent. to the capital to 25 per cent. Reduction of debt was not the means of improving the credit of the companies, and the rate of dividends on ordinary capital has undergone no change that could affect the credit of the companies one way or the other; the greatest variation in the decade having been from 4.99 to 4.02, and the average over 4.50. In some directions the field for the employment of capital is being restricted. Railway construction in the United States has met a check which will continue to be felt for some time; the Canadian Pacific will be completed within the year, and a lull in construction must follow in this country. England is over-built to an extent that is probably unprecedented, and the locking up of capital in that direction must undergo a great decline. Some extension of railways into the wheat-growing districts of India there will probably be; but in spite of dull times and bad trade the growth of capital is likely to go on faster than the demand for investment can absorb the accretion. And, besides, there are not wanting indications that in manufacturing and trade circles the worst is about over, and that the tide must shortly turn. The reduction of stocks of goods in England has gone about as far as it is likely to go contemporaneously with a reduction of prices. Renewed activity may cause some demand for floating capital, but this will not trench on the stock of capital which awaits what is called permanent investment, and which consists of an addition, the creation of saving, to the pre-existing total. How far the downward movement in interest may go is uncertain, but the present tendency admits of no doubt. It is not perhaps in the nature of things that any minimum rate once reached will ever be permanently maintained: fluctuation depending upon an infinite number of incidents, by which the rate of profit and the proportion between the supply and the demand for a loanable capital are affected, is not likely ever to cease. But in the recent past the rate of interest, speaking generally, has declined, and the forces that produced the decline, far from being exhausted, are apparently growing more potent and may acquire increased activity.

THE death of the Postmaster-General Fawcett can hardly make much difference to the English Government. As an administrator he was very zealous, and in some respects successful; but he will be easily replaced. The report that Redistribution had been placed in the hands of a subordinate member of the Government is not likely to be true. Both as a writer on Political Economy, and as a speaker, Mr. Fawcett was clear and sound, without being original or striking. He was Radical, but at the same time judicious, and his arguments always had weight. As a speaker he was heavy in manner, partly perhaps owing to his inability to see the faces of his audience. But extraordinary interest attached to him as the most remarkable and triumphant instance of a struggle against what to most sufferers is the overwhelming infirmity of blindness. That he should have achieved as much as he did in the way both of acquisition and of action seems miraculous. His determination to defy blindness indeed amounted to a passion. Not only did he pique himself on appearing to share all the ordinary impressions and pleasures of those who see; he tried to share their sports, and went salmon-fishing. He fell short only of Montaigne's blind friend who insisted on going out hunting, and was allowed by his dependents to gallop about for a time in an open field, and then assured that he had killed a hare. As a political economist Fawcett may be connected with the school of Mill, having certainly not more than Mill of the Socialistic tendency, which is now beginning to prevail. His character for political independence and integrity stood high; but he was extremely aspiring, and when he thought himself neglected assailed the flank of Mr. Gladstone, whom he once succeeded in defeating by a junction with