

THE WEEK.

Vol. XIII.

Toronto, Friday, May 29th, 1896.

No. 27

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Current Topics.

The Political Situation.

Politics remain unchanged. In Ontario the "No Coercion" cry, which is our old friend "No Popery" in another guise, is still being shouted. Toronto is a good stout Orange centre and the stalwarts are making it very uncomfortable for their candidates. Messrs. Cockburn, Osler, Clarke and Robertson are all pledged to oppose Separate schools in Manitoba. The Hamilton candidates are not so pronounced. The Liberals are curiously silent. They dare not, in strong Protestant constituencies, advocate Separate schools, and their leader and *confères* in Quebec dare not oppose them. Throughout the rural districts of Ontario the people are doggedly opposed to Separate schools, but they are not like the city shouters. There will probably be returned however an Ontario contingent of Government supporters pledged to oppose the granting of Separate schools. The curious point of the situation appears to be that in Manitoba itself the people take it much more quietly than in Ontario. When the elections are over and Conservatives are returned from Manitoba as well as the other Provinces, the people in Ontario, who have been so distressed by the come-over-into-Macedonia-and-help-us-cry, will be surprised to see how unnecessarily their feelings have been wrought up all about nothing. Mr. Laurier has had the good sense and patriotism to see this truth, and all he has found fault with is the mode the Government has adopted to remedy a grievance he himself does not deny. He only goes as far as saying that it should be demonstrated more plainly that there is a grievance and then it can be dealt with. Some of Mr. McCarthy's followers, like Colonel O'Brien, are personally so honest and sincere that we can attribute their attitude only to inherited North of Ireland tendencies which prevent the exercise of their usual fair-mindedness. Their leader seems inclined to play the part of a demagogue, a descent we are sorry to witness.

Mr. McCarthy and the Privy Council.

Mr. McCarthy, in his desperate attempt to set his fellow-countrymen fighting with one another, is apparently ready to go very far. He is in the unfortunate position of being counsel in the case on which he is now stirring up as much bad blood as he can. Not being satisfied with the decision of the Privy Council, he wants that Court wiped out as far as Canada is concerned. That any counsel with Mr. McCarthy's

practice and experience should make such a demand is surprising, and is so surprising that it must be considered as clap-trap. Nobody knows better than Mr. McCarthy the utter failure of the Supreme Court of Canada to command respect. It has been an unmitigated failure. Its composition is radically wrong. Quebec Judges have to decide questions of English law of which they are entirely ignorant. English-speaking judges have to deal with points of civil law of which they know nothing. There never has been any discipline in the conduct of the Court that counsel could observe. Finally, the requirement that the Judges of that Court must live in Ottawa or within five miles of it is a fatal obstacle to getting the best men to go there. What really eminent man, who has his associations, his interests, his life-long friends and acquaintances, say, in Halifax, or Montreal, or Toronto, or Winnipeg, will abandon them all and go to Ottawa to live? It means rooting up every interest a man has. Without any disrespect to Ottawa it is too much to ask. If, then, the Supreme Court of Canada is unsatisfactory, is it not a satisfaction to have a tribunal to appeal to whose decisions *pace* Mr. McCarthy are recognized as satisfactory the world over.

Late Disasters

America is nature on a large scale. If there is a lake, it is an ocean—a range of mountains extends for thousands of miles—it is possible to travel in deserts or in prairies which would alone be the size of small continents. The rivers are as wide as the seas of other continents. Everything is immense. Over these enormous regions nature has a sway which she has not in regions more confined. The western cyclone is something beyond belief. A swathe of destruction three hundred and fifty miles long and forty miles wide has just been cut. Everything in the course of this tornado has disappeared. Human life has been sacrificed and the efforts of human labour have perished in the twinkling of an eye. Canada has been free from these terrific onslaughts of the power of the storm. But, sad to say, in British Columbia, the uncertainty of human happiness and the dangers of human existence have been fearfully exemplified. Some years ago the wreck of the steamer on the river Thames near our Canadian London carried grief to many a heart. This year the fatal accident at Victoria, which has hurried many a happy holiday seeker to an untimely grave, must equally be deplored. These disasters bring up a dreadful total of loss of life. But that actual loss of life is only one element in the tragedy. Those who are left behind to grieve in many cases are in more lamentable condition than those who are gone. These are the things must give us pause and even the most heartless and the most unreflecting must feel that their turn may be next. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow thou shalt die," and "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," go side by side.

The Races.

The efforts of the Ontario Jockey Club to promote honest racing have had a satisfactory result. The horse is not an extinct quadruped yet in spite of the bicycle. Electricity may super-