

# THE WEEK.

Ninth Year.  
Vol. IX., No. 8.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 22nd, 1892.

\$3.00 per Annum.  
Single Copies, 10 Cents.

## THE WEEK:

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND ART

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. 6d.; half-year, 6s. 6d. Remittances by P.O. order or draft should be made payable and addressed to the Publisher.

ADVERTISEMENTS, unexceptionable in character and limited in number, will be taken at \$4.00 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.

No advertisements charged less than five lines. Address—T. R. CLOUGHER, Business Manager, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto.

European Agents—SMITH, AINSLIE & Co., 25 Newcastle Street, Strand, London.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

### CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

TOPICS—	PAGE
Literature in Canada	115
The Bye-Elections	115
Is it Satisfactory?	115
The School Question in Manitoba	115
Proposed Fusion of Courts	116
The Farmers' Institutes	116
The Movement Cityward	116
A Mysterious Case	116
Death of the Duke of Clarence	117
The Threatened War	117
A CHILD OF THE STREET. (Poem)	A. M. Belding, 117
EDUCATION & INSTRUCTION	Frederic E. J. Lloyd, 117
ON THE SELECTION OF EPITAPHS	Archibald MacMechan, M.A., 118
THE LESSER EVIL	F. W. F., 118
THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH CLUB DINNER	H. B. A., 118
A QUATRAIN	A. Melbourne Thompson, 119
HEROISM: HEROIC ENDOWMENT	D. R. Moore, M.D., 119
LINES ON READING IN THE WEEK "PESSIMISM," BY T. G. MARQUIS	Amie Rothwell, 120
"HEATHER AND HAREBELL"	Alchemist, 120
PARIS LETTER	Z., 121
THE RAMBLER	Z., 121
THE POET'S WORK AND WAGES. (Poem)	John Inrie, 122
CORRESPONDENCE—	
"Dunbar Battle"	H. T. R., 122
BALLADS FROM THE ILIAD	W. D. LeSueur, 122
ART NOTES	122
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	122
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	123
LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP	124
READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE	124
SCIENTIFIC AND SANITARY	125
CHESS	127

All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

COMPLAINT is often made of the want of encouragement to native literary talent in Canada. Certainly the young man or woman who should adopt literature proper as a profession, hoping to make it a means of livelihood in the Dominion, would be to be pitied, unless indeed the productions were of such a kind as to have a special pecuniary value in the market-place, and in that case they would probably forfeit their right to rank as literature in the restricted sense of the word. Whether this state of things is to be attributed to Canada as a special reproach, or is merely the result of her present position and circumstances is another question. Mr. James Payn, it is true, has taken it upon himself to call Canada the least literary of the colonies. If this means that we have in proportion to population a smaller number of readers of the class prepared to appreciate and purchase works of the highest literary merit than our sister colonies in other parts of the world, it may possibly be true, though we make bold to doubt it. If true, it can be accounted for no doubt by the fact that, for reasons into which we need not now enquire, those other colonies have been peopled largely by immigrants in whom the literary taste had been more highly cultivated in the old land than it was in most of the hardy pioneers who invaded the Canadian backwoods and conquered the mighty forests with patient stroke upon stroke, or in their children. If, however, Mr. Payn means that Canadians have less constructive literary talent in proportion to their numbers and opportunities than any other colonists, we make bold to deny the impeachment still more emphatically. It could be maintained with a good deal of evidence that our soil is specially fruitful, at least in some sections of the Dominion, in literary talent of a very respectable order. It is only necessary to refer to the large number of our young writers who have ready access to the best periodicals which are published in the United States and Great Britain, to find ample proof of the fact. That the number of those who have become acceptable authors in the stricter sense and have written books destined to live and grow old with the English language is very small, must be admitted. But where in all

the world is the colony of five million inhabitants, comparatively poor, scattered over an immense territory and almost uniformly engaged in the struggle for bread, who can show a better record in this respect? The fact is, and it would be easy to give a goodly list of names in proof, that intellectual ability of a high order abounds in Canada, and that we have among us at the present moment several young men who have even given proof of rich and rare poetic talent. Only opportunity for culture and development is needed to enable some of these to take rank with the best this continent, to say the least, can produce. But, and this brings us back to our starting place, these are for the most part, as usually happens, without means to enable them to devote themselves wholly to their favourite pursuit and make the most of their rare gifts. They find before them an uphill path. The bread-and-butter problem confronts them at every turn and demands first solution. Their friends and admirers become indignant at what they regard as the stinginess or crassness which fails to come to their aid and remove ignoble pecuniary difficulties out of the way of struggling genius. Perhaps the young writers themselves become discouraged and begin to long for a Canadian Macenas to smooth their pathway to fame—and a competence. We believe, however, that generally they are made of sterner stuff. Unless their genius is of a very unpractical kind it should soon enable them to make their services worth the cost of a comfortable livelihood in some useful sphere of brain industry, and still leave them some leisure for wooing Minerva or the Muses. We are not sure that these divinities have not usually been more successfully courted under difficulties. Meanwhile their devotees are under happier conditions than many of the gifted who have gone before them, in that they have not only Canada but the whole English-speaking world for their prospective audience, at the same time that they may cherish the noble ambition of gradually leading their own Canadian fellow-countrymen to a better appreciation of whatever is beautiful and elevating in the realms of thought and song.

THE three bye-elections which have been held up to the time of this writing give no reliable clue to the probable result of the score or two which are to take place within the next few weeks. Thus far the indications are probably rather in favour of the Government, though they have lost a seat. In the other two constituencies they have won by increased majorities, and as it was pretty clearly the McGreevy influence which turned the scales against them in Richelieu they can well afford, as Sir John Thompson said in Halifax, to make the Liberals a present of that triumph. The chief speakers thus far have been Sir John Thompson and Hon. C. H. Tupper on the one side, and Mr. Laurier and Sir Richard Cartwright on the other. As was to be expected the burden of the Opposition plea is the necessity for continental free trade. Mr. Laurier's speeches are always forcible and eloquent and free from anything objectionable on the ground of good taste or gentlemanly feeling, but there can be little doubt that the effect of Sir Richard Cartwright's really able expositions of the trade policy of his party is seriously diminished by the violence of his invective against his political opponents. These intensely bitter personalities may please a certain class of his party friends, but if the chief aim of political speeches is to win over opponents to the speaker's views, it is difficult to conceive of anything better adapted to defeat that object than coarse denunciation of the men whom those who are to be won over have been accustomed to follow. There is, as we have before intimated, much ground for wonder that the Government has not found it possible to secure in all the great Province of Ontario a man of really commanding talent to fight its battles, and it will be strange if this fact does not tell against it in the campaign. What we should have supposed would be felt as the most serious defect in the speeches of Sir John Thompson and other Government leaders is their strangely equivocal position in relation to the question of reciprocity. After having dissolved the House in order to receive a mandate from the people authorizing them to treat with the United States Government for reciprocity, it is certainly not a little perplexing

to find them omitting all further reference to the matter in their campaign speeches. It is still more strange to find them and their organs arguing directly against the policy on which they went to the country and presumably won the election. Have they given up all expectation of the Washington conference which has been twice postponed? It does seem due to their supporters and to the people of Canada generally that they should be told just where the Government now stands in respect to this most important of all Canadian questions.

THE pessimistic spirit is, we think, as hateful to us as to the most sanguine of our readers, but we find it, nevertheless, quite impossible to be satisfied with the logic of a certain species of argument which is being made to do yeoman duty on many platforms and in many newspaper articles. The object is to prove that Canadians ought to be reasonably content with their present circumstances because their people, the farmers for instance, are man for man at least as comfortably off as their neighbours in the United States, which is beyond all question one of the most prosperous nations on the globe. Now we believe that the premises are correct, but we cannot accept the conclusion. We see no reason to doubt that on the average there is as little destitution among us as among our neighbours, that in proportion to population the numbers of the unemployed may be as few with us as with them. But before we can be satisfied with this as an argument which should bring us content we feel constrained to look into the circumstances of the two cases and see whether the conditions are such as to make the comparison just. Very much depends of course upon the point of view. What is a reasonable and right ambition for a young country situated as is our own and possessing its admittedly vast resources? Ought it to be content with remaining virtually stationary with respect to population, so long as its five millions or so of inhabitants are able to maintain themselves in tolerable comfort? Again, it is beyond all question that hundreds of thousands of Canadian citizens by birth or adoption have left the country and gone to the great Republic within the last few years. What would have been the present condition of the country had all these remained in it? Most of them left no doubt because of their inability to find remunerative employment at home. Ought a young country with magnificent resources to be content so long as it is unable to retain its own citizens and find room in addition for a goodly number of immigrants? Sir John Thompson said at Halifax that the country could never have a policy which would prevent our people leaving to try their fortune in other countries. Are we to understand that this magnificent Dominion, with its almost unlimited sources of wealth in soil, forest, mine and sea, is to be content if by natural increase and immigration combined she is able to a little more than counterbalance her emigration? Are we, in a word, to be content with a comfort and prosperity which result largely from the fact that we have at our doors a great nation, able and willing to receive and absorb the surplus and overflow of our population from year to year? Or is it not rather the part of true patriotism to cherish a determined discontent with ourselves and our position so long as things are as they are, and to take no rest until the true cause or causes of such a state of things have been determined and the true remedy, for a remedy there surely must be, applied?

WHETHER and to what extent the recent loss of a seat by the Manitoba Government and the diminution of the majority by which its candidate was returned in Winnipeg, indicate a decline of popularity, it is difficult at this distance to judge. Local causes and the personal influence, or the want of it, of candidates may perhaps account for the change of votes, which was not very large in either case. The indications still are that the people will sustain the Government in the stand it has taken in regard to the school question, which is undoubtedly the most important one now before the people of the Province. This was the chief issue before the Winnipeg electors, and the fact that the Opposition candidate did not declare in favour of Separate Schools, but contented himself with arguing that the Administration had taken the wrong way in defending