

THE WEEK.

Third Year.
Vol. III., No. 2.

Toronto, Thursday, December 10th, 1885.

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

CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES—	PAGE
La Debacle W. G. Stethem.	19
Some Qualities of a Poet A. E. Wetherald.	20
POETRY—	
Fairies' Song Hunter Duvar.	21
CORRESPONDENCE	21
NEW RELIGIONS (Selected)	21
MENTAL EVOLUTION IN ANIMALS	22
TEMPERANCE LEGISLATION	22
LIFE IN ST. PETERSBURG	22
JOHN BUNYAN IN GAOL	23
MUSIC	23
TOPICS OF THE WEEK—	
Character of the Quebec Agitation	24
No Foundation for a National Party	24
Defeat of the Scott Act in Prescott and Russell	24
A Victory gained by the Salvation Army	24
C. P. R. Accounts	24
Settlement of the Irish Question	25
The Perplexity of Parties in England	25
Fair Trade in the General Election	25
Causes of the Trade Depression—Labour Troubles in the States	25
End and Purpose of the Burmese War	25
The Balkan Volcano	26
THE SCRAP BOOK	26
LITERARY GOSSIP	28
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	29

LA DEBACLE.

And shall Trelawney die?
And shall Trelawney die?
Then twenty thousand Cornishmen
Shall know the reason why.

WHEN Louis XIV. revoked Henry IV.'s Edict of Nantes, withdrew toleration from the Reformed faith and commanded millions of the best part of the French people to accept the Roman Catholic doctrine, then occurred not merely the great exodus of French Protestants that gave a superior class of immigrants to Prussia, England, Ireland, and America, but another emigration from the plains of Languedoc to the mountain fastnesses of the Cevennes. There these religious refugees made frequent descents on the inhabitants who had taken possession of the farms and fields they once had tilled. Holding their faith, with their lives, by the arms their desperate courage wielded, they baffled for years the efforts which the Most Christian King made to subdue them, and at last, when an army of 60,000 had only partially succeeded in quelling them, a peace was made that let them practise their religion in secret, with the condition that their young men should serve in the King's armies. One of the regiments organized out of this body of born fighters was the regiment of Carignan-Salières, and the Regiment Roussillon was probably another. After a long service in the great War of the Succession which devastated Central Europe, these two regiments were sent to Canada, there to be disbanded and to form a military strength for the Colony, Roman Catholic wives being sent out to them from Paris and other parts of the kingdom. That these soldiers had in their long campaigns not wholly lost their hold on the Reformed faith may be inferred from the fact that Charlevoix says they were rebuked by their officers for singing Huguenot psalms on the voyage up the St. Lawrence.

The country in which they were settled was at the gateway of the Iroquois incursions into Canada—the valley of the River Richelieu, by which Lake Champlain empties itself into the St. Lawrence. To-day it is called the District of Richelieu, and although the descendants of the Huguenot soldiers lost their fathers' faith, they retained their inheritance of an indomitable love of freedom. The Six Counties furnished the most vigorous insurgents in the revolt of 1837-8, men who fought the trained troops of the British army with old fowling-pieces and wooden cannon, iron-hooped and serving only for one discharge! English-speaking colonists are seldom aware, or, if they know it, forget, that it was this French-Canadian revolt which obtained for the colonies of the Empire that system of responsible government which now gives to the colonial power of Britain so stable and so peaceful a tenure.

Up to 1791 the small French population of Canada was in a position to be converted into an English colony, with traces of French sentiment and language that would have slowly disappeared. But at that date William Pitt, the younger, brought into the House of Commons his Quebec Act, which constituted two Provinces: Lower Canada, with a full provision of French laws, language, and institutions; Upper Canada, with a reproduction of English laws and social system, including primogeniture and an Established Church. During the debate, Pitt declared on the floor of the House that his purpose was to create two colonies distinct from and jealous of each other,

so as to guard against a repetition of "the late unhappy rebellion," which had separated the Thirteen Colonies from the Empire. Thenceforth the existence of a French race as a self-governing people, holding their own institutions, was a certainty in the history of this continent. And to their credit, be it said, they have attained the result in a constitutional manner.

As early as 1807 a journal, *Le Canadien*, published in Quebec, discussed the question of constitutional rights in a large and thoughtful manner, and the tone of language even then foretold a political movement which in 1832 assumed the character of a parliamentary revolution. In 1832 the Assembly attached to the usual Supply Bill a resolution affirming the principle that the Ministers of the Crown should be responsible to the House of Assembly. Each session for five years was illustrated by a like vote with a like resolution, and each time the Governor refused assent to the Supply Bill so conditioned. No money was paid out for any purpose, and the members of the House of Assembly went without their indemnity: one member sawed wood for a living in the day and at night voted the irreconcilable resolution. At last, in 1837, at the advice of the Colonial Secretary, the Governor seized the public chest, in which five years' resources had accumulated. The revolt following this act must be judged by us at this day to have been a vindication of the Constitution, and the act of the Governor to have been an illegal and treasonable proceeding. When the revolt was suppressed by a large military force, and the question of a remedy was considered, Lord Durham's project commended itself to English statesmen. A union of the two Canadas, giving an equal number of parliamentary representatives to each Province, would secure an English majority—and therefore a responsible Ministry governing itself by English views, which would in future guard against the mischief to produce which Pitt had so securely legislated fifty years before.

As constitutional statesmen, however, the French-Canadian leaders were equal to this emergency in the growth of their national autonomy; and, after a few parliamentary contests, the United Province was governed by Ministries each half of which depended on its own Provincial majority and administered affairs for each Province in accord with the views of its supporters. Under this régime a law was passed which assured the growth of French power in Lower Canada. Pitt's scheme had contemplated the leaving in perpetual wilderness of a large tract of mountain and forest land south of the Seignories, and barring any intercourse with the United States.

In succeeding years, under the irresponsible Cabinets which preceded the rebellion, this territory was mapped out and given up to settlement by British immigrants. For years, even as late as 1855, the boundary line between the English and Yankees of the Eastern Townships and the French inhabitants of the flat lands of the Seignories was as distinct as that between two nations in Europe. In 1849, however, L. H. Lafontaine introduced a bill which produced a wonderful social change in these townships.

The Act constituted legal parishes in the Townships wherever a small fixed number of Roman Catholics were settled. These parishes were constituted in the same manner, with tithes and church-rates, as the old parishes of the Seignories. The construction and maintenance of the churches became an obligation on all property held by Catholic parishioners, and took precedence even of prior mortgages with all the absoluteness that a municipal tax has in this Province. The result was that the old Protestant townships were flooded with French-Canadian parishes, so protected that every foothold gained was permanent; and it is only a question of time when this race, strong already in its wonderfully prolific power, and strengthened still more by this inflexible church law, will occupy every rood of land in Lower Canada. Consolidated by language, faith, and institutions, they have, even when divided by family quarrels, been an important factor in all calculations of parliamentary strength: how much more so when united under one leader.

It cannot be denied that they are a valuable race to the industry of the Dominion; and it is equally certain that, as legislators, their chief men have few superiors. In one particular they differ widely from the other races which form our population: the social difference between rich and poor is far less marked, but the difference in education is more strongly defined than elsewhere. In the learned professions the native ability of the race is illustrated by great men; and in politics the average English are their inferiors. On the other hand, the masses, while courteous and well-bred, even among the poorest, yet as a rule are far less advanced in education