

THE WEEK.

Vol. X.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 1893.

No. 10.

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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European Agents—SMITH, AINSLIE & Co., 25 New-castle Street, Strand, London.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

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CURRENT TOPICS.

Mr. McCarthy very fairly and forcibly points out that Mr. Laurier's silence on the question of the threatened invasion of Manitoba's rights in respect to the direction of her own educational policy is in unfavourable contrast with the attitude of the Liberal leader on other occasions. Mr. Laurier's course in regard to this question when it is brought up in the House, as it is pretty certain to be in some form, will be watched with curious interest by both admirers and opponents. It may be said that it is almost too much to expect that he could in this matter rise above the prejudices both of race and of religious education, and that by placing himself in antagonism to the almost unanimous and overwhelmingly strong feeling of his French-Canadian supporters he would alienate his followers, destroy his influence and ruin his chances of future success. The situation is certainly one to try the strength of his principles,—or perhaps we should rather say, the clearness of his per-

ceptions, because it is only fair to suppose that he will take no stand without first having persuaded himself that it is the right one. But that Mr. Laurier is a staunch upholder of Provincial rights is manifest even from the polished but keen rebuke he administered in his recent Toronto speech to those in Ontario who are disposed to trouble themselves overmuch about financial and other matters in the Province of Quebec. He and his French-Catholic followers in the House will do well to remember that in the case of the Jesuits' Estates Act many of both political parties in the other provinces both in Parliament and in the press—though Mr. McCarthy was not of this number—while utterly at variance with the principle of that bill opposed the proposal to veto it, simply because they regarded it as within the constitutional authority of the Province. How many of our French-Catholic fellow citizens will have equal regard for the rights of Manitoba?

One great good we believe we may safely predict as the outcome of Mr. Dalton McCarthy's revolt. He has, if we mistake not, dealt a death-blow to the "gerrymander" in Canada. His frank admission of his own wrongdoing when he allowed his loyalty to his chief and his party to override his conscience in 1882, his refusal to support the iniquity of 1892, and his noble denunciation of all such dishonourable and despicable trickery for the purpose of keeping a government in power will, we cannot doubt, set many of the better class of Conservatives to thinking, as they may never have thought before, about the matter, and lead them to resolve that no blot shall ever again stain the party escutcheon. And when they can no longer count on the sanction of the rank and file of the party to endorse their crookedness, no government will dare to propose or attempt it. It is greatly to Mr. McCarthy's credit that his change of front is to so great an extent the result of moral, even more than of political or personal considerations.

From official information it appears that not less than 692,150 soldiers and sailors are to-day receiving pensions from the United States Government. It seems simply impossible that of the survivors of those who served in the war of the Rebellion thirty years ago, there can be anything approaching this number of needy men. But the question is not one of probabilities, however strong. It is undoubtedly a matter of fact within the means of knowledge of every one who is sufficiently interested to make investigation, that many of those who are thus receiving the charity of their fellow-citizens, are far removed from want. As an instance, one writer states in a newspaper of repute, that among the invalid pensioners of his State, is a member of Congress, known

to be rich and even supposed to be a millionaire, who does not hesitate to apply for and receive the dole from the public treasury. When we think again of other thousands of cases of barefaced fraud which undoubtedly exist, in which the beneficiaries were never in the war at all; when we are further informed that there are over seven hundred thousand applications which have not yet been acted upon, and that the day is probably near when not less than one hundred and fifty millions of dollars per annum will be required for pensions in the Republic, we stand aghast, not so much at the magnitude of the sum to be taken from the pockets of the people for the benefit of those, multitudes of whom are no doubt in much better circumstances than millions of the tax-payers, but at the magnitude of the moral degeneration which is evinced in such facts, and which must hereafter result from such a system. The indications afforded of an already low type of manhood as seen in such utter want of manly pride, must be humiliating to the National pride. What must be the effects of such a system upon the manliness of the next generation?

The people of the United States have within the past few weeks lost an unusually large number of citizens who had been prominent and influential in various spheres of public life, but it is doubtful whether, from the highest point of view, the death of Phillips Brooks, the renowned Boston preacher and Bishop, does not outweigh them all. The loss of him was a sensible lessening of the living forces which make for righteousness in the Republic. Rarely has the chorus of mingled lamentation and eulogy with which the death of a great and good man is heralded, been so well merited. Phillips Brooks was a prince among men and among Christians. Not more did his stately figure and majestic presence lift him above the crowd in visible form than did his unaffected greatness of soul stamp him as the superior of his fellows in all the higher attributes of Christian manhood. As a preacher, he seems to have been one of the rare spirits who could not help but testify to the great truths which he felt rather than apprehended. The glowing words of his eloquence were but the spontaneous out-gleaming of the living flame which burned within him. As a theologian, he was too broad in his sympathies to be fettered by the narrowness of man-made creed. As a Churchman he was too catholic to withhold his heartiest co-operation from any organization which named the name and did the work, no matter in how humble a sphere, of the Master whose he was and whom he served. But it would be perhaps going outside our proper sphere, were we to attempt to do justice to the life-history of this truly great and good man. It is not unlikely that there may be among our readers those who knew him personally,