

# THE WEEK.

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## Current Topics.

### Cabinet Changes.

The resignation of the Hon. J. C. Patterson, Minister of Militia, deprives the Canadian Government of a capable and energetic departmental head, and the people of Canada of the services of a painstaking and generally popular Minister of the Crown. There can be no doubt, we think, that the resignation is due solely to the reasons assigned—the Minister's failing health and the necessity which he has for some time felt, and which is, it is understood, now strenuously insisted on by his physician, of rest from the work and worry of office. It further appears that it has been Mr. Patterson's wish, for some time past, to be relieved of the burden of official life at the earliest practical moment, and that his resignation has been hitherto withheld, at the request, first of the late, and more recently of the present Premier. The bestowal of a portfolio upon the young and energetic member of the Cabinet, Dr. Montague, will meet with general approval, at least, within the ranks of the party. There seems good reason to expect that he will make his influence felt, not only in his own department, but as an influential and aggressive member of the Government. Like the retiring Minister, Dr. Montague is a strong party man, possibly too much so to comport with the highest ideal of statesmanship, but scarcely too much so to confirm his popularity upon his own side of the House, without necessarily making him obnoxious to the Opposition. The rumour which came first through the Toronto *World's* Ottawa correspondent, just as our forms were being closed for the press, touching the alleged resignation, or proposed resignation, of Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, unfortunately appears to be only

too true. Yesterday's telegrams confirm the report. It is greatly to be deplored. The Government is, in all probability, entering stormy waters, and needs that every good officer should stay in the ship.

### The Patrons and the Passes.

The strength of the opposition that is being evoked from both sides of the House by Mr. Haycock's Bill to prevent members of the Legislature from accepting railway passes may not unfairly be taken as one of the best proofs of the need of such legislation. Some of the opponents of the measure speak of the bill as too "paltry a consideration" to be supposed capable of affecting the mind of a representative in the discharge of his duties. But if the gift is so paltry why care so much about the loss of it. Why for a paltry consideration voluntarily suffer the sense, more or less keen, of loss of dignity and self-respect which attends the acceptance of such a gift when one is not in absolute need? Can it be conceived that the man who draws with one hand his mileage allowance, and with the other pockets his free pass, can regard himself with the same personal respect and approval after as before the transaction? If it is not to be supposed that the railway companies bestow the pass with a view to the effect which their acceptance will have upon the mind of the member, on what principle can their bestowal be explained? There is not a director or manager of such a company who will not scout the idea that he manages its affairs on any other than strict business principles. On what business principle is the pass bestowed? In nine cases out of ten the road would be sure, otherwise, to get the fare? Or, taking another view, if the member is in the least thoughtful, he cannot fail to see that the cost of his free pass must in the long run be taken out of the pockets of other travellers, or the public generally, while nine-tenths of those who are thus compelled to pay not only their own fare, but a portion of his, are much more needy than himself. Can a high-minded representative face that conclusion with equanimity? Some urge that to forbid the acceptance of the pass is to cast a reflection upon both the giver and the receiver. This can hardly be denied, but surely the reflection cast on some one by the offer and its acceptance is no less keen. But the severest of all reflections is that cast by the *Globe* when it argues that prohibitory legislation will be of little use because "it will be an easy matter for members to hold passes as shippers or under other pretexts." That is the "most unkindest cut of all."

### Well Remitted.

Everyone who has a due regard for justice and its administration must have been gratified to learn that the Minister of Justice has remitted the three years recently added to the sentence of a convicted burglar, by a British Columbia judge, for the crime of uttering a sarcastic "Thank you," on receiving sentence to a long term of imprisonment. When we read the newspaper statement at the time of the occurrence we found it hard to credit it, and were inclined to suppose