

# THE WEEK.

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## THE WEEK:

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### CURRENT TOPICS.

Are Sir Oliver Mowat's Imperial honours working a transformation in his views with regard to the use and value of pomp and pageants? Have the members of his Government so soon tired of the role of democratic simplicity which they have played so well for a year or two past? Has the advent of a new Lieutenant-Governor brought new ideas into the official atmosphere? Or have the unwonted splendour of their new buildings and surroundings in Queen's Park proved too much for the democratic tastes, or economical propensities, of those who but a year ago seemed to think that the more quietly the session of the local legislature could be begun, the better? What, in a word, means all this booming of cannon and parade of soldiery and other forms of ceremonial display which heralded the opening of the Legislature on Tuesday in its new and stately home? We pause, not without a touch of bewilderment, for a reply!

The neglect of Government and Parliament to present the customary address to His Excellency, Lord Stanley, on the occasion of his last public appearance in an official capacity, has naturally given rise to a good deal of comment. We see no reason whatever to suppose that it was anything more than an oversight, caused by the absence of the Premier, the haste and confusion incident to the end of a very short session, and the paucity of the attendance of members at the closing ceremonies. No doubt Lord Stanley, knowing so well the state of affairs, will so understand it. There is no conceivable reason why any one in Government and Parliament, or elsewhere in Canada, should hesitate for a moment to join cordially in any expression of respect and good will for a Governor-General who has so carefully and conscientiously discharged the duties of his high office, in the most approved constitutional and traditional fashion. Lord Stanley will bear with him from Canada the hearty esteem and well-wishes of the Canadian people, and the latter, in their turn, have occasion for congratulation in his assurance that he will continue to cherish, wherever duty may call him, a sincere desire for their prosperity and progress.

It is a pity that Parliament should have been prorogued without another serious attempt having been made to fix the responsibility for the absurd method of enumerating industries which has made the census not only worthless but a laughing-stock, so far as that particular part of it is concerned. The Government has shewn that its instructions to enumerators were precisely the same as those given in connection with the previous census. The fault was not, therefore, in the instructions. The immediate cause of the absurdities was evidently the system of payment by results, which seems to have stimulated the zeal of the enumerators beyond all reasonable bounds. Was this system a new one? If so, who is responsible for the innovation, and why was it made? And do the instructions contain no definition or limitation to guide the enumerators in determining what is an "industry" in the statistical sense? Surely some explanation should be forthcoming, for the census is too costly an affair to be trifled with in this fashion. Surely, too, the Ministers owe the public an apology for having made such statistics the basis of arguments for continued protectionism.

The supplementary estimates brought down before the close of the session included

in all more than \$150,000 for military purposes. This is surely a pretty round sum to be added to the regular annual bill for maintaining the Canadian armament on a peace footing. Some of the items cannot logically be objected to, we suppose. If it is necessary to keep up a volunteer force it is but reasonable that it should be provided with weapons not wholly antiquated, and unfortunately rifles and similar implements of war soon become antiquated nowadays. But the vote of more than \$100,000 as an instalment of our contribution for works of defence at Esquimalt is one which should not have passed without information having been sought and given in regard to plans, etc., such as might help the House to form some definite idea of what is to be the end of that of which this is the beginning. As we have before said, we should be ashamed of our people if they were not willing, so long as they rely upon the protection of the British navy, to contribute their fair share of the necessary expenses of that navy. But they should have some voice in determining what expenses are necessary, so far as their defence is concerned. No greater calamity could befall the Dominion than that it should become committed to heavy expenditures for military purposes of any kind. Canada should shun the curse of European countries as long as possible.

The decision of the Behring Sea Arbitrators to conduct their proceedings with open doors opens a new era in the history of arbitration as a substitute for war, in the settlement of disputes between nations. It places the proceedings of the court in line with those of the courts of justice in those countries where justice is administered with the greatest impartiality and most fully commands popular respect and confidence. Not only will it add greatly to the world-wide interest taken in the affair to have its doings made public from day to day, but the decision may be regarded as an additional pledge, if any were needed, that the Arbitrators have no ends to serve but those of international justice and right. They are willing to act with the eyes of the world upon them, and to render their verdict with the full consciousness that all the evidence submitted and all the arguments advanced have been weighed by a much larger jury, composed of those in all parts of the world best qualified to weigh evidence and interpret international laws and obligations. Should their verdict be, as there is every reason to hope it will be, such as to commend itself to the judgments and consci-