

# THE WEEK.

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## The Week,

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

### TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE meagre information which is to be gleaned about the Egyptian "campaign" helps rather to the further confusion than to the solution of the muddle. The attitude of the Government would seem to indicate a calm confidence in their policy—or that they have none, and are trusting to the chapter of accidents. It is sincerely to be hoped the former is the case; for, if the opinion of the only capable man on the spot who speaks out—the *Times* correspondent—is worth anything, Gordon is in imminent peril, and the masterly inactivity of the Cabinet is likely to result in a crushing defeat of that general and his devoted followers. It is inconceivable Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington can mean that Gordon can "come home if he likes, and when he likes, and there's an end on't"—yet, that is the policy which, in so many words, is attributed to them by an influential London review. Mr. Gladstone's aversion to interference in the Soudan revolt is perfectly understood, even by those who do not sympathize with it; and he may extract all the consolation possible from the fact that he was forced, by circumstances, into the occupation of Egypt—that it was the necessary outcome of the policy of the late Government; but, having gone so far, he must go farther. For the moment, Egypt is, in all essential respects, under English control, and she is bound to give Generals Gordon and Graham, and Clifford Lloyd, the necessary assistance to crush the revolt, and inaugurate reforms calculated to prevent its recurrence.

THOSE who are in a position to form a pretty correct judgment of Mr. Gladstone's policy and health say, that though he is not going to leave the House of Commons yet awhile, the probabilities are increasing that he will not be one of the members of the next House. He has arrived at an age when a politician who has laboured incessantly for fifty years may well seek the repose of private life, and it is clear that his health is no longer robust, or equal to the strain of the late hours which the House keeps. It may, therefore, be expected that whenever the dissolution comes it will be accompanied by a notification that the Prime Minister does not intend to seek re-election. He may perhaps be

persuaded to go to the House of Lords, and so still keep up some connexion with political life, but this is very doubtful. Of all men who ever entered that assembly he would find himself most out of place, and most of his admirers would probably rather see him retire from politics altogether than subside into the obscurity of the gilded chamber.

THE language of the *Montreal Herald* on the policy of Sir John A. Macdonald in reference to the Grand Trunk Bill leaves nothing to the imagination. Probably the Prime Minister, himself, would be the last person to deny that his conduct of that measure was influenced more by party exigencies than by the requirements of Quebec, or the welfare of the railway corporation. But it is doubtful if the writer, who is said to be an ex-colleague of Sir John's, will not do himself and his journal more harm by the use of Billingsgate than he will the implacable politician, from whose shoulders "derangements of epitaphs" seems to glide like water from a duck's back. It is written that not what enters but what comes from man defiles him.

IT would appear that the constitution of County Boards of Audit, in Ontario, requires modification. At present, each is composed of the County Judge, County Attorney, and an official representing the county town. The duties attaching to the first and last offices are usually included in the general routine of the persons who fill them, without extra salary, the County Attorney being the only paid member of the board as such. Amongst other duties, the board has the passing of accounts for expenses incurred by city policemen in pursuit of criminals who cross the boundary into the county, and it is urged that so many reasonable charges of this kind have been disallowed as to discourage the city police from following up criminals—the suburban force, furthermore, being usually insufficient for the work. It should also be remembered that the law stipulates such charges must be borne by the counties. The result is that criminals take advantage of this state of affairs and escape. It is manifestly the interest of the County Attorney to keep down charges, so as to retain the favour of the ratepayers, and if he can, by any influence, get either of his co-officials to vote with him, he controls the board. This, it is stated, is often done, and a city official who protested, the other day, against the "consideration for thieves" which such a niggardly policy on the part of a board displayed, was publicly rebuked by the Judge. If the critic's contention that the reimbursement of moneys paid out of their private purses by constables in pursuit of criminals was refused, there is a premium being placed upon crime, for the most vigilant officer cannot afford, out of his small salary, to pay for the cost of taking his prisoners.

THE *Financial Reformer*, in an editorial note on Lord Lansdowne, and after reminding its readers that the Governor-General resigned his seat in the Gladstone Ministry rather than be a party to the passing of the Irish Land Act, says:—"However, his Limerick estates were dealt with a few days ago, and the commissioners reduced his rental by just the trifle of 25 per cent.—from £2,400 to £1,800. Folks can now understand the 'noble' independence of his lordship in his heroic retirement from the Ministry. It is to be hoped that his salary in Canada will constitute a sufficient solace for the 'outrage' done to him by the fixing of a fair rent for his depleted tenantry in Limerick."

INDICATIONS that the "uncrowned king" of Ireland must soon abdicate or be dethroned accumulate. The rumour that Mr. Parnell will retire from the leadership of the National party is revived, and following close upon the reports of disaffection amongst his followers, and the pretensions to that position of at least two others, each of whom is the exponent of a sharper policy, is significant. The truth is, that would-be leaders had no idea the "perquisites" of chieftainship were so large until that unfortunate £40,000 was presented to Mr. Parnell, since when the more adventurous spirits, with an eye to a share of the spoils, have been struggling to supplant him. If a recent cablegram is to be believed, the Nationalist leader has no stomach for the physic he so glibly prescribed to his brother landowners, and, despite the big *douceur*, objects to the "no-rent" theory being adopted by his own tenants, one of whom he is reported to have secured a verdict against for arrears of rent.