

THE WEEK.

Fifth Year.
Vol. V. No. 25.

Toronto, Thursday, May 17th, 1888.

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

The Week.

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND LITERATURE.

TERMS.—One year, \$3.00; eight months, \$2.00; four months, \$1.00. Subscriptions payable in advance.

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

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In this issue we publish a sketch of Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, Leader of the Opposition in the Dominion Parliament. In reply to an enquiry of a recent subscriber we may say that sketches of the following Prominent Canadians have already appeared in THE WEEK: Hon. Oliver Mowat, Dr. Daniel Wilson, Principal Grant, Sir John A. Macdonald, K.C.B.; Hon. Louis Honoré Fréchet, LL.D.; Sir J. William Dawson, Sir Alexander Campbell, K.C.M.G.; Hon. William Stevens Fielding, Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, Sir William Leonard Tilley, C.B., K.C.M.G.; Alexander McLachlan, Hon. J. A. Chapleau, Sir Richard Cartwright, K.C.M.G.; Sanford Fleming, C.E., LL.D., C.M.G.; Hon. H. G. Joly, Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, Sir Wm. Buell Richards.

The familiar form and features of the late Archbishop Lynch will long be missed by many in Toronto. His death is a loss to the Roman Catholic body in the Province which will not be easily supplied. While courteous and kindly in his intercourse with Protestants, the whole energies of his strong nature were devoted to the advancement of the interests of the Church in which he was a prelate. In the defence and promotion of those interests he shrank from no toil and, in his younger days particularly, from no self-denial or danger. As Archbishop he was always ready to come to the defence of the dogmas and practices of Catholicism, and to promote it by every legitimate means. Personally he was liked and esteemed by many who had no sympathy with his views, and who condemned the readiness with which he sometimes resorted to strong influences and practical measures for carrying out those views. In drawing the line between the spiritual and the secular his tendency was, no doubt, to trench somewhat on what most persons, including some of his own people, regard as belonging to the latter domain. He was, nevertheless, in the estimation of those who knew him best, earnest, honest, and devout, and the deep sorrow occasioned by his sudden death was shared by many outside the limits of his own communion.

We are pleased to see that the Ontario Government has at last appointed a Commission to enquire into the mineral resources of the Province. The Commission is non-partisan in its composition, and indeed it would be difficult to select a fitter body of men for the work to which they have been appointed. Mr. Charlton, M.P. will make an excellent chairman; Dr. Bell, Assistant Director of the Dominion Geological Survey, and Mr. William Hamilton Merritt will bring both technical knowledge and practical experience to bear on the investigations they will have to make;

while Mr. William Coe's familiar acquaintance with iron mining and the extensive iron deposits throughout the country will be of undoubted advantage to the Commission. Mr. Archibald Blue, the energetic Deputy Minister of Agriculture, is the Secretary, and his duties we are sure will be efficiently performed. The work before the Commission is of the utmost importance; it will take time if thoroughly done, and cannot fail to be of immense benefit to the country.

THE result of the recent bye-elections for the Dominion Commons has been to preserve the *status quo*, so far as the relative strength of parties is concerned. The Liberal journals are somewhat exultant, interpreting the failure of the Government to carry any of the constituencies and the increased majority secured for Mr. Edwards in Russell as proofs of the growing strength of their party. If the issue of unrestricted reciprocity was as prominent a factor in the Russell contest as it is claimed to have been, the result certainly seems to indicate a more favourable feeling amongst the French population towards the reciprocity movement than was anticipated. Otherwise the issue of these elections cannot be considered to have any special political significance. The close of the Session is approaching, and finds the Government indeed sensibly weakened by the death of one of its members, the ill-health of another, and the prospective departure of Sir Charles Tupper, but with its solid majority in Parliament undiminished.

MR. BLAKE will, it may be presumed, shortly return to Canada. It is hardly to be supposed that he can or will withdraw wholly from public life and the discussion of public questions. Much interest will naturally attach to his views in regard to the new policy adopted by the Liberal Party in his absence. Will he feel at liberty to espouse the cause of unrestricted reciprocity and give his political friends the benefit of his powerful assistance, on which they no doubt count, or will he feel himself bound to maintain the views so distinctly stated in his celebrated Malvern speech, and in other places, during the campaign which he conducted with so much ability and energy a year or two since? It is difficult to see how he can evade or confute the arguments by which he then showed that any serious reduction of taxation is now quite out of the question. It is true he did not, at the time of making those speeches, have in mind the possibility of unrestricted and mutual free trade between the United States and Canada. But the advantages, real or fanciful, to be derived from such reciprocity could not help Canada in the matter of revenue, which was at the foundation of his argument.

THE validity and value of Sir Charles Tupper's congratulations on the virtual diminution of the public debt, by the improvement in Canadian credit, and the consequent ability to make renewals at a much lower rate of interest, depend on several considerations. Is the reduction due wholly to the cause assigned, Canada's improved credit, or is it in part the result of a general tendency towards lower rates in England? Mr. Goschen's successful conversion of a large portion of the British three per cents. supports the latter view, since it can hardly be supposed that British credit is also rising. In that case the ability of the Canadian Government to take advantage of the reduced rates some years hence is contingent upon the maintenance of the lower rates in England—an event which cannot be reckoned on as absolutely certain. If, again, the prospective lowering of rates is but a part of a general movement affecting equally private securities of all kinds, the relative reduction of the burden may be far from keeping pace with the absolute reductions of the yearly payments of interest, as shown by Sir Charles's sanguine calculations. From every point of view it is evidently much safer and wiser to rely upon strict economy in expenditure and a careful husbanding of resources for a gradual reduction of the debt, than upon any theoretical and fortuitous concurrence of events to effect that reduction without our efforts.

CAN Sir Charles Tupper be really serious in laying down the startling proposition that the principal of the public debt of Canada is not to be regarded as an obligation to be met in due time, like an ordinary debt, but as one to be renewed in perpetuity by the issue of new securities? To say nothing of the doubtful morality of the principle