

judicial decision based on an interpretation of law. The question which the press may legitimately discuss is whether there is any real danger of injustice to individuals, such as should be suffered to overbalance the very great advantage to the public, from the right of making such a general inquest as that condemned by Judge Robertson's judgment. To most persons it will be hard to see what a contractor or other person whose transactions have been fair and above board, can have to fear from the fullest investigation. If false evidence is given, or libellous statements made, the ordinary modes of redress are, we suppose, open to him. On the other hand the effect of preventing a court from freely following lines of inquiry which may be opened up in the course of the investigation, would very often be to defeat the chief end of such investigation. If it could be known beforehand just what specific charges could be sustained against individuals the general inquiry would be unnecessary.

THE election of ten supporters of the present Manitoba Government by acclamation shows how complete has been the revolution of feeling in that province. Mr. Norquay, himself, is the only member of the late Government who is seeking re-election. All the others, strange to say, have either left the country or are retiring from local politics. A good many charges, both of mismanagement and of wrong doing, are made against Mr. Greenway and his associates. There seems no reason to suppose that the Government is exceptionally strong in ability. And yet there seems no room whatever to doubt that it will be sustained by a very large majority. This occurs in a province in which, but a little ago, conservative influence was overwhelming. The simple explanation of the change is no doubt that the people recognize in Mr. Greenway and his colleagues those who have freed their province from the shackles of railway monopoly, and whom they believe they can trust to keep it free. The revolt against railway domination is deep and genuine.

THE refusal of the British Privy Council to entertain the application for leave to appeal in the Glengarry election case should be gratifying rather than the opposite to all parties. Whatever view may be taken of the merits of the particular question in dispute, it is surely better that there should be even rare failures of justice in the Canadian courts than that the practice of appeal to England in election cases should become established. The reasons are indeed both strong and obvious why such matters should be decided at home. So long as election disputes were investigated by the Legislature themselves, by means of their own machinery, reconsideration by the Imperial authorities would have been considered as out of the question, and an infringement of our constitutional autonomy. But the principle involved can hardly be thought to be changed, nor would the over-ruling of the Imperial authorities be rendered less obnoxious, by the fact that our Parliament has chosen to hand over to the courts the matters it formerly decided for itself.

THE remarkable action of the Quebec Government and Legislature in voting \$400,000 to the Jesuit Fathers in liquidation of their claim for property confiscated at the conquest is likely to be prolific of trouble for Mr. Mercier for many days to come. It is but charitable to suppose that the Liberal Premier and his supporters deem the act one of just restitution, but it is hard to understand by what course of reasoning they have reached that conviction. Granting, even, that the original deprivation was harsh and unwarranted, which is granting a great deal, it can scarcely be denied that the claim of those to whom this large sum of money is now given, to be the lawful successors and heirs of the original grantees, is of the most slender description. The very fact of their acceptance of the sum named, in lieu of the millions to which they are rightfully entitled, if they are entitled to, anything, is of itself a suspicious circumstance. It may not perhaps be conclusive against the equity of their claim, since it is quite possible that a righteous claim may be found incapable of being legally enforced, and may therefore be regarded as a fit case for compromise. But, as matters at present appear, both the political expediency and the morality of the transaction are, to say the least, extremely doubtful, and the Government are likely to find themselves ill bested to defend it either to their own supporters, or the people of the Province generally. The loyalty to Party which may suffice to carry through the Legislature a doubtful measure, is often found to have undergone in the process a strain which may prove the beginning of disintegration or disruption. Indications are not wanting even now which point to such a result as possible in Quebec.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER did well to lay before the annual meeting of the State-aided Colonization Association in London the great advantages offered by the Dominion to immigrants of the right stamp. There can be no doubt, whatever, that a large transfer of population from the crowded districts of the Mother Country to the broad, fertile unoccupied, domains of Canada, if it could but be rightly managed, might be made a great benefit to both countries, as well as a lasting blessing to the people migrating. But truth and justice forbid us to shut our eyes to the one great fact which renders, and must, so far as all can see, continue to render it extremely doubtful, whether the Government of either country can properly aid any such migration with public funds. That fact is our contiguity to the United States, and the ease with which the boundary line is crossed. There is no barrier of language, race, national customs, or international prejudices, such as usually avails to make change of nationality disagreeable and difficult. It would be unwise for either the British or the Canadian Government to expend the public money in promoting transfer of population to Canada, unless, and until, some guarantee can be given and taken that the immigrants will remain in Canada. Frankly we do not see how any such security can be had. After duly discounting all pessimistic views and figures, the fact remains and has to be fairly faced, that Canada has not succeeded well in retaining the large numbers of immigrants who have arrived in the country within the last ten years. There is fond reason to hope for a better showing in the future. The spare lands in the United States are becoming scarce and the competition for the means of livelihood keener every year, while at the same time the advantages Canada has to offer are becoming better known and appreciated. These same influences will continue to work, but at the same time, the fact we have mentioned will continue for some time to come to be a most serious obstacle to any State-aided movement.

In charging a jury in Philadelphia the other day, Judge Biddle said: "At the present day lotteries are held only by two classes of people—very religious people and very bad people; and, strange to say, the most difficult thing is to eradicate them among the first-named class." This reads almost as if it might be a commentary, or a satire, upon the course of the Attorney General of Quebec, who is about proceeding against one of the French newspapers for continuing to advertise a Louisiana lottery, while, so far as appears, no action is to be taken to put a stop to Father Labelle's lottery, which is being carried on openly in the province. If it be said that the latter lottery is under the patronage of the Church, or in its interests, and so specially exempted from the operation of the law, the explanation only makes the matter worse. It would be incredible, were it not an actual fact, that in a province of Canada a thing is done by religious teachers, under the auspices of the Church, and with the sanction of the law, which, if done by any other persons for any other purpose, would be both denounced as immoral and punished as illegal. It is such inconsistencies which furnish the Ingersolls of the day with a large part of their capital.

LORD SALISBURY'S scheme for the reform of the House of Lords has a significance which is quite independent of the nature of the changes he proposes. Were it not so, the measure would scarcely have merited the prolonged discussion to which it has given rise. The essential unimportance of the two innovations which constitute its chief features is admitted on all hands. The creation of life peers to the number of five annually, three of the five to be selected from the classes included in a narrow category, and the whole number thus created never to exceed the limit of fifty—about one-twelfth of the whole House—is certainly a very mild infusion of the revolutionary element. The same may be said of the second part of the Bill, which provides for the cancelling of the writ of summons in the case of the hereditary "black sheep," of whom we have heard so much of late. The case would probably have to be one of very gross and very notorious moral delinquency before the House would feel itself called upon to use the extraordinary powers entrusted to it for the protection of its own dignity. As even Conservative journals admit, these reforms leave untouched the main objection to the constitution of the House as it now exists, viz., that the absolute right to a direct share of legislative power devolves by mere hereditary succession, and without any test or process of selection, upon some hundreds of persons. As Lord Rosebery pointed out, no reorganization of the House of Lords can be effectual which does not introduce the principle of selection or delegation, so as to weed out not only the "black sheep" when they have become notoriously vile, but the idle, the indifferent, and the incompetent. The real significance and importance of the Premier's very mild measure arise from the fact that