

his view that a small deficiency should be made good out of the surplus rather than by an increase of public burthens; but the plea can be good only when an exceptional case has to be dealt with. It would be extremely dangerous to take the ground that deficits may, year after year, be dealt with in this way. Mr. Ross foresees a future necessity for more revenue, and he is ready with a suggestion for procuring it. He has fallen into the evil habit of Provincial treasurers of looking to the Dominion treasury as an inexhaustible source of increased subsidies. His objection to special grants in increase of Provincial subsidies is sound, and it is quite clear that if things continue in their present course Ontario will not always be content to forego a demand for redressing the disturbed financial basis of the Union. But Mr. Ross goes further in the wrong direction than the treasurer of any other Province when he asks that the Provincial subsidies should be increased every ten years. The time will come, and it cannot be far distant, when the financial necessities of the Dominion will be greater than those of any Province. It is easy to say that the Provinces will insist on getting additional subsidies from time to time; but the growing obligations of the Dominion make it certain that it will be impossible to comply with this demand. Mr. Ross admits that special grants to the Provinces lead to extravagance; and it is just as certain that a general increase of the subsidies would have the same effect. Ontario has a right to ask that these special grants should stop, and that if anything be done in the way of increasing the subsidies it should be done on equitable principles; that she should not be called upon to suffer that other Provinces may get special favours. To do this is her duty as well as her right; but a general increase of the subsidies every ten years is happily impossible, and if it were possible, it ought to be rejected on account of its corrupting and emasculating tendency on the recipients.

THE Farmers' Convention is to meet at Winnipeg on the fourth of next month, to insist upon the fulfilment of the demands embodied in the "Bill of Rights," the chief of which are the abolition of vexatious Custom duties, free railway development, and the right of the Province to an interest in its own lands. The regular politicians are scandalized at the movement. But it was evident from the outset that as soon as the North-West began to fill up, to feel its strength, and become conscious of its own interests, it would refuse any longer to be treated as a dependency by the Ottawa Government, and that, unless the Government would give way, collisions would be likely to ensue. Feeling among the North-Western farmers must run high if, as a well-informed correspondent assured us the other day, they are beginning to talk of appealing to Washington. To that, or any other extreme measure we, may be sure they will not really think of resorting, till efforts to obtain their rights in a regular and constitutional way have failed, a result which there is no reason to apprehend. Their first object should be to get themselves properly represented at Ottawa, where their delegation though small, would from the prospective greatness of their territory, have an influence out of proportion to its mere number if it were independent and true to its constituents. Unfortunately most of its members have succumbed to the influences of the place. To call these gentlemen to account ought to be one of the first measures of the Convention; and the earliest opportunity ought to be taken of replacing them by representatives above temptation.

THE spirit of England is rising to the emergency; but it is evident that she is short of troops. Well she may be, with an army about a third of the size of that of Italy, and dominions all over the world. Now, as we said before, is Canada's opportunity. We, or busy and aspiring persons in our name, have made a number of rather unsubstantial offers and promises. We have sent over somewhat apocryphal catalogues of persons who were eager to enlist, and wholly apocryphal statements as to the magnitude of our army and the military organization of our people. Let us now prove the genuineness of our affection and lay up a proud memory for ourselves by tendering substantial aid. Let Canada present to the Mother Country, in acknowledgment of all that she has done for us in the way of military protection and in other ways still more important, a single regiment, to be maintained for a certain time at our cost. Recruiting would probably not be difficult. A good many people are out of work; not a few are actually committing petty offences for the sake of being housed in gaol; and the class of men somewhat indiscriminately labelled as tramps are often rather restless than criminal, and under discipline would make good soldiers. A tramp, in fact, is generally only a soldier wasted. The cost, if it burdened us, might be saved out of emigration agencies, Senatorial indemnities, and perhaps some expenditures of a still more questionable kind. Would the proposal be too unpopular? What then becomes of all our effusions of martial ardour, and all our professions

of eagerness to take part in upholding the honour of the Empire? Were they mere words, or did they mean only that Canada would always be ready to sell England assistance at the market price provided some Knight-hoods and Companionships of the Bath were thrown into the bargain? Of all the politicians who wear Imperial decorations, gained largely by fine speeches of this kind, is there not one who will come forward in Parliament to make his words good and show forth the chivalry which has been imparted to him by the accolade? If no real aid is tendered to England now, we may close the debate on Imperial Federation. For whatever else Federation may mean or not mean, there are two things which it unquestionably does mean—Free Trade and Contribution to Imperial Armaments.

THE motion of which Mr. Beaty has given notice in the Dominion Parliament embodies what has been maintained in these columns to be the one rational, equitable and effective measure of Prohibition. Beer and light wine he leaves free; but with regard to spirits he goes straight to the mark, and proposes, instead of ineffectively meddling with the sale, absolutely to stop the manufacture and the importation, paying, as the justice on which all society is based requires, reasonable compensation to the distillers. If anything is to be done—and we have never deprecated strong measures in case of real necessity—this is the right course. Whiskey, such whiskey at all events as our people commonly drink, may be said without great violence of language to be poison; it may be said, at all events, to come fairly within the cognizance of sanitary police; it acts injuriously on the coats of the stomach and engenders the dipsomaniac craving which is apt to become hereditary. But it is to whiskey, as the liquor most easily smuggled, that imperfect measures of indiscriminate prohibition, such as the Scott Act, practically drive the people. In truth they drive the people to worse things than the worst whiskey. The *World* gave us the other day a pleasant account of the diabolical compounds which contraband dealers, practically protected in their noxious traffic by imperfect prohibition laws, are able to sell at an enormous price to the unfortunate labourers on the railroads in the North-West. Paid lecturers are going about and telling the people that all alcoholic beverages are poison. Very slow poison wine and beer must be, since in England people live to a hundred who have drunk them all their lives. The first living authority on diet has just told us that wine drunk in small quantities with the meal does no man harm in body or mind. The notion that the moderate use of light wine or beer must lead to excess, or to the use of stronger liquors, is confuted by the experience of tens of millions in the wine-growing countries, and in the countries where wholesome beer is the regular drink. When a man asserts that drunkenness is prevalent in the wine-growing countries he only shows that he can never have seen them. In Spain the sight of a drunken man is so rare that a crowd will flock to behold it.

It seems to be supposed that objections to the bestowal of seats in the Senate as payments for services done to the party or the Prime Minister in elections must necessarily have their source in Revolutionary or Radical sentiment. Precisely the opposite is the fact. It is unnecessary here to discuss the merits or demerits of the Bicameral system. That system has been adopted in Canada; and it is upon the Senate that the framers of our Constitution have relied as the conservative and regulative element of the Constitution. But this function the Senate, owing to the manner in which the appointments have been made, has become totally incompetent to perform. It is a cypher; its debates are not reported by the journals, unless there is a personal fracas; nor is it treated by the Government as a body possessed of the smallest independence, or even of any great amount of self-respect. Suppose in some time of fierce national agitation, caused perhaps by industrial distress, a violent and socialistic measure were to pass the Commons, could any stand be made by a body the vast majority of whose members would represent nothing but the favour of a single party leader who had used his patronage as party spoils? Would the Senate at such a crisis offer any sort of rallying-point for the conservative effort of the country? It would go down like a rotten sea-wall before a heavy gale and a spring tide. Conservative institutions, when destitute of moral strength, are worse than nothing; they are provocatives of Revolution. The merits of an appointment cannot be discussed without raising a somewhat personal question, though private character is not touched by the examination of public claims; this we regret; but THE WEEK is not the only journal on which an unwelcome necessity is occasionally imposed. When we are told that our reason for demurring to the nomination of Dr. Sullivan is our prejudice against Catholics, we can only reply that nobody can seriously believe such nonsense. It is not the religion to which we object, but the man of that religion, or rather the grounds on which