

be no better test of their honesty than that which will be afforded by their action in relation to this system. The advantage will then be wholly on their side, and they will show more stern and self-denying adherence to principle than is often manifested when the Outs have become the Ins, if they are in a hurry to make a radical change in the system which they now so vigorously and with so much reason denounce. It is, however, greatly to be regretted that a Government and Party so enamoured of everything British as are those now in the majority, is not prepared to follow British precedent so far as to put the appointment of revising officers and the preparation and printing of electoral lists beyond the reach of Government control. Canadian party politicians still need to take lessons in British fair play.

Second thoughts are often best, in the case of legislatures as well as of individuals. The probability now seems to be that the annexation of Hawaii to the United States will be indefinitely postponed if not definitely declined by the American Congress. The consequences of entering upon the line of policy to which the Republic would be in a manner committed by extending the national boundaries to take in an island three thousand miles away, are in this case greatly increased by the character of the island, or rather of its population. The treatment of the twenty thousand coolies who are said to be in Hawaii would of itself be a very perplexing problem for a nation which not only forbids the entrance of Chinese into its territories, but is now contemplating the deportation of a large number of those who are already in them back to their native land. It would be an act worthy of ante-Christian times and nations to follow the annexation of new territory by the banishment of a considerable part of its population. Another course which has been suggested, viz. to forbid them to set foot within the boundaries of the Republic as it now is, would be scarcely less barbarous, and would involve the absurdity of denying citizens the right of access to different parts of their own country. It would mean in short a re-establishment of slavery. It would be equally out of the question to refuse to sugar-producers in one part of the nation the same advantages as are given to those in other parts of it. But the greatest and possibly insuperable difficulty would probably arise from the fact that Hawaii, at its present stage of civilization, would fall far below the standard of progress governing the admission of territories to statehood, while the Hawaiians, or those claiming to act in their name in asking for annexation, would scarcely be willing to accept the inferior position of a territory, much less that of a mere dependency.

We are glad to see that the sense of Justice of the citizens of Toronto has with so much vigour and unanimity condemned the harsh and discourteous treatment to which Dr. Allen, the Health Officer, has been so unaccountably subjected by the Mayor and certain members of the City Council. To decapitate, or attempt to decapitate, a public officer at a stroke, on the slightest suspicion, is a method of government which does not commend itself to those who live under free and democratic institutions and know how to appreciate them, nor can they be reconciled to the Oriental harshness of such methods by any trial or

semblance of trial that may follow the attempt. We are glad to see that Dr. Allen's defence bids fair to be thoroughly effective, in almost every respect. But should it appear that some defects were to be found in the book-keeping of the department, or even that the system of visiting and inspection is not yet so thoroughly organized and systematized as it should be, the facts would by no means justify the methods adopted. Every citizen, we believe, must admit that Dr. Allen, during his brief term of office, has infused an energy and efficiency into the work of the Health Department hitherto unknown, and no one, so far as we are aware, has ventured to hint at anything in the shape of intentional neglect of duty, partiality, or fraud, in connection with his administration. That being the case, it is little less than an outrage that an officer of his character and standing should be put under the necessity of publicly defending his reputation. We are glad to believe that the Mayor and those who acted so precipitously with him were actuated solely by zeal for the interests of the citizens, and that the error was simply, one of judgment. But none the less it was an error and a grave injustice to Dr. Allen, unless it can be shown that there were grounds for the suspicion of serious and intentional wrongdoing or gross incompetence.

The contest which took place in Committee of Supply, in the Commons, on Friday, in which the Opposition called for the means of verifying the census statistics of industries in the cities and towns of the Dominion, though it had of course a strong party flavor, really raises a question of much importance. Upon the reliability of these official returns depends not only the validity of a favorite argument of the supporters of the National Policy, but the much more serious question of the good faith either of the Government or of its officials. The bearing of the investigation upon the mode of appointing census enumerators and of census-taking generally in the future is obvious. The value of the census for all practical purposes is destroyed when once its absolute reliability is brought into distrust. We are all accustomed to quote the census returns as the end of controversy, so far as questions of fact are concerned. Yet, when such men as Sir Richard Cartwright and Mr. Davies and Mr. Lister and Mr. Casey, no one of whom would willingly disparage towns in his own constituency, arise and declare that there can be found in specific localities, with which they are intimately acquainted, nothing like the number of industries enumerated in the census, what are we to think? Apart from direct testimony, it seems impossible to deny the perfect reasonableness of Sir Richard Cartwright's opinion that it is beyond all possibility that in towns with a population of 2,000 or 3,000, or even 5,000, there can be from seventy to a hundred industrial establishments. If any stronger evidence that there must be some serious error were needed, it is supplied by such cases as that of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, in which, as Mr. Flint informs us, there were enumerated in the census of 1881 but 15 industries, while in that of 1891 the number is put at 151, though, so far as he is aware, there had been no increase in the number within that period. It is surely imperative, for the sake of the Government itself, that the means of arriving at the truth should be given, and this can no doubt be done without violating any personal confidences. More-

over, the tariff discussion, which is now the chief matter before Parliament and the country, is largely a war of statistics, and it is of the utmost importance that these should be reliable.

The tendency towards Agrarian agitation seems not only to be in the air in Anglo-Saxon countries, but it has also, it appears, reached Germany, and threatens to effect at an early day radical changes in the constitution and legislation of the Reichstag. On its face, the movement simply indicates that the rural populations of these nations have at length awakened to the possibility and necessity of concerted and organized action, with a view to bringing their legitimate influence to bear in shaping the legislation and policy of their respective countries. In the United States and Canada, this new and formidable political force is so far directed mainly against the high taxation which affects their interests so unfairly, and in favor of tariff reform. This object they can easily accomplish if they but work and vote together with tolerable unanimity. None the less, the fact of their having organized and entered the political arena with such success as must have already dispelled the old illusion that the conditions of rural life rendered effective organization impossible, is prophetic of great changes in political conditions in the future. Whether their entrance into the field of politics shall prove a boon or a bane depends mainly upon the degree of intelligence they may bring to bear on the study of political and economic questions. In Germany the conditions are different. The patronizing tone in which the Emperor deems it fit to address the representatives of the farmers, his semi-childish appeals to them to regard him as their father, to remain loyal to their Emperor, who evidently regards himself as such by divine right, etc., seems to indicate on his part a low estimate of their spirit and intelligence. It is pretty evident, however, that he is reckoning without his host in supposing that they can be wheedled by that kind of talk into submission to the Imperial pleasure. It is to be regretted that the German farmers are showing themselves wedded to the idea of protection for their industry, though it has undoubtedly as good right to such protection as any other. But this will prove, it may be hoped, but a stage in their political self-education. The significant fact is that in so many countries the rural population is coming to the front in political and public life, and that radical changes of some kind are pretty certain to follow.

The Canadian Magazine, which we gladly welcome to the field of Canadian periodical literature, has well established its right to be, by the weight and excellence of its first number, especially by the first two articles in that number. The first of these, by Mr. Dalton McCarthy, deals trenchantly with a new and most important question in Canadian constitutionalism. That question, arising out of the novel attitude and action of the Dominion Government in relation to the Manitoba School question, is that of the constitutional right of the Federal Government to assume at will two radically different characters, or to act in two radically different capacities, in dealing with provincial legislation. May it, or may it not, lay aside its executive robe and don the ermine of the bench at pleasure, now issuing and enforcing its edicts and vetoes in the name and