

MAY 3, 1901

**Accidents to Workpeople.**

The "English Labour Gazette," gives data referring to the fatal and other accidents which happened last year in

England to persons in connection with their occupation. In 1900 there were 4,158 fatalities to workpeople who numbered 5,435,140, which gives one fatal accident for each 1,307 persons. Those engaged in shipping appear to have the worst luck, as, out of 231,784 employees there were 1,889 killed by accident which was one fatality for every 123 persons employed. There were 1,049 miners killed out of 764,166 employed, which indicates there having been no great calamity by explosion. The railway service had only 626 fatal accidents for 534,140 employed. This, though larger than in 1899, is a low rate considering the risks run by brakemen and other railway servants. They, however, had an exceptionally high record of accidents which were not fatal. The railway men are about 10 per cent. of the total employees, but their accidents amounted to over 18 per cent. of the total. The English law for compensating sufferers by accident arising from their calling has not reduced casualties' as much as was expected. It is even averred that the prospect of compensation has developed carelessness in many employees.

**Irregular Census Papers.**

There has been a highly acrimonious debate in the House of Commons, Ottawa, in regard to two circulars issued supplementary to the regular schedules used for census purposes.

One which is alleged to have emanated from the Government of Ontario, instructed the census officials in that Province to record the political proclivities, or record of the voters which information was to be considered as no part of the census paper, but ascertained in order to give the authorities the data required for the purposes of political organization. This was so clearly outside the object of the census, and involved so positive an act of perjury on the part of the enumerators that the circular was condemned by the Minister of Justice, at Ottawa, and prompt steps taken to have the document cancelled. None the less the issuance of so irregular a paper will tend to discredit the census, as its use by some officials evidences a desire to pervert the census into a political party weapon. Another circular of irregular character was the one issued in the Province of Quebec, addressed to the parochial clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. They were requested to give assistance to the census enumerators in securing complete returns, more especially in regard to those of their flock who were known to them to be temporarily absent from Canada during census taking time, and as to their racial origin. This circular was marked "Confidential," and although its object is not open to serious objection, if, indeed, to any at all, the issuance of a document of this kind to the clergy of one church, practically in regard to persons only of a certain class, was highly irregular and calculated to

excite suspicion and arouse racial animosity. The object of the Quebec circular seems to have been the ascertainment of information which is called for by the census schedules, not, like the Ontario circular, to secure information, wholly outside the census, for the use of political organizers. It seems, however, not to have occurred to those who issued the Quebec circular that to call in the clergy of one church to help in filling up the schedules was a breach of the regulations governing census-taking. This is the case, for each census paper is declared to be, and by-law is regarded as a private, confidential document, a knowledge of the contents of which must be confined to the chief person named therein, and the census officials. Naturally these circulars were sharply condemned, but the Quebec one excited comments which were highly provocative of racial feeling, which some members, on both sides, seem far too fond of displaying. One member proposed that a fine of \$100 be imposed on any member of the House who raised the racial cry. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's judicious and high-minded remarks in deprecation of such aggravating allusions to race questions were admirable. We fear the reliability of the Canadian census of 1901 will be open to grave question owing to the prolonged delay in filling up the schedules, and the irregular, and, what many will consider the suspicious circumstances attendant upon the enumeration of the people of the Province of Quebec.

**Quebec Labor Troubles.** The port of Quebec is again disturbed by labour troubles. The Ship Labourers' Society on 29th ult., went in force to the ocean steamer "Belgian," and ordered the men to cease work who were loading the cargo. This high handed proceeding is on a line with the conduct of this body in previous years, which did serious injury to the port of Quebec, as their present conduct will. One of the absolutely essential conditions requisite for maintaining the attractions of a port for ocean steamers is a regular and adequate supply of labour needed for the work of loading and unloading vessels as rapidly as possible. Every hour one of these steamers is in port involves great expense for which, during that time, it is receiving no revenue. The more quickly a vessel is unladen and reloaded the less are its current expenses in proportion to its receipts for freight and passengers. At this time when Quebec is being sought to be boomed as the future chief port of the St. Lawrence it is a calamity to have such scenes as occurred at the dock a few days ago, where similar disorders have previously taken place. Montreal in this, as in all other respects, is entitled to a continuance of its pre-eminence for we have, not only, what Quebec has not, an ample supply of labour, but a body of men who respect themselves too much and know too well the requirements of the port, to embarrass the work of unloading cargo. The Quebec trouble has been since settled.