

guments on which Mr. Gladstone will base his new bill :

The Royal Commission on the Laws of Naturalisation and Allegiance, which was appointed in May, 1868, and completed its inquiry within nine months, reporting in 1869, was constituted of the Earl of Clarendon, Mr. Cardwell, M. P.; Sir R. J. Phillimore, Judge of the Admiralty Court; Mr. Baron Bramwell; the then Attorney General, Sir J. Karslake; the Queen's Advocate, Sir Travers Twist; Sir Roundell Palmer, Mr. W. E. Forster, M. P.; Mr. W. Vernon Harcourt, Q. C. and Mr. Montague Bernard. Although the Commission did not escape a misfortune which has befallen many recent British commissions—a disagreement among its members upon some points—all ten agreed in the essential recommendation of the report and affixed their signatures to it. The Commissioners begin with a definition of natural born British subjects—viz., those who are such because born within the Queen's dominions, and those who are declared to be such by various general acts of parliament, though born out of the dominion of the British crown. By the common law of England the allegiance of natural born British subjects is indelible. The Commissioners state at once that they are of opinion that this doctrine is neither reasonable nor convenient. It is at variance with those principles on which the rights and duties of a subject should be deemed to rest; it conflicts with that freedom of action which is now recognised as most conducive to the general good as well as to individual happiness and prosperity, and it is especially inconsistent with the practice of a State which allows to its subjects absolute freedom of emigration. It is inexpedient that British law should maintain in theory, or should by foreign nations be supposed to maintain in practice, any obligations which it cannot enforce, and ought not to enforce if it could; and it is unfit that a country should remain subject to claims for protection on the part of persons who, so far as in them lies, have severed their connection with it. The commissioners accordingly submitted the following recommendations for an amendment of the law:—

1. Any British subject who, being resident in a foreign country, shall be naturalised therein, and shall undertake, according to its laws, the duty of allegiance to the foreign State as a subject or citizen thereof, should, upon such naturalisation, cease to be a British subject.

2. The principle of this rule should be applied to a woman who, being a British subject, shall become by marriage with an alien the subject or citizen of a foreign State.

3. The wife of a British subject who shall become naturalised abroad, and his children, if under the age of twenty one years at the date of his naturalisation, should likewise cease to be British subjects from that date; but this rule should not include a wife or child who has not emigrated to the country of naturalisation, nor should it operate unless, according to the local law, the naturalisation of the husband or father has naturalised also the wife or child.

4. Naturalisation in a foreign country, though operating from the time of its completion as an extinguishment of the original citizenship, should not carry with it discharge from responsibility for acts done before the new allegiance was acquired.

Provision should be made for applying the same principles to the case of British subjects who have become so by naturalisation.

The commissioners observe that the removal of the difficulties arising from a double

allegiance cannot be entirely accomplished without the co-operation of other countries, and they say:

If Great Britain renounces the doctrine of indelible allegiance, and acknowledges that British subjects can divest themselves of their nationality by foreign naturalisation, it may be hoped that the same principles will be recognised by other countries with respect to aliens naturalised within the British dominions; and we accordingly recommend that efforts should be made to procure that reciprocity, as well as to secure to the children of British subjects born abroad the same power of choosing their nationality which it is proposed to confer on the children born of alien parents within British territory. This might be effected by agreements or conventions concluded with different States separately, or better, perhaps, by means of a general understanding arrived at, in conference or otherwise, by the powers most interested in the subject.

The report concludes by recommending the abolition of the mixed jury system. It was instituted by Edward III., as an encouragement to foreign woollen merchants to resort to the English market. The foreigners on a mixed jury are not required to be of the same nationality as the aliens, they may all speak different languages. The system is incorrect, and presents no advantages.

TRANSIT ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

LAND AND RIVER IMPROVEMENTS.

Gen. T. J. Cram, of the U. S. Corps of Engineers, read a paper before the Detroit Board of Trade on Friday last, on the subject of the Northern Inter-Oceanic route of commercial transit between the tide-water of Puget Sound of the Pacific and tide-water on the St. Lawrence Gulf of the Atlantic Ocean. The paper very fully and ably discussed the whole question, giving and criticising the various plans for a ship canal around Niagara Falls. After describing the route of the proposed Northern Pacific Railway, and pointing out the improvements necessary to be made in St. Mary's Canal and the St. Clair flats, Gen. Cram came to consider the obstructions to navigation presented by the Niagara river. We quote the remainder of his paper:—

"Around this obstruction there exists on the Canada side the well known Welland Canal, 28 miles in length—leaving Lake Erie at Port Colborne, 18 miles west of Buffalo, and debouching into Lake Ontario at Port Dalhousie, avoiding not only the Falls but all the Niagara River—thus throwing aside the parts above and below the Falls, which are eminently susceptible of deep navigation, and overcoming the total fall from the head to the foot of the canal of 134½ feet, with 27 locks of 150 x 26½ feet of chamber, and only 10½ feet of water on the mitre sills.

"This total of 334½ feet is to be regarded as the difference of level between Lake Erie at Port Colborne and Lake Ontario at Port Dalhousie. Subtracting the perpendicular descent of the Niagara Falls from this, the remainder would be the fall of the parts of the river which are above and below the cataract.

"The maximum capacity of this canal is a vessel 140 feet long, 26 feet beam and drawing 10½ feet and 500 tons burthen, or only 16,667 bushels of wheat. Of the vessels at present engaged in commerce on the

lakes many are little short of 300 feet in length. Freight can be transported much more cheaply in large vessels than in small ones. It is plain, therefore, that to meet the wants of commerce the Welland Canal will have to be enlarged so as to have its locks 350 x 50 feet and 16 feet of water on the mitre sills, to be made 90 feet wide at the bottom and 140 at the surface, and a depth of at least 17 feet. But there is a very serious natural obstacle to improving the Welland Canal to such a capacity, and that is a wide extent of rock formation in the lake in front of Port Colborne coming up within twelve feet of the surface, its width at least 1,000 feet. Without excavating through this rock it would be useless to deepen the canal to more than 12 feet on the mitre sills. The enlargement of the canal to the full capacity proposed, including a corresponding channel through the lake rock, was estimated to be from \$10,000,000 to \$12,000,000 in gold.

"Gen. Cram believed that the great expense of such an improvement, the length of time required to make it, the length of the canal and its being in a foreign country, are points of objection of sufficient weight to induce the construction of a shorter and better ship canal around Niagara Falls on the American side. He then rehearsed briefly the history of this project from its inception 60 years ago, under Jefferson's administration, when a company was formed to build this canal. But it is no nearer done now than then.

"If our Northwest intends it shall be completed, and, no-doubt, its loud demands will force its construction either by public or private means, as soon as the consequences of the gigantic consolidation of railroads become developed in their relation to the transportation of products, it is desirable, for all interested in the work, to have the canal not only located on the best route, but also to have it constructed on a plan commensurate with all future commerce that may reasonably be expected to flow between the Pacific and Atlantic, along the route of the projected Northern Pacific railroad and the chain of lakes.

"In regard to location, all other things being equal, the shortest of the practicable lines should be adopted. The shortest leaves Niagara river at Schlosser, (three miles above the falls) and debouches into this river below the falls and all the rapids at a point 700 feet north of the steamboat landing at Lewiston, N. Y., being 75-100 miles long, which is only one quarter the length of the Welland canal. The profile on this route gives the total fall between the Schlosser and Lewiston terminus as 316 feet.

"Gen. Cram then gave in detail and criticised the plan of Col. Blunt, the plan of John Burt, the plan of Col. Forshey, and another plan which had been proposed. The first is that of 21 double locks distributed in five flights, separated by short basins, and is estimated to cost, according to Gen. Cram's theory of its capacity, \$13,457,259. The plan of John Burt is to make a single lock of 316 feet lift, and is estimated to cost \$11,500,000. The plan of Col. Forshey is to raise and lower vessels floating in docks in two separate cuts the whole distance by means of ropes over pulleys, like alternate ascending and descending buckets in a well. This is estimated to cost about \$12,000,000. Another plan is to make a series of 12 steps and risers in the through cuts, and to arrange a flight of 12 double locks, each with 26½ ft. lift, with steel gates. Upon this plan the estimated cost is \$12,500,000