

THE EVIDENCE OF FRAUD.

Sir, these proofs, as I said, are accumulating; they are accumulating in the census of the United States, which we have now the opportunity of comparing with our own. They are accumulating in connection with our municipal statistics; they are accumulating still more in the course of researches which are being carried on under the supervision of Mr. Fisher, when our census enumerators are obliged to compare and to check their returns with the returns which were made in 1891. Sir, I am sorry to say that throughout there is evidence of the extremest and most criminal carelessness and worse on the part of those who compiled the census statistics of 1891. I cannot on the present occasion enter into a minute analysis and give you all the details which have led to this conclusion, but I can give you this conclusion generally, that there is the strongest possible ground to believe that the nominal population of Canada was fraudulently increased by 250,000 or 300,000, if not more, in the census returns of 1891, and that, to a great extent, the Liberal party were thereby defrauded of the credit of the increase which really did take place after they entered office in 1896. But I will give you one or two brief illustrations which have been put into my hands very lately, to show, as I have said, the extreme carelessness with which these matters were conducted. Sir, if there is one thing more than another that ought to be carefully attended to, it is our agricultural statistics in a country like Canada.

CROPPED UNTILLED ACRES.

Nevertheless, sir, we found very lately, on examining the returns of the quantity of land under crop, that in the census of 1891 the then enumerators—or perhaps I am wrong in saying the enumerators—but the census authorities at any rate, had returned 19,900,000 acres as being under crop, when the schedules in the possession of the Census Department showed that there was not more than 15,500,000. That is to say that they had added four and a half millions to the nominal acreage under crop throughout the Dominion of Canada. Sir, that is a very bad showing, and that is but in keeping with the great number of other facts which have recently been brought to light in connection with this same census; and which, taken together, much more than justify my statement that there has been the grossest and most criminal negligence displayed in the taking of that census from first to last.