

WHETHER Lord Salisbury has good and sufficient reasons for taking Portugal so peremptorily by the throat can hardly be determined in the court of public opinion without fuller knowledge of all the facts and circumstances than is yet attainable. In the absence of such information it is but proper, we suppose, that judgment should be suspended, even by those who do not believe that a thing is necessarily right because it is done by, or on behalf of, their own country. In any case it is greatly to be regretted that it should be deemed necessary for one of the Great Powers to refuse to a feeble nation, quite incapable of self-defence, the arbitration said to be so earnestly demanded. On the face of it the course taken by England does not look like even British fair-play, to say nothing of the magnanimity which ought to characterize the British lion, in such a matter. Then, too, the contrast irresistibly suggested by the recollection of the long-suffering patience which Lord Salisbury's Government has shewn in recent dealings with another nation, which happens to be great and strong, makes the fierce energy displayed towards Portugal all the more surprising. We do not say that the patience with which the buffets administered in Behring's Sea have been borne may not hereafter be shown to have been a highly commendable act of self-restraint, in the interests of peace. We would not even detract from the merits of such forbearance by suspecting that the indignity in this case was the more easily borne, because suffered by proxy in the person of a distant colonial connection. But why this difference in the treatment of the two peoples? If the wonderful meekness in the one case is commendable, how can the unyielding sternness in the other be justifiable? If much allowance is to be made for the overgrown and stalwart youth in the family of nations, why could not an equal amount be afforded to one of the older members of the family, whose nerves have been spoiled by indulgence and dissipation? It surely cannot be, as has been hinted, that Great Britain is so universally unpopular that she dare not trust her rights even as against Portugal to the arbitrament of European or American statesmen! The only alternative which now presents itself, that could justify the Salisbury Government in declining to submit the dispute to friendly arbitration, would be the refusal of Portugal to retract, pending such arbitrament, an aggressive step taken by her officials in glaring defiance of all international law and courtesy. Such, we presume, will be Lord Salisbury's plea. Whether and to what extent the plea is supported by the facts, as they appear to an impartial observer, it is at present impossible to say.

NEEDED WARNINGS.

At a recent meeting of the St. George's Society some remarks were made which ought to be widely circulated, not only among ourselves, but in the Mother Country. We fear that in England there prevails not only a general ignorance as to the condition and circumstances of Canada, but a special ignorance as to the cost of living and the difficulty of obtaining the means of support. To the ordinary Englishman it will probably be a little startling to hear from Professor Goldwin Smith that the cost of living is greater in Toronto than in London, and from the secretary of the society, Mr. Pell, that out of every thirty or forty of the inhabitants of Toronto one is in receipt of relief. We are now drawing attention to these statements, and to some other facts of a similar nature, which ought to be present to the minds of Canadians who may be consulted by friends in England as to the desirableness of emigration. We wish there were any fair chance of their finding their way into the minds of Englishmen themselves; but that seems by no means an easy matter.

As regards cheapness of living, it is perhaps not wonderful that there should be, among people in the Old Country, an ineradicable conviction that it is less expensive living in a colony than at home. So it was once. Those who know only the prices of the necessities of life at the present moment would hardly find it possible to believe what the same things cost only fifty years ago; and Englishmen who have read accounts of how men lived at that time, have not learnt of the revolution which has taken place, and know little and think less of the change of circumstances by which it has been brought about.

In those early days land could be had, comparatively, for nothing, and all that grew out of the earth was abundant and cheap. Taxation was scarcely existent, and men's needs were fewer. Now, population has increased with terrific rapidity. Toronto, which little more than

fifty years ago, had only ten thousand inhabitants, is said now to have two hundred thousand; and although the rest of the Province is not advancing at the same rate, still the population is keeping pace with the demand for workers.

Here we are touching upon another of the illusions of the Old Country. There is a common notion that on this side, and especially in Canada, there is such a need for labour that anyone who emigrates from England will be gladly welcomed and employed the moment he sets foot on the soil in Canada. Now, we must beware of exaggerations. Some of our people, in their desire to correct the foolish expectations of Englishmen, go so far as to say that the labour market here is sufficiently stocked. We doubt this. Those who find a difficulty in getting orders executed, and these of many different kinds, will be slow to believe that we have all the workers that we need. But the question is not so much as to the quantity; it is the quality and kind about which mistakes are made.

The error in England seems to be that a man of any business or of any trade can find occupation in this country; nay, worse, that a man who is a very bad and inefficient workman at home may be good enough for a colony. All this is laughable to us, because we do not remember how difficult it is to impart knowledge about a distant country, and how impossible it is to form right judgments without knowledge.

We wish we could let Englishmen in general know that a man who fails in England is very likely to fail here; that a bad workman is not wanted in Canada any more than in the British Isles; that a man who drinks in England will not cease to be a drunkard when he arrives in the Dominion; and that those workmen that are drugs in England are precisely the same here. For example, there arrive in Toronto every year multitudes of Englishmen who apply for clerkships. They should be told that there is at least as much difficulty in getting such a situation here as there is in London, and they will know or guess what that means.

English people have been told a hundred times what we want and what we do not want; and it must be repeated a hundred times more, for their sakes as well as for ours. We do not want paupers, and, if they are sent, it is probable that they will be returned. We do not want idlers, who did nothing and starved when they were at home, and who think they can live without working here. We do not want men who mean to live by their wits. We have plenty of that kind already, who are probably quite as sharp as any that the old country is likely to send us. We do not want men who are in search of elegant occupations, with light work, a good deal of leisure and pleasant society. Least of all do we want excessive drinkers, whose friends imagine that they have done all they could for them, and then send them here, thinking that change of climate will make the Ethiopian change his skin. We are not writing unmercifully. If the idler will take to work, we will welcome him and try to find work for him. If the drunkard will leave off drinking, we will do our best to help him. But what we want to impress upon people who think of coming here is the fact, which they might find out for themselves, that a man who fails in England will probably fail here; although a man who does fairly well in the Old Country will probably do better in this.

But we must specially remind them that the kind of professions which are most crowded in England are, if possible, more so here. We want mostly such as can work with their hands. We want domestic servants. We want farm labourers; and we want men with capital to develop our splendid agricultural resources. With regard to the last want, we must utter a warning. Capital by itself is insufficient. There must be knowledge. Many military men settled in this country in former days and became farmers. Large numbers of them were utter failures. They lacked knowledge and their habits unfitted them for their work. But there is no doubt about the other two classes. Good domestic servants, if they can only remain uncorrupted by the local prejudices of many of their class, will certainly do better here than in England; and so will farm servants. For professional men, literary men, and those who want employment in offices, or the like, to come out to Canada on speculation, is little short of madness.

An instrument called the telegraphone has been patented, which enables the sender to record his message on a cylinder attached to the receiving instrument, in the absence of any one to hear it, and even to repeat the message back to himself for correction.

ENGLISH MINORITY IN QUEBEC.—II.

ORIGIN OF THE PARISH LAW.

WHEN Canada passed under the power of the British Crown the parish system formed part of the law found established in the country. It had been introduced in 1663 as part of the customary law of France. In England the parish had been the remotest time, not only a religious, but also, in some aspects, a secular division. It was not so in France. It was for a long time purely an ecclesiastical division; and, until 1560, required no civil recognition. After that time letters patent had to be obtained from the king and registered in the Parliament of the province. In Canada the civil power did not intervene until 1721. In that year the King ordered the Governor, Bishop and Intendant to draw up a schedule stating the boundaries of all parishes which had been canonically erected by the Bishop. These he confirmed and homologated by an *Arrêt* in 1722, and they are the parishes which existed at the conquest.

During the Military Government, 1760-3, and the *temps de malaise*, 1763-74, no parishes were erected, because of the uncertainty as to what laws were in force. In 1774 the Imperial Parliament confirmed the use of the French civil law as it remains to this day; but there still existed uncertainty as to the precise status of the Roman bishop, for the parish law formed no part of the seigniorial law. The Council, however, in which the English were in a large majority, put an end to these doubts in 1791 by passing an Ordinance to the effect that the law should continue as before the conquest. That is, that the Bishop should, as formerly, erect canonical parishes and that the civil functions of the Governor and Intendant, confirmed by the royal *Arrêt*, should be performed by the British Governor for the time being. Practically, that is still the law. The newly instituted Parliament of Lower Canada in 1794 amended and confirmed this Ordinance, and the special Council, which administered the government during the rebellion, again amended and confirmed it in 1838. The whole statute law concerning parishes was consolidated by the Parliament of old Canada before Confederation, and forms Chap. 13 of the Cons. Statutes of Lower Canada. This body of parish law is then no new thing. Every form of government which has existed in Canada, excepting the present form, is responsible for it. Nor is there anywhere any indication of a limit to its application short of the boundaries of the present Province of Quebec.

The question has recently, however, again been raised as to whether this parish system can legally be extended into the Eastern Townships where the land was originally granted under the English tenure of free and common socage. This is an important question because of recent economic changes. As the English farmers move away they are replaced by French Catholics who cannot live away from the ministrations of their Church. A Protestant who has never lived among the French people in the country cannot form an idea of what the Church is to the *habitant*. The varied ceremonies, the recurrent festivals, the round of the ecclesiastical seasons weave into the dull monotony of his laborious life threads of solace, of hope and of joy. He is by nature gregarious. Solitude is intolerable to him. He will remove into the most forbidding wilderness. He will attack the most unpromising soil; but the priest must be in the van. With a people so constituted civilization crystallizes round the church steeples. It is hard for the English mind to understand this to its full extent; but to a *habitant* an Englishman living isolated, far away from a church, is an utter mystery. The Eastern Townships of Quebec were settled by English immigrants from Britain and the United States. As, during recent years, the rich lands of the North-West were opened up the young people became restless. The proceeds of the sale of a farm will buy ten times as much land in the North-West, believed to be of better quality. The attractions of city life draw the youth to the town, the profits of farming in the East are destroyed by Western competition, and so the heads of rising families must move West or be left to manage their farms alone. In this way a constant movement is going on, an outflow of English and an inflow of French.

The case of the parish of St. Barbe, which will be the subject of a future letter, is only the first of similar cases which may arise as the process goes on. The theory that the parish system was linked with the seigniorial tenure will not avail, for it is not true. Nor would it be desirable if true. If the English farmers improve their circumstances by selling out it is surely better that ready purchasers should be found. It is better than leaving the farms tenantless. The movement is not peculiar to the Eastern Townships of Quebec. In Vermont, New Hampshire, and other New England States, the number of deserted farms lapsing into wilderness is so great as to cause serious alarm; and plans are projected of getting up societies to promote immigration. Bishop Grandin is just as powerless to prevent the English from buying land in his diocese in the North-West as the English of the Townships are to prevent the French from buying land in territory they fancied to be their own. When Monseigneur Grandin sees the North-West slipping away from the French race which discovered it; and when, with a sore heart, he appeals to the Province of Quebec for help, we perceive at once that he is mourning the inevitable. In like manner should we of the minority in this Province recognize that the movement of population here is also inevitable.