

unsuccessful emigration begins to bear a large proportion to the successful, and too often presents itself in cases of the most heartrending distress, as all connected with Toronto charities know. Even as regards the North-West, however, we cannot help thinking that Professor Tanner would do more good and render better service to the land of his love if he were more discriminating and less optimist than he is. There have been failures even in the North-West, and the wisest, as well as the most honest, course is to admit them, explain their causes, and warn intending emigrants against a repetition of the same errors. The gloomy picture of the depressed condition of North-Western farmers, and the despondency prevailing among them drawn the other day by Colonel Wheatley in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was no doubt over-charged; that it was not a mere fiction, the public utterances and movements of the farmers show; and its publication warns us that even if all Canadians should conspire, as some think patriotism enjoins us, to endorse every falsehood which any touter chooses to tell, the truth would find its way through other channels and be rendered all the more damaging by the attempts which had been made to suppress it. Neither England nor Ontario wants her best farmers carried off or is likely to allow them to be carried off on false pretences. A perfectly fair and conscientious account of the North-West with its advantages and disadvantages would be invaluable, but the man who can give it us has not yet appeared.

PERHAPS the most interesting and cheering part of Professor Tanner's report is that which relates to the Gordon-Cathcart settlement of the Skye Crofters. Unquestionably these people seem to be doing well; and their success is the more noteworthy because they can hardly be said to have been farmers in the true sense of the term, nor did they bring with them habits of very steady labour. The only drawback to their prosperity appears to be the sparseness of the settlement, fifty-six families being spread over two hundred and fifty square miles, which must be fatal to schooling and church-going, besides depriving the settlers of the general benefits and comforts of neighbourhood. The usual disadvantages of pioneering in this respect have been aggravated by the Government policy in the North-West. Skye is Ireland in miniature, less the Roman Catholic Religion. Overcrowding on an unproductive soil is its disease; emigration is the remedy from the application of which impostors and incendiaries are trying to turn the people. Even Sir William Harcourt seems inclined to talk clap-trap on the subject. If emigration is to be preached down, how is the earth to be peopled? Why is emigration from Skye to Manitoba more horrible than emigration from New England to California, or than emigration from Skye to Kent? How many men, even of the wealthier class, are permitted to spend their lives where they are born? We would not undervalue the local tie; but the ties of family affection are higher, and the seat of family affection is a prosperous and happy home.

MR. CLEVELAND's letter to Mr. George Curtis on the subject of Civil Service Reform must gladden the hearts of all Reformers. It shows that the President-elect is true to the principle of the Civil Service Act, and purposes faithfully to enforce the law. It further shows that he is personally the hearty enemy of the Spoils System, and that he is determined to confine the changes of office, on the accession of his party to power, within the narrowest limits which the necessities of the case will permit. Active and violent partisans of the other side must, of course, expect to be removed. Mr. Cleveland evidently anticipates trouble with the more extreme and self-seeking members of his own party. Trouble he will have; but if he stands firm, and the country sees in him its deliverer from the Spoils System, he will win no ordinary crown. After a long line of mere partisans he will be the first national President. It is not pleasant to feel that Canada at the same time is celebrating the culmination of a system which immolates everything to party, which has turned the nominations to a branch of the national Legislature into a mere bribery fund, and now threatens to degrade to the same use the appointments to the Bench of Justice.

THE enormous pension list of the United States admits of plausible defence only as the expression of a nation's gratitude to the soldiery by which, in the crisis of its fate, the nation was saved from destruction. On any other theory it must be condemned. Facts which have from time to time come to light show that gratitude was not the only motive for voting a pension roll such as no European government, in the worst of times, ever imposed upon its people. The Pension Bureau is the unconscious but real distributor of a corruption fund by which one party bids against the other for votes of the pensioners and their friends. In the months of October and November last over one hundred special examiners from the Pension Bureau at Washington were in the State of Ohio. The fact that a

pension agent sometimes has as many as three thousand clients shows what a profitable business is done in pensions by others than the persons entitled to receive them. The Mexican Pension Bill, now before Congress, throws a flood of light on the previous expansion of the pension list. This bill, which has passed the Senate and may pass the House of Representatives, cannot be justified by the motives which may be urged in favour of the Civil War pensioners. The soldiers in the Mexican War, whatever else they may have done, assuredly did not save the Union. Since that war closed a generation has been born and died. But these considerations did not prevent the introduction and the passage through one branch of the Legislature of a bill, the ostensible object of which is to recompense the heroes of the Mexican War. When the statisticians of the Pension Bureau tell us that this bill would take at least seven hundred millions out of the public treasury, it is impossible not to suspect the operation of some other motive than the desire to reward men most of whom have long been in their graves. If the strongest possible reasons for showing the nation's gratitude to the army that accompanied General Scott to the Halls of Montezuma once existed they exist no more; if neglected heroes have been allowed to die without a hand being stretched out to help them, it would be no atonement to give pensions at this time of day to persons who have no other claim than that they happened to be relatives of the dead men. Should this bill pass, it is not denied that it will be followed by another the purpose of which will be to give pensions to all soldiers who served in the Civil War. The Mexican Pension Bill would take twenty-five millions a year out of a surplus which the Secretary of the Treasury estimates for the present year at only thirty-nine millions. For a non-military people the American nation is involving itself in the strangest of contradictions; and this non-military people marks its love of militarism with additional emphasis by confining all its pensions to the army and the navy and denying a like recognition to the most eminent services given in any other capacity; the President himself, though he should retire without the means of support, after having rendered the most signal services to the nation, would be denied a pension.

THE Australians and all their friends in England are overwhelming the Colonial Office and its unhappy chief with denunciations for permitting Germany to annex in the neighbourhood of Australia. The Colonial Office and the Government altogether are pretty hard bested in these tempestuous times, and they cannot put forth the whole power of England at once in all quarters of the globe. This is a truth which colonists and Englishmen in general will gradually learn to recognize. Had the Australian Colonies, instead of being a group of dependencies, been an independent Confederation, they would not have been, as they are now, the helpless objects of aggression. They would have developed a military force of their own, and, what is perhaps of even more importance, they would have been protected against insult by the moral status and dignity which belong even to the youngest and smallest of nations. Nor would they have been entangled in the diplomatic quarrels of the Imperial country and made a mark for the malignity of its enemies. As it is, they are in a position at once of the greatest peril and of the greatest weakness.

To the challenge of Bishop Macharness, who calls upon the vivisectors to show why they should not vivisect men as well as brutes, "L.L.D." in the *London Times* answers, as he thinks conclusively, that "Human life is by God's law sacred, and brute life is not." But the question is, why human life should be sacred in the eyes of those who do not believe in God. To this no answer has yet been given.

THE CLOSE OF MR. GLADSTONE'S REIGN.

It is Mr. Gladstone's son who now tells us that the political life of his father cannot be much prolonged. His words are more trustworthy than bulletins. The luminary which has shone so brilliantly and so long evidently hastens to its setting; and it seems likely to set in cloud. Not that Mr. Gladstone's ascendancy either in the country or in Parliament is diminished. Perhaps it was never more signally manifested than when, setting himself above the limitations of party, he negotiated a Redistribution Bill with the leader of the Opposition. Only the other day journals not entirely in harmony with his policy were proclaiming his "apotheosis." But the most fervent admirers of his genius and his character can hardly fail to see that while as an orator, as a Parliamentary leader, as a framer and exponent of legislative measures, he has not only not declined but risen higher than ever, in the work of a Prime Minister and a ruler his weaker points have been betrayed. Nature does not lavish all her gifts upon one man. On Mr. Gladstone she has