

The low prices of agricultural products, as well as the vast quantities of fertile land still unoccupied and untilled, show that the limits of its capacity for food production are as yet very far from having been reached. Why, then, is it that not only in a densely settled country like Great Britain, but in Canada, with millions of unoccupied acres waiting for the plow, thousands of willing hands are seeking work and finding none, while their families, meanwhile, suffer hardship and privation in a land of plenty? We often speak of our own land as one in which the miseries resulting from over-competition are at a minimum — are, in fact, almost unknown. In comparison with these evils as they exist in older and more densely populated countries, we speak truly. And yet employers of labour tell us that it is pitiful to witness the result of an advertisement for a hand to fill a vacancy. One employer told us the other day that, the impression having gone abroad that two or three hands were needed in his establishment, though no advertisement had been published, the applicants poured in by hundreds, and that their eagerness to find employment was pitiable. Even now, in the height of the summer season, when work is most abundant, our City Council is casting about for a way of providing employment to the many needing it. By setting out in this way from one's own locality in any part of the Empire, and proceeding from the known to the unknown in proper progression, one can get some conception of the magnitude of the problem which the British Government has before it when once it sets itself seriously to grapple with the problem of finding work and a living for the unemployed.

And yet the problem should not prove wholly insolvable. It is pretty clear that there must be something fundamentally wrong in the social or economic conditions which make so unequal a distribution of the privileges and products of industry possible. This wrong may have, no doubt does have, its origin in human selfishness, working out its greedy purposes through the inequalities of mental and physical endowments which bring mastery to one, defeat to another, in the life struggle. But is there not strong reason to believe that these levers, which, in selfish human hands, are constantly producing these social upheavals by which one is raised and another crushed to earth, rests usually on a fulcrum of injustice in the laws, either of the past or of the present; generally, perhaps, of both. But whether this be so, or not, it surely ought to be within the power of modern statesmanship to ameliorate the results by legislation. If human governments are to be anything more potent than flies on the great balance wheel which has failed so signally to keep the machinery which is driven by the giant forces of selfish competition, working the inexorable laws of supply and demand, in proper adjustment, surely the resources of their statesmanship should be able at least to do something to regulate that working and ameliorate the condition of those who are now being crushed by it. The first duty of Lord Salisbury's Government will, no doubt, be to see whether some temporary device may be found to afford immediate relief. But it would be a Sisyphean labour to depend on any temporary measures of relief, which would have to be continually repeated, with the ever-recurring conditions which make them necessary. Nothing less will be worthy so great and powerful a Government as that now on the British Treasury benches, than a comprehensive investigation of the whole question, with a view to ascertain as far as possible the sources of a terrible evil which is not obviously or axiomatically incurable, and, if possible, to get such conceptions of the underlying causes which have wrought through centuries to produce such evil as may enable them to set intelligently about effecting the nearest approximation to a radical cure which is now possible.

## The Bishop and his Apologist.

IN my contribution to THE WEEK on the Manitoba School Question, I referred to the Gravel incident. I had considered it a matter of some importance as showing the methods which free communities have to counteract and contend against, in maintaining the freedom of their institutions. But it appears that I have given the incident an importance entirely unwarranted by the facts.

It would seem that a gentleman living somewhere in Eastern Canada, had by some strange coincidence, made the same misinterpretation of the incident as I had, and in a letter to the press, after some vigorous comment on Bishop Gravel's conduct, had suggested the propriety of Mr. John S. Ewart, the ubiquitous literary and legal advocate of the Manitoba Roman Catholics, retiring from that position, with a view to the protection of his own reputation. Mr. Ewart, in reply to Mr. Pringle (the correspondent in question), shows that the construction put upon the performance of Bishop Gravel by practically the whole of Protestant Canada (and probably by a goodly portion of Catholic Canada, if we knew it all) was not at all based upon, nor justified by the facts in the case, but was really the product of that unreasoning prejudice on the part of Protestants against Roman Catholics the unquestionable existence of which Mr. Ewart always assumes in his disquisitions on this subject. This assumption is, indeed, as a rule, indispensable to the cogency or coherency of Mr. Ewart's arguments in the school dispute.

Mr. Ewart shows that Bishop Gravel, far from being the wirepulling, intriguing ecclesiastic, which a superficial reading of his report might suggest him to be, is in reality a very simple and unworldly person, whose lack of sophistication, and whose ignorance of mundane manners, render him prone to the commission of trifling indiscretions such as that which recently caused the astonishment and widespread comment in Protestant and Catholic Canada, which Mr. Ewart, with great good taste and appropriateness, characterizes as an "Orange whirlwind."

It may be interesting to recall the salient facts of the incident. Bishop Gravel was requested by Cardinal Ledochowski, Prefect of the Propaganda (whose office at the Vatican is somewhat analogous to that of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the British Government), to prepare a report on the Manitoba School Question. In compliance with this request, the Bishop made a report which was submitted on December 7th, 1894. The matter was considered by the Church authorities to be one of great importance, and it would naturally be thought that the Bishop would spare no pains to secure and to verify all available data, so that the accuracy of his report would be unimpeachable, and its exhaustiveness leave nothing to be desired. But strangely enough he commences it: "I have done the work from memory, not having any book or document relating to this question. I believe, however, that I can affirm that the account which I give of the events surrounding this affair is strictly true." This shows the folly of relying upon human memory in a matter of importance, even if the memory be an episcopal one. For the account given by the Bishop is so inaccurate in regard to some of the most essential facts as to render the whole recital a gross perversion. His description of the functions and *modus operandi* of the Imperial Privy Council is decidedly piquant and interesting. Referring to the judgment in which that tribunal held that the Manitoba School Legislation of 1890 was strictly constitutional, the good Bishop says: "That Council, which is the guardian of British interests, considered that it was more advantageous for the peace of the Empire to affirm the autonomy of the Province of Manitoba than to maintain the rights of the Catholics. It therefore reversed the judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada, and declared to be constitutional the obnoxious law passed by the Legislature of Manitoba. To reach that conclusion the Privy Council affected not to understand the force of the evidence furnished by the negotiations which had taken place at the time of the union, and by the solemn assurances given by the Crown."

It will be observed that the worthy Bishop evinces a cynical readiness to assume, as the most natural thing in the world, that the judges of the British Privy Council, the most exalted tribunal in the Empire, whilst pretending to adjudicate on cases brought before them solely on the facts and