

tration among the Protestants of this province. Among Roman Catholics a register of baptisms is practically a register of births. In fact, in the view of the teachers of that faith a person is not duly born until he is baptised, as the priest must have his hand in everything. To be the officer of the state and to have the visible sanction of the state behind him, as well as the invisible sanction of heaven, is a state of things which suits the parish priest, and the register which he files with the prothonotary is simply a duplicate of the parish register, and he can collect whatever fee he likes to cover the cost of the service. It is entirely different with those whom the law of this province classes as Protestants, meaning by that all sorts of outsiders from the well-organized polity of the Church of Rome. The mixed multitude so denominated hold all sorts of views with regard to the rite of baptism. Some, like the Baptists and various sorts of Adventists, think it a sin to administer it to children, some ignore it religiously, like the Quakers and the Salvation Army. A great many ignore it irreligiously. Some postpone it for years and some forget it altogether. This is no doubt all very shocking to those who believe that baptism means regeneration, and that without it a child is damned or sent to limbo, but of course the people described do not believe that. Such being the practical facts, and a large part of the people being attached to no minister in particular, the registers kept by ministers are, as far as securing a record of the number of births in the province is concerned, *somewhat worse than none*. Further, the ministers who keep them are taxed, as our correspondent shows, for doing so, a process which does not render them the more attached to the performance of a fruitless service. The whole system is a fraud."

No one will deny to parents the right to carry out their conscientious notions of religious duty, so long as they do not encroach on the rights of other citizens or endanger the lives and health of their children, and while they comply with the necessary regulations of a civilized community. But the present system is a relic of barbarism, and should be at once replaced by a compulsory system of civil registration. It is one of the essentials of civilized life that accurate vital statistics should be kept, and while these are left in any shape to the care of the priests, accuracy will be out of the question.

Britain's Future.

While some of our friends are predicting all sorts of disasters to Britain, from the attacks of foreign enemies on the one hand, and from internal dissensions on the other, it is somewhat reassuring to find such reasonable sentiments as the following coming from a correspondent of Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*:

"When we consider the many attractions of Australia and New Zealand life, it appears inevitable that they should draw large numbers from other lands. . . . It is estimated that they will have thirty millions in a score of years. Cecil Rhodes is opening to immigration high and healthful table-lands towards the Zambezi. . . . By the end of the first quarter or third of the next century, these lands will teem with fifty millions, and the British Premier will stand at the head of one hundred millions. Picture such a democratic power in close harmony with a United States of still more massive force. What a moral pressure could be exerted on the mediæval nations to treat all men with justice!"

Had Canada been governed during the last quarter of a century by wise and honest statesmen, her population to-day might have been far greater than that of all Britain's other colonies. The slow growth of our population is certainly not due to any natural disadvantages of the country, either in climate or infertility of soil.

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