

justified by the facts. We regret to say that it seems difficult, if not impossible, to resist the conclusion that the Redistribution Act brought down the other day by Sir John Thompson bears too clear evidence in its construction of such a disregard of the promptings of a nice sense of honour, and such a betrayal of trust, in order to secure a partisan advantage.

WHEN we referred to the forthcoming Redistribution Bill, in a recent paragraph, we expressed the opinion that the Opposition would be sure to suspect and accuse the Government of "gerrymandering," no matter how impartial their arrangement might be. We at that time sincerely hoped to see a Bill brought down so manifestly honest and impartial in its provisions that we could confidently defend and praise it. We are sorry to find ourselves disappointed. It would hardly be within the province of this journal, even had we the space, to go through the provisions of the Bill in order, and point out the particulars which have a partisan cast. On the other hand, we wish no reader to accept our bare expressions of opinion upon such a question. What we chiefly desire is to induce each elector to study the facts in a judicial spirit and form his own conclusions advisedly. It is due to ourselves and our readers, however, that we should give some reasons for the opinion we have expressed. We shall, therefore, refer to two or three particular cases which seem to us but too conclusive in regard to the character of the Bill. First, there is the fact—we think it will not be disputed—that, taking the figures of the last election as a basis of calculation, the net result of the redistribution will be to add not less than six or seven to the number of constituencies which can be relied on, under ordinary circumstances, to return supporters of the Government, and of course to diminish the ranks of the Opposition by the same number. If this is not a correct arithmetical calculation from the data given, we shall be glad to stand corrected. This fact, assuming it to be such, however strong the presumption it creates, does not absolutely prove that the Act is a "gerrymander." But it does certainly throw upon the Government and its defenders the burden of proving that the necessary changes in representation could not have been effected without producing such a result. Seeing that, in Ontario at least, the number of supporters of the Government now returned is far in excess of the number that would be given by a calculation based upon the totals of Conservative and of Liberal voters in the Province, it must be exceedingly difficult to make out any such necessity for this apparent unfairness. Again, it is obvious that in selecting a group of constituencies from which to take one or both of the representatives needed to meet the just demands of the city of Toronto and the district of Northern Algoma for increased representation, the Government was in honour bound to be guided as far as practicable by the unit of representation. Is it, then, or is it not, the fact that the new Bill passes by a group of constituencies in Eastern Ontario, which has now the largest number of representatives in proportion to population, but which are mainly represented by supporters of the Government, and takes two members from the Niagara district, which is, it is true, somewhat over-represented, though in a less degree, but in which the representatives are mainly supporters of the Opposition? Once more, the new Bill makes a number of readjustments of single constituencies, though the main proposition of its defenders is that the design was to make as little disturbance of existing arrangements as possible. The case of the city of London will serve as a sample of the way in which several, at least, of these changes are made. London and East Middlesex have at present the following populations: London, 22,281; East Middlesex, 25,569. Now, let anyone look over the lists of constituencies, with their respective populations throughout the Province, and note in how many cases the disproportion is very much greater than in this case; then let him try to conceive of any good reason why those two particular constituencies should have been specially meddled with, while so many worse cases were left untouched. It will surely puzzle him to assign any other reason than that by detaching West London from East Middlesex and adding it to London, the Government is assured of a safe majority in the latter, without affecting the political complexion of the former. The three cases we have named, represent three different species of changes effected by the Bill. They seem to us, in the absence of the fuller light which the debate may possibly supply, to afford three fair sample tests of the character of the Bill.

THE question of the need of more freedom in commercial and other negotiations with foreign countries came up again in Parliament on Monday, in connection with Mr. Dalton McCarthy's motion that a representative appointed by the Government of Canada should be attached to the staff of her Majesty's Minister at Washington, specially charged to watch, guard and represent the interests of Canada. The motion gave rise to an interesting debate, which is to be resumed at some future day. It was easy enough for Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Laurier and others who supported the motion, to make out a pretty strong case for the usefulness of such an agent, provided he could be so accredited as to be able to act with freedom in the interests of Canada, and secure proper recognition and influence at Washington. Opinions were divided as to whether the interests of the Dominion could be better served by a diplomatic agent, acting as an attaché of the British Embassy, or by an unattached commercial agent acting under the immediate direction of the Canadian Government. It was, however, forcibly urged that, in view of our relations to the United States, questions will constantly arise needing full information and frank discussion, which would be quite outside of the sphere of a commercial agency. Assuming the impossibility of obtaining direct communication with the American Government through an independent Canadian representative, so long as we are connected as a colony with Great Britain, the only alternative is that of an attaché of the British Minister. The crucial difficulty with any such arrangement was in part touched by Sir John Thompson, who pointed out that an officer occupying that position would be unable to report either to the Canadian or to the British Government, since his position would necessarily be that of a confidential servant of the British Minister, without whose permission he could do nothing and communicate nothing. When to this consideration is added that to which we referred on a former occasion, viz., that neither as a representative of Canada, nor as a subordinate of the British Ambassador, could he expect other than a very informal recognition from the American Government, it is pretty clear, we think, that Mr. McCarthy's proposal is impracticable, however beneficial such an arrangement might otherwise prove. The fact is, and we may as well recognize it, that there is a limit to the exercise of the functions of self-government by a dependent colony, and that limit Canada must have pretty nearly reached. So long as we are content with the colonial status, so long must we accept its necessary limitations with the best grace possible.

NOTWITHSTANDING its large majority, the new Government of Quebec has some hard tasks before it, if it is either to fulfil its promises or to meet the demands of the situation. Most difficult of all, in some respects, will be the task of equalizing revenue and expenditure. The finances of the Province are certainly in a very bad position, the most discouraging feature being that of the comparative smallness of the margin between fixed expenditure and fixed income. It seems almost doubtful whether any possible economy can now avail to restore the proper balance. It is, however, a promising omen that both parties seem fully alive to the gravity of the situation in this respect, and that the Opposition seems disposed to co-operate with the Government in any reasonable measures which may be deemed necessary. If we may judge from the promptness with which the Government brought down a number of Bills of great importance, it means to set at work in earnest. The four measures introduced by Mr. G. W. Stephens, the first day of the session, are in themselves, if honestly and thoroughly drawn, almost enough to occupy a session of moderate length. These were: a Bill to prohibit lotteries; a Bill to provide for compulsory voting; a Bill to prevent bribery of members of Parliament; a Bill to prevent bribery and corruption of aldermen and members of civic corporations. The radical character of these Bills, emanating as they do from a professedly Conservative administration, will cause their passage and the future course of the Government to be watched with more than ordinary interest. The anti-lottery Bill, we are glad to learn, is a most stringent measure, covering the whole ground and making no exceptions whatever. If it be carried in this completeness it will be a boon, not only to Quebec, but to the whole Dominion. It would be not a little remarkable should Quebec, the least radical of all the Provinces, be the first to try the experiment of compulsory voting. Stringent laws to prevent all forms of bribery and corruption are desirable and necessary, and the sister Province will do well to

make hers as strict as possible, but it is evident that something more is needed to raise the tone of Canadian political morality to the level of even ordinary respectability. The parliamentary as well as the popular conscience stands sadly in need of education and development. We need a great educational campaign. We need, all over the Dominion, higher ideals and better examples set before the people by those who are at the head of affairs. But where, alas! shall we begin? Who shall educate the educators?

THE decisive majority of sixty-five, by which the British House of Commons, a few weeks ago, rejected Mr. Fenwick's motion in favour of payment of members, shows that the time has not yet come for the recognition in Great Britain of the wisdom and fairness of a practice which has long since been conceded in the colonies to be both just and necessary. Though perhaps a little late, it is still interesting to read some of the arguments which were made to do duty even in the leading journals, against the dangerous innovation proposed. On the face of the matter, apart from all considerations of custom and precedent, it is hard to conceive of any sufficient reason why those who are chosen by the people to transact the business of State legislation should be expected to do so at their own expense, any more than those appointed to do duty as magistrates, or judges, or military officers. Lord Elcho's satirical speech, which seems to have given a vast amount of satisfaction to the opponents of the measure, was certainly a somewhat brilliant specimen of humour and wit in the discussion of a serious question. It is generally admitted, we believe, that it had not a little effect in determining the result. And yet, we make bold to say, anyone who will take pains to analyze the subject-matter of that speech, and extract the essence of sound argument it contains, will be amazed at the quantity of logically worthless residuum. The "points" made, so far as we can discover, are two. First, the Bill should be carried to its logical result and provide for the payment of all those who, like the speaker, had been giving long years of "totally unremunerated political service." It should also do something for those who were left stranded at the bottom of the poll, should make the payments bear some proportion to the abilities of the members, and to their sacrifices of time, health, political principles, etc. And yet the witty lord could foresee grave difficulties in finding a basis of computation. For obvious reasons, it would hardly do to pay the representatives according to the number of speeches made, or the number of votes recorded, and so forth. The second point was evolved from the fact that the recipients of the salaries and the paymasters were necessarily the same persons. We need not, we think, stay to point out how easily the *reductio ad absurdum*, which constitutes the gist of whatever argument such irony contains, may be applied with equal force against all kinds of payment for public services. Scarcely more cogent are the sober reasonings of such journals as the *Spectator*, which bases a long argument on the unspoken assumption that the men whose lack of means will not permit them to give up their time and energies to the service of the State are necessarily the ill-informed and the narrow-minded, and that the men who have really the education and the breadth of view essential to fitness for Parliamentary service are all to be found within the very narrow limits of those whose independent fortunes make the matter of indemnity one of indifference to them. The evident sincerity with which the writer who reasons in this fashion believes that the many who cannot afford to give their lives to the service of the State without some remuneration have a monopoly of British ignorance and prejudice, would make an interesting study for a philosophic cynic.

A BILL was passed a few weeks since in the British Commons, which, though of comparatively slight importance if judged by its actual contents, may yet prove to have been the beginning of a change in the principles on which the great Indian Empire is governed, the end of which will not be seen for generations. The Bill, as described by Mr. Curzon, who introduced it on behalf of the Government, is intended to give members of the Indian Councils an opportunity of indulging in full, fair and free criticism of the policy of the Government, and of asking questions of the Government. It also increases the number of non-official members of the Councils, and empowers the Viceroy to invite the municipal bodies to select representatives for nomination. The last named provision, which is probably the most important, while