

ratio of growth. Illinois (which has a population of 3,818,536) has added 740,665 to its numerical strength. Massachusetts is more populous by 405,332 than in 1880. Two States, Vermont and Nevada, one agricultural the other mining, show a decrease, the former (whose figure is 332,255) of 81, the latter of 17,939. This last decrease (nearly 29 per cent.) leaves Nevada the least populous State in the Union. It is difficult, where so many causes interfere with the law of natural increase to discover its actual rate. It has been suggested that if the births and deaths of the immigrants (5,246,613) that entered the country during the last ten years be accepted as counter-balancing each other, a little more than 7,000,000 would represent the natural growth of the population, so that the rate of increase would be about 1.4 per cent.

THE FLAGS OF FRANCE.

During the preparations for the visit of the Comte de Paris to this city, the question arose whether, in his reception, the old white flag of the Bourbons or the tri-colour should be used. The *drapeau blanc*, which was formally adopted by Henry the Fourth, was the flag of New as well as of Old France, when the foundations of the colony were laid and until its transfer to the Crown of England. The origin of the national standard of France is involved in obscurity. According to one story, Clovis, after his conversion to Christianity nearly fourteen centuries ago, adopted as his banner the "chape" or cloak of St. Martin—that is, the half that remained to the soldier-saint after he had shared that garment with the beggar. Some archæologists, however, maintain that the "Chape de St. Martin" was not really a flag or a portion of dress used as such, but a relic which was carried in a box. Others, again, adopt this view with the difference that the relic was really the half-cloak, and that the oratory in which it was kept was called in Latin "capella," and that our word "chapel" is thence derived, the first *capellani* or chaplains being the priests who had charge of it. The opinion also widely prevails among antiquaries that this "chape," borne on solemn occasions with the host of Clovis, was the first flag of Western Europe. Dagobert chose an eagle for his emblem, but whether he used it on a flag does not appear to be certain. The oriflamme is ascribed to the reign of Charles the Great, which that monarch is thought to have received from Pope Leo the Third. According to the *Chanson de Roland* it was at first called "Romaine" from this circumstance, but the name was afterwards changed to "Montjoie," from Mons Gaudii, a hill near Rome. To this oriflamme succeeded the flag of St. Denis, which was adopted by Philip the First from the abbey of the same name, to which it belonged. It was first solemnly raised in the year 1124, when Philip's successor, Louis the Sixth (Le Gros) was going to war with the Emperor Henry the Fifth. Its fate is still a theme for controversy. It is comprised in an inventory of the treasures of the abbey in the year 1504, and Dom Felibien testifies to having seen it ninety years later, greatly the worse for wear. It was of red silk and was, in all probability, flame-shaped, in harmony with its name. The oriflammes, both that of Charlemagne and that of St. Denis, were associated with religion in centuries when religion and war were often closely related. In the time of Louis the Seventh another flag came into use—a blue ensign—which ultimately became the banner of the nation. This was the blue flag with the golden fleurs-de-lys, sometimes called "bannière royale," sometimes called "bannière de France." Here again we are confronted with a conflict of opinion. Its origin, its significance, even the nature of its symbols are ground for dispute. Some trace it back to Clovis, some to St. Denis, one writer to Japheth, son of Noah. By some the fleur-de-lys is claimed to represent a lance-head; others will have it to be a rude representation of a bee; others would have us believe that the original artist meant to depict a toad in reference to the marshy country from which the Franks first came. A fourth group of inquirers hold that fleur-de-lys is a corruption of *fleur-de-Lois* (flowers of Louis), the early kings so called having so spelled

their name. As to the colour, it is the blue of the water, according to some; of the sky, according to others, while some again maintain that it was the favourite hue of St. Martin and of the Merwings. How the blue flag became white is another point on which there is scope for argument. One thing is that the white cross which French soldiers wore on their breasts was transferred to the royal standard in the time of Charles the Seventh, and that, partly through the example of the Maid of Orleans (who had a white flag of her own), and partly through the gradual broadening and lengthening of the arms of the cross till it covered nearly the whole of the blue ground, the change of colour was effected. The white cross appeared on the King's banner in the middle of the fifteenth century, but it was only after the accession of Henry the Fourth that the blue disappeared and the *drapeau blanc* became the acknowledged flag of the Kings of France. It lasted for just two centuries, embracing the entire period of the Old Régime in Canada. When the National Guard was constituted in July, 1789, its cockade was of red and blue—the colours of the French metropolis. After the taking of the Bastille, Louis the Sixteenth, with the shadow of doom already approaching him, put the new badge in his hat. On Lafayette's proposal, white was added, and thus the Bourbon colour completed the tri-colour. Even during the two centuries of continuous Bourbon supremacy, blue had not been discarded—all merchant vessels bearing "the old flag of the French nation, a white cross on a blue standard." Even red was not quite strange to French royalty—all three colours of the present flag being used in the liveries of the King's servants. It may be recalled by our readers that nearly seventeen years ago the late Comte de Chambord deliberately preferred to remain in private life rather than be king of France under any colour but his own—the white of Henry the Fourth and all the Bourbons that ruled in Canada. The opportunity, then lost, of regaining the throne has not recurred, and, from present appearances, is not likely to recur. But, should the offer be repeated, no scruples of that kind will stand in the way of acceptance.

THE UNITY OF THE EMPIRE.

The Ottawa branch of the Imperial Federation League has started a movement which just now must be considered especially opportune. Its object is to ascertain by inquiry the prevailing views of our people as to the means by which the unity of the Empire may be strengthened, and how, in the development of its vast resources, intercourse between the inhabitants and interchange of the products of its several parts may be most successfully promoted. A great deal of misunderstanding exists in some sections of our population as to the real drift and significance of the League's aims, and much utterly baseless apprehension has been caused through this misunderstanding. Some writers seem to look upon it as a gigantic conspiracy to rob Canadians of the birthright of their liberty and subject them, *nolentes volentes*, to an alien yoke. We need hardly inform our readers that the founders of the League never dreamed of interfering in any way with a single right or privilege enjoyed by the people of any portion of the Queen's domain. On the contrary, it has been their desire and constant effort to enlarge the influence of the outlying parts of the Empire so as to give them due participation in the control and direction of Imperial affairs. As to the *modus operandi* by which that great end should be effected, there is room for much difference of opinion. Perhaps it would have been wiser if, in the first instance, the late Hon. Mr. Forster and his colleagues had avoided any seeming anticipation of the judgment of "Greater Britain" in their choice of a name for the society. Lord Rosebery has all along stood out against even the appearance of such prejudice, and has deprecated precipitate action whenever he saw any members likely to be carried away by their enthusiasm. The Canadian branch of the League has followed in the lines laid down by Lord Rosebery, and has always been most cautious both in assertion and suggestion. Imperial unity has been its watchword. Its organiz-

ation is a protest against everything that tends, directly or indirectly, overtly or secretly, towards the disintegration of the Empire. "It is not," says the circular of inquiry which we have just received—"it is not, as many suppose, one of the functions of the League to propound a new constitution for the British Empire. No scheme worthy of the name is possible, without consulting every interest involved, and no attempt should be made to formulate a scheme except by properly constituted authority, after obtaining the fullest information respecting the wants and wishes of the several communities concerned. Nothing could be more definitely assuring against any contemplated surprise on our liberties than these plain, honest words.

But surely when we uphold the unity of the Empire we should be prepared to give a reason for our faith in the Imperial bond, as against any rival scheme. Some of us, it is true, would be content, with an unquestioning allegiance, to remain Britons simply because we are Britons and could never be anything else. But ours is a complex nationality. An important section of our population is British only by adoption, and attached to the British Constitution on account of the popular liberties and impartial administration which it secures. Others are attached to our very mild monarchical régime because, in practice, it is more thoroughly and consistently democratic than that of more than one republic. A good many, moreover, are conservative from habit, and dislike change. But, while sentiment is a strong force in human relations, self-interest is with the mass of the people still stronger, and it behoves all enlightened and patriotic Canadians not only to keep in mind the boons of liberty and order that we enjoy under our present dispensation, but to aid in every possible way in making known how our relations with the rest of the Empire may be rendered most advantageous to us, both as communities and individuals. The questions proposed in the circular to which we have referred deserve the thoughtful study of all Canadians who have the interests of their country at heart. The general problem to which they relate—how Imperial unity may be made more real and more fruitful of good to all parts of the Empire, and how and to what extent the great self-governing division, like the Dominion, should be given a voice in the direction of Imperial policy and the management of Imperial affairs—is by no means easy of solution. But solved in some fashion it must be, and it is our duty to give it careful attention. Elsewhere in this issue our readers will find the questions which the Ottawa branch has addressed to the public.

In connection with the subject, we would urge on our readers the importance, at the present juncture in our economic history, of devoting more attention than has hitherto been usual to the resources and capabilities of the other portions of the Empire, more especially with reference to the interchange of commodities with ourselves. We fear that the knowledge possessed by the average Canadian of the natural products and manufactures of the other parts of the Queen's dominions falls lamentably short of what, in regard to our own interests, it ought to be. It would be well, indeed, if in our schools and higher centres of education more attention were devoted to economic geography. In the commercial and in some sections of the scientific departments it ought to have a prominent place as a branch of study. Of course, a thorough acquaintance with the great physical and economic features of our own half of this continent is of primary importance, to this the study of the West Indies, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and India, as well as of those foreign countries with which Canada might reasonably hope to have mercantile dealings being complementary. Far too seldom has the British Empire been studied, as a whole, with the zeal and national pride that our neighbours are wont to bring to the history and geography of the United States. We purpose, in future issues, to give a share of our time and space to the elucidation of this subject—a subject on which Mr. J. Castell Hopkins has already contributed some excellent papers.