

desire to make Australia a white man's country. They are really fighting for their own existence because if the Japanese once get a foot-hold, they will invade the country in millions. The contest for the island continent is natural and inevitable. Nothing but connection with some strong European power can save Australia for the Australians. Their best statesmen know it; they realise it as few Canadians seem to realise how vitality important British connection is to Canadian independence. Germany would, no doubt, be glad to assume the protection of Australia; but we do not believe a dozen Australians could be found who would prefer any European protection to that of England. The time may come when Australia will be strong enough to stand alone, but it will not want to do so. It has a grander destiny as an important part of the world's greatest Empire.

Ireland's Population. The preliminary census statistics now published place the population of Ireland at 4,381,951. How this compares with past censuses is shown by the following:

1821.	6,801,827	1881.	5,174,836
1841.	8,175,124	1901.	4,458,775
1861.	5,798,967	1911.	4,381,951

The rate of decrease during the last ten years, it will be seen, has been lower than formerly. When agitation ceases, and confidence is restored and industries are developed throughout the country, we believe that the population of that dear little island will increase, and that there will be a bright future before it.

Ex-President Diaz. Ex-President Diaz has left Mexico, but he is apparently convinced that he will return. The country has prospered during his presidency, and it has gained the confidence of investors. Canadians are now largely interested in Mexico and are naturally anxious that the new President should be able to inspire the same confidence as his predecessor. Though, as has been pointed out in THE CHRONICLE on previous occasions, there is, in our opinion, an ample field for investment in Canada, without going so far away. The differences in the constitution and in the history of the two countries and their methods of government are too well known to be dwelt upon.

Twin Nuisances. We would be sorry to see anything done that would increase the danger to the workmen engaged upon the mammoth building at the north-west corner of St. James and St. Francois Xavier streets. But building science is not all it is cracked up to be if they cannot be warned when a beam

is to be hoisted without making noise enough to raise the dead. Further, it cannot be pretended that the frightful output of smoke is necessary for the safety of the workman. It certainly is not essential to the comfort of the people who have offices on St. James street. This smoke nuisance has become intolerable and would, we venture to say, not be permitted in any other important city on the Continent. The use of soft coal or slack should be prohibited.

Fire Prevention in New York. In the very interesting letter from our New York correspondent, which appears on another page, attention is called to several recent insurance developments of importance in that centre, including the discussion regarding the adoption of a new building code in the city. The existing building by-laws in New York are evidently no more perfect than those in Montreal, and the facts stated by our correspondent are such as to suggest that the matter is of the utmost importance, to the public as well as to the fire companies.

Royal Exchange in Danger. The Royal Exchange, London, was once more threatened by fire on Wednesday. During the terrible thunderstorm which visited the metropolis and killed seven people on Derby Day (five of them at Epsom Downs) an electric wire in the Exchange was fused and a small fire started. The first Royal Exchange started by Sir Thomas Gresham in 1566, in imitation of the Antwerp Bourse, was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666, just a hundred years later. The building which succeeded it was also destroyed by fire in 1838. The present Royal Exchange, which cost £150,000, was inaugurated by Queen Victoria, January 1st, 1845, having been commenced in 1842.

The Census. The Census Commissioners are right and perfectly reasonable in bespeaking courteous treatment for their enumerators from the public. The work is an important one and the men engaged on it should have the cordial co-operation of the people they call upon for information. If there are unnecessary or irritating questions in some of the schedules, that is not the fault of the enumerators. Moreover, it is well to bear in mind that while the Government has no legitimate concern with the private business of individuals, the collation of statistics regarding the business of the people as a whole may be very much in the public interest. The greatest kickers against the "impertinent curiosity" of the questions might be among the first to kick if the general information were not forthcoming.