

—was in venturing upon rash denials without having the facts fully before him. On the other hand both Mr. Craig and Mr. Meredith are to some extent open to the charge of want of generosity, if not of candour, in refusing to give Mr. Ross credit for the steps he had taken in the direction indicated, long before the matter was brought up in the House. It is well that Mr. Craig and his leader have had the wisdom to withdraw from their unreasonable demand that English should be made the sole language of instruction, even in cases in which it is to the pupils an unknown tongue. In contending that the use of French as a medium of communication should be discontinued at the earliest possible moment, and especially in opposing the instruction of French children in their own language, they are taking a narrow view and an untenable position. The evidence goes to show that in the great majority of cases French parents are more than willing that their children should be taught English; but to compel such parents to pay school-taxes and then deny them the right of having their children instructed also in their own mother tongue would be unjust and tyrannical. The other questions involved are matters of detail, relating to the manner of giving effect to conclusions upon which all are agreed. There is a good deal to be said in favour of the view that it is better that the decisions of the Legislature on questions of principle should be embodied in distinct acts, rather than left to be carried into effect by Departmental regulations. A regulation, when sanctioned by the House, may have all the authority of an act, but it is liable in practice to have more of the unpleasant savour of arbitrariness. At the same time it needs to be borne in mind that an act will no more enforce itself than a regulation. Either is effective only as it is enforced.

SOME law of association brings up the thought of the approaching decennial census, and the discussion that took place a week or two since in the Commons in regard to it. Surely the Government will not fail to amend their method in the two important respects suggested on that occasion. If the population of Canada is increasing with reasonable speed nothing but good can result from having the fact placed beyond dispute. If, on the other hand, the increase in population is less than it should be, it is equally desirable that the truth should be known and established. Nothing is to be gained by living in a fool's paradise. No one can seriously doubt, we think, that the *de jure* system used in the census-taking in 1881 is delusive. It would be delusive even with the strict time-limit recommended by some one, since many of those whose departure dated within that limit might still be no longer fairly entitled to rank as Canadian citizens. On the other hand the *de jure* system has much to recommend it, and were it absolutely necessary to choose between that and the *de facto* system, it is quite possible that the former should be chosen as giving a nearer approximation to the truth than the latter. What is wanted is evidently a combination of the two systems, as Mr. Blake suggested. Why not? The additional column could not add very largely to the expense, while the two sets of figures side by side would greatly increase the interest and the value of the statistics. Again the failure to recognize Canada as a country fit for any of its citizens to be born in, indicates an excess of colonial modesty which is both unpatriotic and harmful. By all means let us know from decade to decade how many Canadians are really natives, and in what Provinces they were born. We are not sure that it would not also be well to record the place of birth of their parents. We talk much of the weakness of Canadian national sentiment, and yet frame our own statistics in such a way as to encourage even the sons of the soil to look to the home of their ancestors as their native land. Now that their attention has been called to the matter we cannot doubt that the Government will remedy this grave defect in taking the census of 1891.

IT was estimated by Mr. McMillan, Emigration Commissioner of the Manitoba Government, in his examination before the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Civilization, that at least 12,000 of the immigrants who settled in Manitoba during the last year were from Ontario. Those who have paid some attention to the movement that is just now in progress can scarcely resist the conclusion that a larger number will move westward from this Province during the present season. We do not mention the fact to bewail it. The farmers of Ontario and the Eastern Provinces, like all other citizens, have a perfect right to go where they think they can do

better for themselves and their families. Those who go to the North-west are, happily, not lost to the Dominion. On the contrary, if their expectations are realized, any increase of prosperity they may gain from the change will redound to the benefit of the whole Dominion. It would ill become us to take a sectional view of the matter and we are not in the least disposed to do so. We want to see the great fertile plains of the North-west rapidly becoming occupied and cultivated, and we have no doubt that those who go thither from the older provinces are, on the whole, the very best class of settlers. But it would be worse than folly, nevertheless, to shut our eyes to the fact that the total population of Canada is not increased by such migrations. Are the places of those sturdy farmers who are going out from amongst us by the hundred being taken by other settlers of an equally valuable class coming in from abroad, or are they simply left vacant? The question is certainly a serious one. If the oldest and richest province is really losing in agricultural population, if it is even remaining stationary, a searching inquiry into causes and remedies should be at once instituted. Unhappily, under present conditions, such an investigation is well-nigh hopeless, since, even should a Parliamentary Committee or Commission be constituted, the survey would almost surely be made through party spectacles, and the report be pretty sure to reflect the partisan hue of those who proposed it.

THE Indian Councils Bill, which passed its second reading in the British House of Lords a few weeks since, is, as was to be expected, a very conservative and cautious measure. If intended as in any sense a concession to the demands of the Native Indian Congress, it is clearly doomed to failure. Mr. Hume, the general secretary of the Congress, has written to a Bombay paper denouncing the Bill as "worse than useless" and "an insult to the country." The chief objects of the Bill, as explained by Lord Cross, are in the first place to enlarge the powers of the Viceroy's Legislative Council by allowing the Budget to be discussed as a matter of course, whereas at present, the functions of the Council being strictly legislative, it can be discussed only when some change of the law is involved. In the second place the Bill in question concedes to the Council a restricted right of interpellation, such as it has not hitherto possessed. A third feature is the proposal to increase the *maximum* number of non-official or legislative members of the Governor General's Council and also of the Provincial Councils. The intention is, as explained by Lord Cross, to strengthen the native element in all these Councils and to widen the sphere of Government selection. But when it is borne in mind that these members are all nominated or appointed, it will be seen at once that none of the provisions of the Bill contain even an earnest of anything in the shape of representation. In fact the one point upon which the British lords on both sides of the House are thoroughly agreed is that anything having even the semblance of representative institutions is quite out of the question. Lord Kimberley, who was Secretary of State for India in Mr. Gladstone's administration, is quite as emphatic on this point as his Tory successors. It must be obvious to every one who stops to consider India's immense diversity of races, languages, creeds and castes, divided by climate, habit and traditions, and now held together, as the *Times* puts it, "only by the strong hand of a benevolent despotism," how utterly hopeless would be the task of attempting at present to frame a constitution under which all, or the great majority, could exercise even a modicum of self-governing power. Well might Lord Kimberley reject the notion of having a representation of all classes and races in that vast country as "utterly chimerical," "one of the wildest that ever entered into the heart of man." Evidently if the Indian populations are ever to have free institutions they must get them piecemeal, and no faster than the different classes and races can be educated up to them. Lord Kimberley, with seeming inconsistency, regretted that the elective element had not been somehow introduced into both the Provincial and the Supreme Councils. Lord Salisbury's reply is clearly logical, taking Lord Kimberley's own premises. He fears to introduce even the thinnest edge of the elective franchise. "Wherever in Europe," he said, "it has made for itself a small channel, it has been able to widen and widen the channel gradually until it has carried all before it." That is unquestionably what might be expected in India. But can such a consummation be prevented? Will not the demand for representation gain in momentum year by year until it becomes irresistible? That is clearly the present tendency. Lord Salisbury should follow out

his metaphor, and explain how it is possible to prevent a steadily rising reservoir from eventually making a channel for itself, unless at the risk of a general inundation.

THE Irish Land Bill introduced by Mr. Balfour in the British Commons is undoubtedly a most complicated as well as a most extraordinary measure. That it must have required patient and protracted study of no ordinary kind, as well as genius of a high order, to elaborate its provisions, is generally admitted. We have hitherto refrained from comment because discussion of such a Bill, with no better basis of knowledge than summaries by cable, would be both presumption and folly. Even now, with the fuller reports and discussions of the British press before us, it will evidently be wise for critics at a distance, without expert knowledge of the Irish question, to await the fuller Parliamentary discussion before forming any very decided opinions as to the workableness or worthlessness of the scheme. The prime feature of the Bill is its proposal to pledge the public credit on a grand scale—if necessary up to a total of £33,000,000—to enable Irish tenants to purchase their holdings. There can be of course no compulsion of either buyer or seller, but the aim is to make the bait so tempting that both parties will be eager to seize it. Preliminaries being satisfactorily attended to in a given case, an order will be issued, the effect of which will be to convert the tenant into the owner of the property, subject to payment, for a term of forty-nine years, of an annual charge equal to four per cent. upon the amount advanced by the Land Department for the property. This payment to the former owner is to be made in Government stock bearing interest at two and three-fourths per cent., and not redeemable for thirty years. One-fifth of the purchase money is to be withheld, as under the Ashbourne Acts. The landlord will thus have obtained a saleable security, as good as consols, which he may convert into cash, if so disposed, to the value of four-fifths of his property. The result in brief is, if Mr. Balfour's reasonings are valid, that the landlord who wishes to sell gets a fair price at once for his property, the tenant who wishes to buy is enabled to do so on easy terms, and the State which supplies the capital, or rather the credit, by which the transaction is brought about, is absolutely free from risk while performing this great service to both parties. How this immunity of the State from risk is to be secured is not made quite clear in the outline before us, though it appears that certain moneys to which Ireland is legally entitled are to be held as a guarantee fund for the purpose, and that, amongst others, the sums due annually as education grant and poor-rate are to be made available for indemnification.

THE scheme in outline has an attractive look, such as might make one, at first, sanguine that Irish troubles and discontent will soon be abolished, and poverty and disorder give place to rural plenty and contentment. But examination in detail does much to dispel the glamour. There are certain practical tests which are comparatively easy of application. First in importance, from the point of view of the British tax-payer, is the question of security for the immense amount of capital pledged. What, in the first place, is the probability that the poor peasants, utterly unable as many of them are to pay the rents now charged, can be relied on to pay the £80 per cent. of the amount of those rents, which would be about the amount required under the scheme, for the first five years, or even the £68 per cent. which will be required for the remaining forty-four years? Considering the condition in which they would find the average farm at the time of taking them over, there seems small probability that the majority would be able to make the annual payments. In case of failure, what follows? Would the British Government really withhold the poor-rate money and the education grant in order to guard itself against the threatened loss? Would the British nation save itself from pecuniary damage by depriving the Irish children of their education, and Irish paupers of the bread which stands between them and suffering or actual starvation? To do so would be a refinement of cruelty, and a grievous moral as well as political wrong, against which the conscience of the nation would revolt. But if, on the other hand, such a security would never be made available in practice, the guarantee is itself clearly delusive. Another test is supplied in the question whether the Act, assuming it to be in successful operation, would really relieve the portion of the population most in need of relief. What has it for the farm labourer? What for other classes even lower in the scale of hopelessness and destitution? Would not its effect be simply to substi-