

the same proportion as they are in Canada.¹ Ticino, Valais, Luzern and Freiburg are almost all Roman Catholic, just as Vaud, Neuchâtel, Shaffhausen, Bern and Zürich are almost all Protestant. In other cantons the people are fairly divided between the two denominations. In the federal assembly the French, German and Italian languages are freely used in the debates and proceedings. Switzerland in the course of her eventful history, has had to pass the ordeal of many feuds and trials, from which Canada has been happily spared since the trouble of 1837-38. The geographical situation of Switzerland, in the midst of different races and religions, has made her necessarily an arena of conflict in times of religious strife and controversy in Europe. This strife has raged on her own soil with great intensity. The history of the Reformation is associated with the history of Switzerland, and the names of Knox and Calvin must always cling to the old town of Geneva. We see the result of the religious dissensions that have excited the cantons like other parts of Europe for centuries in the fact that the constitution expressly interdicts the Jesuits from coming into the country. The same prohibition is extended to other religious bodies whose action may be considered dangerous to the state or liable to disturb the peace between sects. No bishopric can be created upon Swiss territory without the consent of the confederation, and the foundation of new convents and orders is forbidden. The constitution at the same time declares in general terms that freedom of conscience and belief is inviolable; that the exercise of civil or political rights cannot be abridged by any provisions or conditions whatever of an ecclesiastical or religious kind. The cantons and the confederation may take suitable measures for the preservation of public order between the members of different religious bodies and also against any encroachments of ecclesiastical authorities upon the rights of citizens or those of the states. Switzerland, indeed, despite the broad enunciation of religious freedom laid down in her constitution, shows no such liberal spirit as Canada in all matters of religion. The latter permits all religious sects to pursue the even tenor of their way, and can interfere in no respect with their recognized rights and privileges as long as its members keep within the limits of their authorized jurisdiction and do not infringe the laws of the Dominion. The Salvationist has been as free as the Roman Catholic to pursue the peculiar methods of his curious religious system. This principle has been practically the governing principle in Canada since it came under British dominion. Religious freedom has always kept pace with the extension of political rights ever since 1774. The Quebec act, we know, was a recognition of the rights of Roman Catholics in Canada long before the same body was relieved from old disabilities in Great Britain.² It is only on this basis of complete religious freedom and equality that Canada could have been so long happily governed, and the moment we depart from its principle the happiness and peace we have so long enjoyed must be seriously disturbed.

No country in the world has had greater difficulties to surmount than this confederation of cantons that have been struggling for centuries among the mountains to preserve their local institutions and to maintain their independence in the face of the aggressive powers which hem them in on every side. Their history from its beginning is a record

¹ The census of 1888 showed that there were in Switzerland 1,724,257 Protestants and 1,190,008 Roman Catholics. In Canada the census of 1881 showed the Protestants to number 2,439,188 and the Roman Catholics 1,791,892. The new census shortly to be taken is not likely to alter this proportion.

² *supra*, p. 18.