

ROMANISM IN CANADA.

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It is estimated that Canada has five times as much fertile area as Britain and France, which support eighty millions of people, and, should, therefore, be capable of sustaining a population five times as large as theirs. Its resources of all kinds are practically inexhaustible, and its commercial relations and connections with other countries are being rapidly developed. Many lines of first-class ships and ocean steamers are engaged in the carrying trade of the St. Lawrence; and the Canadian Pacific Railway, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific—the construction of which in a few years gave proof of the spirit and energy of the people—furnishes the shortest highway by more than a thousand miles across this Continent between Liverpool and Hong Kong. The provinces of the Dominion are united under one federal government, and were drawn into this union, in spite of differences of race, creed and local interests, in a time of profound peace, and without an appeal to the stern logic of war. So far as the constitution, the theory and principles of responsible government are concerned, there is no serious grievance of which to complain. With a single exception, to which attention will presently be directed, the people of all the provinces enjoy the fullest measure of civil and religious liberty and the advantages of admirable education and municipal institutions. But the country is in its infancy, with a population of only between five and six millions, and because this is the case, and it is certain in the near future to have five times that number, the consideration of the great forces—social, political, educational, and religious—which mould the national life is a matter of the utmost importance. We propose, therefore, to consider Romanism as one of these potent forces, and in doing so we shall have to deal chiefly with the Province of Quebec and its French population of over one million; for while Romanism is spread more or less over the whole Dominion, it is most persistent in its propagandism. In all places, it is here concentrated in full force, possesses dominant power, and has had a career of more than two centuries—surely surely sufficient time to enable us to judge of its outcome. The Roman Catholic Church is established by law in

the Province of Quebec, and possesses endowments and other sources of revenue of untold value. Her legal status, in a general sense, can be readily determined, but it is extremely difficult—indeed, utterly impossible to obtain full information as to her possessions and income. The policy of the Church of Rome in all things is secrecy. While she publicly anathematizes secret societies, her whole machinery, which in Canada is passing into the hands of Ultramontanists, is moved by invisible springs. Her methods of business are as subtle as her casuistry and theology. Protestant Churches, Banking-Houses, Benevolent Institutions, and Civil Governments stately publish their income and expenditure; but the Romish Hierarchy spreads a veil of darkness over all such matters. In 1862 the writer addressed a letter to a distinguished statesman, asking for information as to the resources of the Church, and received in answer this statement: "I regret to say that no compilation has ever been made up of the endowments of the Church of Rome in Canada. It ought to have been done long ago, and should be done still. Had these endowments been in Upper Canada, no doubt it would have been done long ago; but the Protestants of Lower Canada, as I suspect you will find out, are exceedingly civil to Romanism. In Smith's 'History of Canada' you will find a list of the lands held by the Roman Catholic Church at the Conquest; but as to her acquisitions since from public grants and private bequests I know of no mode by which you can arrive at it? A committee of the House of Assembly could lay all bare, but where is the man in Parliament who dare move for it? And if he did, how many votes would he get? Half a dozen, perhaps, vehement abuse from the Roman Catholics, and the cold shoulder from sagacious Protestants as a very violent man."

The author of this statement was not ignorant or irresolute. He was a man of force and penetration, and well inured to the strifes and tumults of the political arena; yet here is a task which he acknowledges should be performed, but which neither he nor any other public man in Canada is fit to accomplish because of the deference shown to the political power of the Hierarchy. The grants of land to which herifers amount in all to 2,117,119 acres. This is exclusive of private gifts, and of much real estate obtained, from