

lies, but also towards us Protestants. I refer more immediately to the manifesto by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Montreal, but remotely, though not less directly, to the ecclesiastical pressure which has been put upon the press of the country, and the claim advanced, with ever-increasing arrogance, to the right of the Roman Catholic Church and its hierarchy to control and direct the scope of political action and public law within the Province of Quebec, treating it as their own peculiar domain, and regarding us as strangers and aliens, holding no status of our own, but simply tolerated in their midst.

These pretensions we could afford to view with indifference, if they were only those of a few ambitious priests; but, unfortunately, the Vatican Decrees have announced, as the future policy of the Church of Rome, the complete subordination of all the members of that communion to the control and direction of the Pope. And the celebrated Syllabus sufficiently discloses the design that the regulation of faith and morals is to be extended to embrace the whole field of human thought and action.

That these views and ulterior aims are repugnant to the convictions of by far the larger number of the Roman Catholic clergy of Lower Canada, I firmly believe. Many years of intimate acquaintance with them long since satisfied me that, as a body, they were highly estimable men, conscientious and scrupulous in the discharge of their duties, and tolerant of the claims of others. As a natural consequence, a freedom of thought sprang up among the laity, and was shewn in the public utterances of their press, which held forth the hope that the liberal views of the so-called Gallican Church would ever prevail in Lower Canada, and that Protestant and Catholic would alike respect their several opinions, cordially uniting in all that concerned the prosperity of their common country, without either Church claiming undue supremacy, or introducing the fatal element of religious strife.

These expectations, I regret to say, cannot, I think, be any longer safely held, nor ought we to accept the