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IF the sensational telegrams from Newfoundland are not pure fabrications, which is hardly supposable, the situation in that Island is really very serious. We do not refer particularly to the threats of immediate heroic measures, either sanguinary as against the French aggressors, or revolutionary as against the Mother Country, but to the general effect, not only upon the condition of the Islanders, but upon the future of the colonial relation. It is most unfortunate from every point of view, and must be specially discouraging to those who cherish dreams of strengthening and perpetuating the bonds uniting Great Britain with her American colonies, that each of those colonies should have an inveterate and seemingly irreconcilable difficulty with a great foreign nation. In the case of Newfoundland it is not easy to foresee the issue. Every one can sympathize with the intense indignation which every citizen is said to feel at the thought of seeing important and, to a certain extent, exclusive territorial rights on their own shores given over to another people. The thing is an outrage upon every local sentiment, to say nothing of its bearing upon important material interests. But what the Newfoundlander cannot, we suppose, be expected to consider, is the right and wrong of the matter according to treaty. If these rights are secured to France under the old bond, the fact that they are ruinous to the industries and repugnant to the feelings of the Islanders cannot abrogate the treaty, or cancel the French claim. And this is, of course, what the British Government has to consider. Her representatives in former days may have sworn to the hurt of the present colonists, but their successors cannot now, in honour, repudiate the oath. Of course the Island Government and people are very sure that the treaty conveys no such rights as are now claimed by France, and temporarily conceded in the *modus vivendi*, and it must be admitted that, in the absence of the other side of the argument, their view seems very plausible. On the merits of that question we cannot venture an opinion, though it is hard to conceive that the Salisbury Government would concede so much, even for an hour, had the matter been so one-sided as the enraged colonists seem to think. The fact that the Newfoundland Government was not even consulted is certainly exasperating, but is easily explained on the supposition that the British Government, having decided that it was either right or politic to

make the arrangement, knew well, by past experience, that to ask the colony's consent would be useless, while its refusal and bitter opposition would only complicate the matter. Nevertheless, it is clear that if the Mother Country had really cared much for the welfare and goodwill of the colonists she would have endeavoured to settle the French claim and, if need be, buy its relinquishment at almost any cost, in the interests of international peace and colonial loyalty and prosperity.

A PART, however, from any question as to the true interpretation of the Treaty of Utrecht, it is certainly too much to expect that the people of Newfoundland should acquiesce in any settlement which, as Sir Charles Dilke says, would "involve the exclusion of the British population of a British Colony from the occupation of the soil and from the working of mines in a large portion of the interior." The question then arises, "What can they do?" Resist the French operations *vi et armis*, as the hot-headed are said to be advising? The idea is absurd, inasmuch as, to say nothing of the inability of a few thousand colonists to cope with France, the British Government would be bound to carry out the agreement and prevent any violence. The only argument in favour of so desperate a course is that based on the hope that the effect would be to arouse the British people to interest themselves in the matter. It might be supposed that they would hardly be quiet spectators while their ships were being used to compel their own colonists to submit to the domination of a foreign nation on their own soil. "Let Newfoundland join the Dominion," say some super-loyal Canadians. Such advice must imply, we suppose, either that Canada will fight the battle of the Islanders on her own account, which is absurd, or that her greater influence will prevail with the British Government to do for her what it refuses to do for Newfoundland, which is far from complimentary to Great Britain. Renounce British connection, and appeal for aid to the United States? There are many unlikely conditions involved in such a proposal. Yet it is perhaps not quite so chimerical as it might at first thought appear. Would Great Britain consent? It is hard to say. There would be a strong repugnance on the part of many of her people to retaining the colony by force, after failing to preserve intact the territorial rights of the colonists. Moreover, a good many would be willing to get rid of an island of small value as the easiest way out of a vexatious difficulty. Would the United States accept the proffered allegiance and undertake the quarrel with France? It is very unlikely, in any case, and almost out of the question without England's consent. At the same time the appeal would, for various reasons, come home powerfully to the American politicians and people. It would tickle the national vanity immensely. The island is the key to an important position. Its acquisition would be a step in the direction of "manifest destiny." France would be less arrogant with the United States than with England, and the United States would be, perhaps, more determined with France because of the freedom of the great American Republic from the dread of European complications. But it is useless to multiply conjectures, especially as it is quite probable that the situation is not so serious as alleged, or that the ebullition of outraged interest and sentiment may soon exhaust itself, and the people resign themselves to a situation which, however hard, they cannot help. We can only await developments, watching the effect upon the British Parliament and people of an agitation which may any day have a parallel in Canada.

WHAT is legitimate patronage? When the Ontario Government is accused of wasting the people's money by multiplying registrarships, Premier Mowat retorts that his opponents wish to deprive the Government of some of its patronage. A despatch from one of the Maritime Provinces assigns the unwillingness of the Local Government to give up some of its patronage as the reason for its refusal to bring about the abolition of the Legislative Council. Patronage is regarded as one of the strongholds of the Ottawa Government, and is even said to be the cause of jealousies amongst the Cabinet Ministers. The general tenor of all such discussions seems to take it for granted that there is such a thing as legitimate patronage,

which is one of the rights or perquisites of the men in office, and that it is the abuse, not the use of this means of influence which is to be deprecated. All this must mean, if it means anything, that the power of appointment to civil offices, which is vested in the members of the Government, is not simply a trust to be conscientiously used for the good of the country but also a means of private advantage, by which the man using it may be enabled to enlarge the sphere of his personal influence, and help to keep himself and his party in power. To what a low ebb have our politics fallen when such ideas can be countenanced and approved on both sides of the House. Is it, then, only a myth or a tradition that the Executive of the country are the servants of the people, and that the Minister or other high officer who makes even the most insignificant appointment to office, on any other basis than that of fitness, proves unfaithful to a solemn trust? It will be said, no doubt, that fitness is not disregarded in appointments, and that the honourable party principle is that, other things being equal, the Minister is justified in giving a lucrative office to a political supporter rather than to a political opponent. But the trouble is that other things are seldom equal, and were it otherwise, the fact that the officer who has the patronage is keeping in mind some considerations other than those of the public interest is putting it out of his own power to decide simply with a view to the public well-being.

FROM the logical standpoint the conclusion reached by the Ontario Government and embodied in the Tax Exemption Bill, as a result of its inquiries in regard to the subject, is a most lame and impotent one. What possible reason can be given why the land on which a church is built should be taxed for local improvements, and not for general municipal purposes, or why the land should be taxed and the buildings exempted, and so forth? Nevertheless, as practical legislation, the Bill is, doubtless, a step in the right direction. Surely every clergyman in town and city must feel gratified that an undeserved stigma has at length been wiped out, and that he is henceforth to take his stand side by side with his fellow citizens as one able and willing to bear his share of the burdens of citizenship. Now that a commencement has been made, the process of wiping out unjust exemptions and putting all citizens and all property on an equality in respect to municipal rights and duties, will be extended until it can no longer be said that any citizen, no matter what his creed or nationality, is forced by law to contribute directly or indirectly to the support of institutions in which he does not believe. It is gratifying too, to observe that the movement is being forwarded, not mainly by such classes as those just alluded to, who suffer the wrong, but by the churches, or some of them, which themselves profit by the exemptions. Within the last few weeks petitions have been presented to the Legislatures at Ottawa, Toronto and Quebec, praying on behalf of a convention of delegates, representing the Baptists of the two provinces, that all tax-exemptions, all grants to denominational institutions of every kind, and everything in the nature of the support of religion by the State be done away with, and all citizens thus put on a footing of perfect equality before the law. The example is worthy of imitation.

THREE points of considerable importance are involved in the question of the Schools in the French districts, which were the subject of an animated debate during the closing hours of the session of the Ontario Assembly. These pertain to the teaching of English, the language of instruction, and the teaching of French. It can scarcely be denied that Mr. Craig and Mr. Meredith succeeded in convicting the Minister of Education of a certain amount of recklessness of statement, to say the least, touching the first point, in his statement in the House during the session of 1888-89. All are agreed that English should be taught efficiently in every public school in the Province. Mr. Craig did a public service in calling attention to the fact, a fact that was fully confirmed by the Report of the Commission, that in a few schools English could scarcely be said to be taught at all, and in others was far from being effectively taught. Mr. Ross' mistake—and it is a very serious mistake in one occupying an official position, because it tends to impair confidence in future statements