

The *Toronto Mail* of that date said:—

“Colonel O’Brien has acquitted himself well. His resolution in amendment to the motion of supply pronounces the Jesuit Acts unconstitutional, first, because the endowment of the Order is a departure from the principle of religious equality and at variance with the view that there should be no connection between Church and State in Canada which was set forth by the Legislature forty years ago; secondly, because by the Act of endowment a foreign potentate is authorized to interfere in our domestic affairs; and, lastly, because the incorporation and endowment of this Order, which has been expelled from many European countries for various high offences, is contrary to public policy. Col. O’Brien supported these propositions in a clear and forcible speech, which will be read with great interest. His arguments on the question of public policy are, in our opinion, unanswerable, as is also his contention that the payment of the Jesuit claim was in direct contravention of the act of the King of Britain in escheating their derelict estates, which act the Legislature had over and over again confirmed, although it required no confirmation. Col. O’Brien deserves the thanks of the community for the manly and independent course he has pursued. He has set an example to the other Ontario members which it is to be hoped, for their own sake, they will follow.”

The *Telegram* thus referred to the same incident: “He did more than any other man to acquaint Ottawa with the rare virtue of Parliamentary independence.”

Recently the *Mail and Empire* said: “During the fourteen years of his career in the House of Commons no member commanded a greater measure of respect from his colleagues on both sides of the House, and from those holding a different faith, than did Col. O’Brien. It was felt by all that his opposition was based not on prejudice or opportunism, but on a firm belief that, in taking the course he did, he was serving the best interests of the country.”

The protest which arose resulted in the “Equal Rights” movement, which stirred the Dominion from end to end and aroused the conscience of the people as nothing has done from the time of Confederation up to the present war.

In 1896 Mr. O’Brien supported D’Alton McCarthy in his opposition to the Manitoba Remedial School Bill, by which Sir Charles Tupper’s Government sought to coerce Manitoba into