

## CANADA AND THE JESUITS.

THE Legislature of Quebec the other day passed an Act authorizing the payment of four hundred thousand dollars (about 80,000*l.* sterling) out of the public funds to the Society of Jesus. The payment was alleged to be paid by way of composition for the lands which, after the suppression of the Order in the last century, had remained in the hands of the Crown, but to which it was assumed that the Order still had a claim. The sum of sixty thousand dollars for Protestant education was tendered as a sop to the Protestants of the Province. The Act formally submitted the settlement for sanction to the Pope, whose authority was thus recognized in Canadian legislation.

This Act affected to be framed with a view to quieting doubts about the title to the estates and the right of the Province to dispose of them. This pretence was baseless, if it was not ironical. The estates had passed to the Province from the Crown impressed with a direction in favour of public education. Into the hands of the Crown they had passed really upon the cession of Canada by France, when only the endowments of the secular clergy were guaranteed by the Treaty, and when the Crown was specially advised by the Solicitor-General, Wedderburne, on a reference to him by the Privy Council, not to allow the Jesuits to retain their estates; but at all events on the suppression of the Order by the Pope in 1773. In stating that they had been confiscated by the Crown the Act stated what was untrue. To suppose that the refoundation of the Order could revive its title to its old estates is preposterous, and the claim would be scouted by any Roman Catholic Government in Europe. The sop tendered to the Protestants would have been superfluous had the claim of the Jesuits been real.

There are now left in the Province of Quebec only two or at most three constituencies Protestant in such a sense that their members are not afraid of the Catholic vote. Two members of the Legislature protested. To divide would have been futile, and the Act consequently passed without a division.

But by the time that the Provincial Act reached the Dominion Government public feeling in the British Province of Ontario had been aroused. All Acts of the Provincial Legislatures are subject to the veto of the Dominion Government, to be exercised within a year. It was demanded that the veto should be put upon a Provincial Act which endowed Jesuitism and recognized the authority of the Pope, besides contravening the principle of religious equality by the endowment out of public funds of a particular religion, and not only of a particular religion but of an offensively propagandist Order. The leading Liberal and Independent journals opened fire, and a menacing movement commenced in the Orange Order, which for a long time past had been successfully controlled by Government influence and patronage, its Grand Master having been made a member of the Cabinet for that purpose, and had been turned into an ancillary engine of the Tory party.

The Government, to which the support of the French Catholics is indispensable, and which in fact has its basis in Quebec, tried to quell the storm by advising the Governor-General at once to signify his allowance of the Act. This was unconstitutional, since the British North America Act provides that the Acts of the Provincial Legislatures shall lie before the Dominion Government subject to veto for a year, while those of the Dominion Legislature are to lie before the Home

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