

Quebec Home Rule, the Protestants of that Province looked to him for guidance. He had his doubts as to what might happen when the check Ontario supplied was removed, and it was not until he had received what he considered ample assurances and guarantees for the protection of the minority that he advised acceptance of Confederation. Had he counselled otherwise, the Protestants of Quebec would have resisted the dissolution of the Union. This eminent political leader, clear-sighted and disinterested, when he had seen the result of a few years' experience of separation from Ontario, confessed he had been mistaken, and regretted the advice he had given. "The conclusion is stable," he wrote, "from the nature of the means employed, that a deep-laid plan exists for the complete subjugation of the Province of Quebec to ecclesiastical rule." So wrote the statesman when Quebec had been separated from Ontario only thirteen years. Had he been spared to see the developments of the following thirty years, his worst fears would have been confirmed. Where circumstances favour the Church of Rome, in any country where her followers form the majority, government by the people becomes nominal—the priesthood rule, and rule for their own aggrandisement and that of their Church. When Quebec was granted Home Rule it ceased to be British, it became Papal—give Ireland Home Rule and the like result will follow.

No limit can be set to a power that lays claim to universal sway; no agreement will stand made with men who claim Divine attributes. It is distressing to say this, yet if Catholics will fairly consider the position of Protestants they cannot complain. When they choose to subject their freedom of action to a secret organisation, to blindly do what a fellow-being orders them, are Protestants to blame in refusing to deal with them as free agents in affairs in which their Church has an interest? They believe

their clergy are a Divine caste, that what they order is not to be questioned, but to be obeyed. Is it not presumption for them to ask those who do not think so, who regard the Sacerdotal claim of their priests as blasphemous, to place themselves in a situation where the will of those priests will rule them? Were the Home Rulers free from entangling spiritual obligations, were they independent, shaping their course as their judgment led them, a Parliament of which they would form a majority would cause no apprehension; but when we know they are not freemen, that they reverence a voice other than that of their own judgment, that, whenever the interests of their Church are concerned, they will vote as their clerical monitors tell them, surely Protestants are justified in standing up and saying decisively, and once for all, that they will sooner die than be governed by a Parliament which is inspired and controlled by the Church of Rome. The instinct of self-preservation dictates that.

EXPERIENCE OF QUEBEC— A WARNING.

A higher incentive is duty to resist claims which trench on those attributes that belong to God alone. The experience of the Province of Quebec is the experience of every country where Catholics are in the majority—the government is not by the people and for the people, but by the priests and for their Church. A Constitutional organisation and forms do not necessarily imply a free government. The common, the easy reply of Home Rulers to the objection here raised is to call those who make it bigots, and to discourse gushingly on the odiousness of bigotry. Now, I hold that whatever Unionists may be, it is not for the Home Rulers to charge them with bigotry. Who is it that claims their Church to be the only true Church, and all other religious organisations to be only pretences? Who is