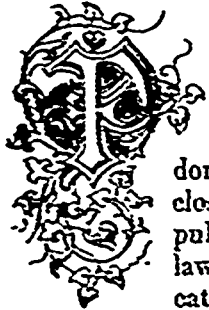


# THE PRESBYTERIAN.

AUGUST, 1865.



PARLIAMENT will soon meet again to discuss the question of Confederation. What has been done since the last session closed, to bring before the public the true aspects of our laws on common school education? We know that, opposing themselves to any improvement, the Roman Catholic Hierarchy maintain their ground by the mere force of possession of the power necessarily belonging to those who have the control of the funds, and who exercise the superintendence over the various officials connected with this department of the public service. We have already pointed out the false move which we believe to have been made by the Committee who took this question into consideration. Events, happening every day only the more strongly confirm us in the belief we have heretofore expressed that, instead of assuming the title of Committee for Protestant Education in Lower Canada, it would have been much better, and the scheme would have been more likely to succeed if the Committee had fairly stated the question as one between the inhabitants of Lower Canada who desire to carry out the Common School laws in their integrity, and those who insist upon appropriating the funds for this object to schools which are in no sense of the term Common Schools, but which are sectarian institutions, designed to promote the progress of a form of religion which we are bound to hold as a corrupt and apostate branch of the Church of Christ. Even supposing, however, that the objection we have made to the constitution of the Committee be groundless, there remains the charge of being satisfied with the isolated efforts they have made against aggressions which are continual and persistent. Since Parliament closed, not a

single step has been taken, nothing has been done to call public attention to the real question at issue, to concentrate the aims and efforts of those who are dissatisfied, and justly so, with the present position of educational management. Great danger exists that, by the continued apathy of those who ought to take the lead in matters of this kind, the present illegal assumption of the funds by the Roman Catholics will become legalised and permanent. Beside a body banded together under one leader, and, however much divided among themselves on other points, united in the determination to hold control of the funds and management of the Board of Education, what has the organization on the other side to show? Two or three meetings, a number of circulars, an application to Parliament, and then a total cessation of everything like effort. Are we prepared, this having been the course adopted, to have this question settled in the present Parliament? If so, what are the terms we expect to get? Are we to go asking that as a favour which we ought to demand as a right? The Romish power has always hitherto taken high ground. The celebrated Encyclical letter shewed that its claims are still as arrogant as ever. In France, Italy, Belgium, even in Spain, the power of the priests has been curbed, their privileges restricted, their claims resisted, and themselves brought more under the control of the civil power, which, heretofore, they had attempted to defy. It is a strange spectacle to see the British population, in a British colony, absolutely suing for some little consideration at the hands of a race whom they have conquered. If the question of education is to be settled in this Parliament, it is time some steps were taken to ascertain upon what basis the settlement is to be made.