

permitted to burke discussion upon it. Moreover, while English journalists of great ability and high repute do not hesitate to discuss the question from all points of view, the same privilege may surely be accorded to native Canadians, who ought not to be threatened, even in jest, with the fate of St. Stephen, for daring to express their honest opinions on the subject.

NOT only on this continent is the status of the Romish Church fast becoming the burning question of the day. A manifesto has just appeared in Berlin signed by over two hundred Evangelical dignitaries, University professors and other persons of note in literature and science from all parts of Germany, urging the formation of an anti-Catholic league. Protestantism, it is said, has always suffered the heaviest losses when the hierarchy has succeeded in coming to an understanding with the State; and the settlement of all party quarrels within the Protestant Church is suggested as absolutely necessary to combat "the aggressive and increasing power of Rome." It really seems as though a time of trial were in store in the near future for the Catholic Church all over the world. In France the direct political power of Rome may be said to be very nearly annihilated. In the German States everywhere any open attempt of ecclesiastics to control the political action of the people raises a storm of indignant denunciation. In Spain and Italy—the least educated portions, perhaps, of Europe—the feeling against clerical dictation is strong, and rapidly growing in force. That the matter is beginning to attract serious attention in the United States is apparent to any one reading the American papers. The Catholic journals especially are getting angry and alarmed at what they consider the menacing tone of public opinion. We in Canada know to our cost what a bone of contention this has been and will be. Not at all too soon is the question made one of practical politics with us. Without any reference to the necessities of party politicians, it is time to declare that on this free Canadian soil "no Italian priest shall tithe or toll in our dominions."

WE are now able to form a more correct estimate of the political situation in England, and we see no reason to alter the opinions hitherto expressed. The tragic death of Lord Iddesleigh and the secession of Lord Churchill for the moment shook the Government severely. But there is no doubt the accession of Mr. Goschen has more than compensated for the retirement of the spoiled child of the Primrose League, and that whether Lord Churchill's action arose from personal pique, or vanity, or ambition—or, as is most probable, a combination of all three—he has, in the opinion of his most sincere devotees, damaged himself much more than he has harmed the Government. On the other hand, Mr. Chamberlain's conference has missed fire. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Chamberlain individually is not a strong political force, and though he is awkward as an opponent, he is not very valuable as an ally. Mr. Goschen will act as a bond of union between the Government and the Hartington party, who are in truth not only unionists but minister-

ialists. Mr. Gladstone has but little chance of returning to office, for the simple reason that a considerable number of Liberals, outside the Unionist party, are quite resolved that he shall not. In fact, as far as outsiders can form an opinion, there appears at present no reason why the Marquis of Salisbury should not, barring accidents, pull through the session with tolerable ease.

It is to be hoped that the session of the Ontario Legislature now opened will be more fruitful of reformatory legislation than the sessions of the last few years. One of the most urgently required measures is a comprehensive reform of the municipal law. Innumerable acts tinkering with the existing system in minor points of detail have been introduced. What is needed is a thorough revision of the system, to adapt it to changed conditions. The present law, however well suited to the Ontario of a generation ago, has been outgrown. The existing basis of representation in our city and county councils makes them large and unwieldy bodies. The growth of large urban populations renders the extension of civic powers of government desirable. There is no reason why the property qualification long since abolished for parliamentary representatives should be retained in municipal affairs. It serves no good purpose, as a colourable qualification is easily acquired by the ambitious and unscrupulous aspirant, while it may exclude men well qualified in every other respect.

THE fashion of prominent politicians contesting more than one constituency, which has for some time been practised in Britain, is gradually being introduced into Canada. At the last election Sir John Macdonald was elected for two constituencies. On this occasion he has also received a double nomination, and has intimated that in the interests of his party he may contest other ridings. His example has been followed by the Minister of Militia and Mr. Blake. As a consequence, whatever the result may be, we shall have a supplementary election campaign in three or more constituencies, entailing additional and altogether unnecessary expense and inconvenience upon the country. Dual candidatures ought not to be permitted, and as the practice bids fair to extend until it becomes a serious evil, legislation should be invoked against it.

THE exultation of the Conservatives over the re-accession of Sir Charles Tupper to their fighting forces will be somewhat dashed by the tidings of the campaign in Nova Scotia, where that stalwart campaigner was expected to bear down all opposition by the impetuosity of his attack. Making all due allowance for partisan misrepresentation, it is evident that Sir Charles is meeting with much more strenuous antagonism than was expected, and that his personal influence with the Nova Scotians has been over-estimated. Should the result prove adverse to the Government the Finance Minister's reputation as an available man will suffer a similar disparagement to that which attends the failure of a Presidential candidate to "carry his own state." But it can hardly damage Tupper, who is the Hobson's choice of Conservatism.