

—that for which they exist? And is not their ability to promote this end in the ways above indicated proportionate, other things being equal, to the amount of funds they are able to devote to it? If the classes of ecclesiastical property now exempt were taxed, the money to pay these taxes would have to be taken out of the general church fund, and that fund, and the power of doing religious and charitable work it represents, would be diminished in proportion. On the other hand, were the taxes now charged on property held for income, not for immediate use, remitted, the power of the church for doing its proper work would be increased in proportion. Is not the breadth equal to the length? Whether the people are more likely to follow the argument to its practical conclusion, or to retrace their steps, and reconstruct its premises on a logical non-exemption basis, is another matter.

ANOTHER dictum of Mgr. Lafèche has received even more notice than the foregoing. His words, as reported and going the rounds of the press, are as follows:

"The right of the state to hold property and to exempt from taxation such portions of it as are necessary to the public service is possessed in equal degree by the Roman Catholic church."

It is difficult to believe that this can be a correct statement of the Bishop's proposition. If it be, we confess our inability to fathom it. Does he mean to teach that the Roman Catholic Church, as a matter of fact, has and uses coordinate powers with the State in the matter referred to? The words, "is possessed," would seem to imply that. But that would be an absurd mis-statement, so far at least as this continent is concerned, for nowhere does the Roman Catholic Church attempt or pretend to use such powers. As a statement of an abstract proposition the sentence would be meaningless. The State receives the taxes, hence exemption by it has a definite and easily understood meaning. But to claim for the Church a right to exempt some of its own property from paying taxes to the State, is like claiming for a debtor the right to exempt himself from paying a part of his indebtedness to his creditor. Columns of argument and denunciation have been expended upon this proposition ascribed to Mgr. Lafèche, but it seems pretty clear that either his words have been misunderstood, or that he must have failed egregiously in clearness of thought.

THE Mormons are, it is said, flocking into the North West in considerable numbers. They have purchased large tracts of land from the Alberta Railway and Coal Company. From what is too well known of the history of this people in Utah, it is doing them no injustice to suspect that their intention is to evade the laws of Canada and indulge their polygamous propensities at pleasure. Mr. Stenhouse, formerly a member of the Legislature of British Columbia, who has joined the Mormon Colony in Alberta, is said to have declared openly that they will practise polygamy if they wish. This, it may be hoped, is incorrect, though it has been often repeated, and, so far as we know, without contradiction. Mr. Stenhouse, unless we mistake, gave assurances of a very different kind to the Canadian Government. The duty of the authorities is obvious. A strict watch should be kept upon the proceedings of this dubious colony, and every clear violation of the laws of the Dominion should be visited with condign punishment. A little strictness and severity at the outset may save the country from having a great evil, and one hard to eradicate, rooted in its soil.

THE agitation against the Jesuits' Estates Act is well kept up. There is no avoiding it. In one aspect or another it meets one at every turn. No one can doubt that many of the leaders of the movement desire, above all things, to be perfectly fair in argument. And yet we cannot rid ourselves of the impression that in one respect these speakers and writers, almost without exception, unconsciously beg one of their major premises. Everywhere we find the \$400,000 spoken of as an endowment, either of the Jesuits or of the Catholic Church. Any sum of money received by the Church would be, we suppose, an endowment in effect. All who urge so strongly the disallowance of the Act are firmly, and perhaps rightly, convinced that the award named was an endowment in intent. But, as a matter of argument, is it quite fair to assume this, and to ignore completely the ostensible purpose of the Act—the payment of a debt? The whole tenor and purport of the Jesuits' Estates Act are to the effect that it is a payment of a sum of money agreed on

for the liquidation of a "moral claim." Is it perfectly clear that this "moral claim" was a figment—that it was without a shadow of justification? And, if so, is it perfectly clear that both parties to the arrangement were of that opinion, and with conscious and utter hypocrisy, used as a pretext, and a blind that which they knew had no existence as a fact? Still further, granting both of these hypotheses, is there not still a logical necessity that they should be proved, and the moral claim shown to be a mere pretext, as a logical preliminary to the construction of an argument on the "endowment" premise, as if it were admitted and unassailable?

THE statement that two British warships have been sent to cruise in Behring's Sea, and that the American Government has decided to send two of its vessels in the same direction, is, on the face of it, somewhat disquieting. The accompanying statement in the Washington despatch that "the State Department has decided that Behring's Sea is a *mare clausum*, and intends to assert dominion over the whole North Pacific within the limit defined in the United States treaty with Russia" is in the highest degree improbable. It not only conflicts with what has hitherto been understood to be the position of the Washington Administration, but would, in itself, be arrogant to the verge of absurdity. Should it prove that Secretary Blaine has really resolved on such a piece of bravado, and that the President has approved it, their action would admit of but one of two explanations. They must either have persuaded themselves that Great Britain will submit to any claim, however extravagant or unjust, rather than quarrel with the United States, or they must wish to force a quarrel upon her. The latter supposition is too horrible to be entertained for a moment, to say nothing of its folly in view of the state of the respective navies of the two countries. The former is a mistake which a short-sighted demagogue might possibly make, misled by England's well-known peace proclivities. But the probability seems to be that the Washington Cabinet is acting a part, hoping to gain time and to effect its main object of making a close monopoly of the seal fishery for the benefit of the Alaska Company, pending some international agreement, in which it is pretty sure to get the better side. One thing must be quite clear to the most ardent lover of peace, and that is that submission to a claim so utterly unreasonable as that which, even in the most favourable view, the United States have set up and are seeking to maintain in Behring's Sea, would not be in the interests of peace. What do the people of the Republic, apart from the politicians and the Anglophobists, think of the matter?

BETWEEN the flour-makers of the West and the bread-eaters of the East, the Minister of Finance does not just now recline on a bed of roses. The question is one which well illustrates the practical difficulty in adapting a policy of protection to the conflicting wants of localities whose conditions are radically diverse. From the protectionist point of view, or even from any other point of view, the case of the millers is certainly one of real hardship. They do well to be angry. While other industries all round them are protected from foreign competition by tariffs which really protect, the miller finds his product not simply unprotected, but actually discriminated against. It is clearly a sound and wise policy to encourage the importation of raw material with a view to its manufacture in the country and the exportation of the manufactured product. The tariff which successfully accomplishes this result accomplishes the highest end of protection. But when the miller sets about doing this, he finds himself actually compelled to pay a higher tax on his wheat, which is the raw material of his factory, than that imposed upon the foreign flour which comes into competition with his finished product. But, on the other hand, there are large numbers of people in the Dominion who have either to import their flour, or to pay for its carriage over a long, expensive route. Of all forms of taxation none is, perhaps, so odious, or so carefully avoided by all wise Governments, as a tax upon the people's bread. No one who understands the circumstances of the people of the Maritime Provinces can wonder that they object most strenuously to any increase of the tariff on flour. It may well be doubted whether the Government would be justified in making such increase for the sake of encouraging any industry, no matter how important, in another section of the country. The numbers who would be affected by an advance in the price of flour would be vastly in excess of the numbers who would receive benefits from better

protection to milling. This is assuming, of course, that the effect of increasing the tariff would be to increase the price. No tariff which failed to do that could be satisfactory to the millers. A mere extension of the home market at unremunerative prices would be a doubtful boon, and certainly not the boon they seek. The dilemma is an awkward one for the Government. To seek to escape one horn would be to precipitate themselves upon the other. In such cases masterly inaction is sometimes the safest policy, and that seems to be the course which just now commends itself to the Dominion Government.

IF any reliance can be placed on one-half the testimony given before the committee which has in charge the Chicago Insane Asylum investigation, that institution, as hitherto conducted, is a disgrace to American civilization. But if such horrible abuses could so long go unrebuked in the Chicago asylum, why not in many others managed on similar principles all over the Union? If anything can open the eyes of the American people to the evils of the "spoils" system of appointment to office which they carry into the details of National and State administration, such a revelation should have that effect. Our Canadian methods work badly enough in many respects, but, happily, such an atrocity as the handing over of our lunatics to the tender mercies of a set of "roughs and toughs" is hardly conceivable. And yet we are reminded that even in Canada it is no unusual thing for lunatics to be confined for a length of time in the common gaols for want of proper asylum accommodation. This cause of reproach cannot be too speedily removed, for, as there is no class of sufferers whose misery appeals more powerfully to the minds and hearts of people of large and cultivated sensibility than those who are bereft of reason, so it may be doubted if there is a better test of Christian civilization than the manner in which these unfortunates are cared for, and the appliances of medical science brought to bear for the amelioration of their pitiable condition.

WE referred last week to the difficult question of the relation of a member of Parliament to his constituents in regard to matters of opinion demanding action in his representative capacity. A somewhat similar question has arisen in some parts of the United States in regard to the relations of a professor in a State university to the majority of the people. The latest case in point is that of Professor H. C. Adams, who is accused of promulgating free-trade doctrines in a course of lectures recently delivered to the students of Michigan University. His views, as put forward, seem to have been very moderate, and to a considerable extent hypothetical, amounting to little more than an affirmative answer to the question, not whether Protection or Free-Trade is correct in theory, but whether the United States have now reached a point in industrial development where they can advantageously drop the restrictions which they have chosen thus far to retain. The doctrine to which Professor Adams thus subscribes was, as some of the Republican papers point out, repudiated last fall by a majority of those who are taxed for the support of the University. It seems certainly rather hard that the majority should thus be compelled to aid in propagating the views of the minority. On the other hand, as the *New York Nation* says, "the idea that nothing should be taught that is not approved by a majority of the people, presupposes that the majority are as wise as the professors in universities; whereas, if this were the case, there would be no need of universities." The *Nation* also quotes approvingly the doctrine uttered, or rather implied, in Mr. Lowell's remarks in his Harvard Centennial address, that "we have to deal with a time when the belief seems to be spreading that truth not only can but should be settled by a show of hands rather than by a count of heads." When the truth in question has a practical application to the every-day concerns of the people it is not easy to conceive how it can be settled otherwise on republican principles, by which Mr. Lowell, no doubt, holds. Even if it should be thought wiser to count heads, none but the majority can have the right to determine what heads are to be counted. This, clearly, is but removing the difficulty one step backward. The show of hands still determines the question.

THE Committee of the New York Senate which was appointed more than a year ago to investigate, and, as was supposed, to curse the Trusts, seems, Balaam-like, to have "blessed them altogether." According to the *Philadelphia Record*, a majority of the committee have presented an elaborate report in which they defend the