

# Ulster and Home Rule:

## A CANADIAN PARALLEL.

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### I.

There is a striking resemblance between the position of the Protestants in the Province of Quebec and that of the Protestants of Ireland. Both are in a minority, both are mainly gathered in a few counties, both are regarded by the majority as aliens and intruders, and in both countries the great employers of labour, the leaders in commerce and manufactures, the chief capitalists, are Protestant. That they are widely separated, that the Atlantic rolls between them, makes no difference in the conditions they have to face, for it is the same foe that dominates the Protestants of Quebec as is now menacing the Protestants of Ireland. It follows, therefore, that the experience of the one ought to be of value to the other. This is especially true at the present juncture of affairs in Ireland, when it is proposed to break its Union with Great Britain, for the Protestants of Quebec can tell the result of being separated from Ontario and left in the power of a Catholic majority.

### WHEN THE UNION WAS BROKEN

At one time Canada was treated as a Crown Colony, ruled directly from Downing Street. When Canada was given self-government by the Imperial Parliament, Quebec and Ontario were joined for Legislative purposes. The Catholics of Quebec resisted union with Ontario, kept up an agitation to repeal it, and to be given a Legislature

of their own. The course pursued by the Quebec members brought on a deadlock, when, as a means of overcoming it, the plan was suggested of all the Canadian Provinces being united to form a Dominion, each Province to have a Legislature of its own to transact local business, and a joint Parliament for such matters as concerned them as a whole. This proposal was resisted by the Protestants of Quebec because it involved separation from Ontario, and would leave them at the mercy of a majority controlled by a foreign power. Under the Union, Protestants felt secure, for they had the protection of Ontario. In the proposal to break the Union and set Quebec up as a distinct unit, autonomous and self-governing with a Legislature of its own, a Cabinet of Ministers and a Lieutenant-Governor—in a word, to constitute the Province of Quebec independent in every regard save those relations unavoidable to a federal compact—the Protestant minority saw their danger and resisted separation from Ontario. They urged that if the Union were broken they, who formed only a fraction of the population of Quebec, would be at the mercy of an overwhelming majority, swayed and directed by the priesthood. Their situation was exactly that of the minority in Ireland at the present time, who truly say that so long as Ireland is united to Britain they are safe, but the moment the tie is cut and they pass under the government of a Home Rule Legis-