

our hopes for the future of the Province, is his assurance that the French-Canadian Liberals will follow the liberal party in England. That is all we ask ; but we are anxious to see them go to work and lose no more time in proposing such reforms as Gladstone, Bright and Forster would introduce, suppose by some happy chance they were to replace Messrs. DeBoucherville, Chapleau & Co. at Quebec. A platform of public measures is conspicuously absent from Mr. Laurier's address. When English Liberal leaders make great public speeches, they generally inform the people what particular abuses they are opposed to, and what particular reforms they are in favor of. Mr. Laurier only promises in general terms that his party will follow the English Liberals, and that they will carefully defend the principles of the British constitution in their application to our affairs. That is all ; but that is really a great deal for a liberal politician to say in these days, and that is more than any French-Canadian public man has said for many years past. Therefore it is that we hail his declaration as an event of great promise. On one point, however, he is sufficiently clear—that of clerical intimidation in elections. Mr. Laurier explains that it would be contrary to the principles of the liberal party to deny the clergy the right of taking part in politics and of endeavoring to influence electors in every legitimate way to vote against the Liberal party. But when they abuse this right to the point of intimidating electors by threats or otherwise, they violate the principles of the constitution, which the Liberal party are bound to protect. If the clergy persist in dictating to the people in political affairs, he warns them that the result will be to deprive them of some of their privileges, which are now guaranteed them by that very constitution they are striving to overthrow.

The effect of the address has already been to revive the spirits of the liberals and to excite the Ultramontane press to greater violence of language than ever. The wise, calm and generous declarations of Mr. Laurier are treated by the clericals as insults and defiance offered to the Church, and fresh appeals are made to the faithful to unite and put down the liberal monster which is bent upon the destruction of everything sacred. The effect of these appeals upon the ignorant *habitants* should convince the liberals that the first and most urgent reform required is popular education. As soon as the liberals can muster up courage enough to make a stand, the tide will turn in their favor. It remains to be seen if that hour has come or not.