

in matrimonial cases. Liberal Catholics confine to the State the superintendence and direction of primary schools, to the detriment of the Church and fathers of families. Liberal Catholics grant to the State the right of intervening in the erecting of parishes, independently of any authorization from the Holy See. These errors were gaining ground in the country, were causing the Church to lose its independence, and threatening soon to place her on the same footing as the so-called Church created by Henry VIII. And the Christian people, accustomed to the encroachments of the State, were beginning to think that all these sacrilegious encroachments were real rights of the State, and that it was a duty for the Church to recognize them. One must fight with all the arms of doctrine against these fatal errors which threaten to pervert all minds. Among the most valiant defenders of the rights of the Holy Church, we shall always see our venerable Pontiff. Whilst these false doctrines are spreading and gaining strength everywhere, the venerable Bishops of Canada assemble in Council at Quebec. What will be their first thought? their first effort? The shackles of the Church must be riven asunder, its independence must be proclaimed in the face of the country and of the Catholic world, and the Bishops, assisted by the Holy Ghost, animated with a holy zeal, burning with love for the Church, issue this decree: *De obedientiâ Summo Pontifici*, of obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff: a decree which will be to the end of time, one of the finest monuments of the history of the Catholic Church in Canada, and will be for ever the glory of the venerable Fathers of the Council who were its authors. They profess the most entire obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, by proclaiming that the laws which they make concerning the general discipline of the Church are binding in this country, independently of the sanction of civil authority. Therefore, we adhere with our whole heart to all the Constitutions which concern—the dogma, and to each one in particular, and also to those which concern—the general discipline of the Church; and we declare and teach that, not depending on any sanction of the secular power, they must be recognized by all the faithful as the rules both of faith and conscience. His Lordship hastened to make known to his clergy and people this decree of

the Council, which is to put an end to those divergences of opinion which were dividing Catholics. This decree, says he, settles this great question, to wit: whether the Apostolical Constitutions, when once published in Rome, in due form, are binding in this country. The clergy and the faithful share the Bishop's sentiments, all are unanimous in repeating the words of the Council: *Toto animo adharemus omnibus et ingulis apostolicis Constitutionibus*. In future every upright and logical man, enlightened by the zeal of the Bishop and his clergy, will say: Yes, we most heartily adhere to the Constitutions of the Church. Yes, they bind in conscience independently of the sanction of the State. Therefore the Church is an independent society. Every one admits this principle. The State is subordinate to the Church. This truth is admitted. No one now dares to deny these two Catholic dogmas. But many, for want of a logical turn of mind, do not see the consequences which flow from these principles, and dare to doubt them. But the day we trust is near at hand, when Government repudiating their errors, will at length recognise the truths proclaimed by the first Council of Quebec. The laws of the Church itself enact the ecclesiastical laws, without any recourse to the State, and it is the duty of the State to recognise those laws and submit to them. The Church can, inasmuch as it thinks proper require from the State a civil sanction for the laws. This sanction adds no new obligation to the law, but helps the execution thereof. In this case it is not a bill, a draft of a law, which the Church proposes to the examination and discussion of a Parliament, it is a law already made, and which the Church alone has a right to make, a law which is already binding on the conscience, independently of the sanction of the State, and for which the Church claims a purely civil protection and sanction. The State does not enact the law, nor does it discuss the same; this is beyond its jurisdiction. It simply sanctions it civilly, just as the Church proposes it, without having the right to change, omit or add anything. Would you pretend to submit to your judgment and discussion the legislative authority of the Holy Church. If the State is Christian it will grant to these laws this civil sanction which the Church requires. This is the only manner in which the State can interfere in