

Sir John Macdonald must have thought when he vetoed a local railway Act passed by the Legislature of Manitoba. If the Dominion retains its power of controlling Provincial action for the common good, Canada may be a nation ; if it does not, she can be nothing but a league. And who wants a league with a French and Papal Quebec ; a league too on such a footing that while Quebec pursues objects of her own, she is to dominate over our politics and extort money from our treasury by her solid and alien vote ?

If the veto is a nullity the question arises whether any Province ought to be left without a Second Chamber or some equivalent security against rash legislation ? With all due respect for our local legislators, we can hardly deem them men of such calibre that in their case we can afford to dispense with the checks and safeguards deemed indispensable in the case of the most august assemblies in the world. One of them the other day was seen selling pools for races. By this gentleman's vote a great question relating to the distribution of political power, the tenure of property, education, or the relations between the sexes, might have been settled after a single hearing and without power of revision. The legislature of Ontario once broke a will, and it was not contended, we believe, that it had exceeded its legal power. The States of the American Union have all of them two houses, and the veto of the Governor is a real safeguard. We, with all our mock-monarchical buckram and costly shams, are left without any safeguard at all.

It is very true that the national veto is not in satisfactory hands. Under the cloak of the Governor-Generalship it is exercised by the leader of the party in office. But this is an inevitable incident of that party system, from which it is to be hoped that the Commonwealth will some day be delivered. Under the party system all power is not in national but in partisan hands. It has been said that the Liberal leaders think of proposing to transfer the veto to the Home Government ; if they did propose such a surrender of independence, they would complete their ruin.