

sailants. For every Canadian defending his rights there must be at least one Canadian assailant. There may be half a dozen leagued against the one. If this everlasting clamour about rights really means anything, in many cases it means that a large number of Canadians by force, or fraud in some other way, are trying to deprive their fellow-countrymen of their rights. For every brave defender of his rights there is at least one assailant. For every man ready to die on his doorstep, so to speak, in defence of his rights, there is at least one citizen of "predatory instincts" as Sir Richard would say. Where does the compliment to Canadian character come in? It would be a far higher compliment to our young nation to assume that a large number of people who clamour about their rights in Church and State are talking nonsense than to assume that they have any real grievance. If they have a real grievance—if their rights are really in danger—there must be an immense number of people in this young country who desire to assail the rights of their neighbours.

From Sir John Macdonald down to the last-appointed pound-keeper every official in the Dominion is ready to defend what he calls his rights. From the Federal Government down to the last committee formed for any purpose on the banks of the Saskatchewan, every corporate body is sensitive about its rights. Societies of all kinds are ready to go on their muscle about their rights. Conventions nearly always spend a considerable part of their time in defining and defending their rights.

When the world is so sensitive about its rights the Church is sure to be sensitive in the same way. Hence we have in the Church never-ending discussions about rights; the rights of managing boards, the rights of committees, the rights of Church members, the rights of adherents, in short the rights of everybody. Is this a good sign? If the Churches were as busy as they should be in the great work of saving souls, would they find time to discuss such questions? Men usually discuss the machinery of a locomotive when it is cold and standing still. When it thunders past at the rate of sixty miles an hour they have no chance to wrangle about the nuts or bolts, or the symmetry of the smoke-stack.

If the Church and the corporate bodies of the world contend so much about their rights, can we wonder that *individuals* are becoming unduly sensitive about individual rights? Somebody describes the present age as one of "ferce individualism." Ferce individualism is good. That is to say, the phrase is good. The thing itself is bad. It strikes at the root of constituted authority. It saps the very foundations of law and order. If carried out to its logical results, it must lead to the disintegration of society and the destruction of the Church. Perhaps the individualism would not be so ferce if Church courts contended

less for what they call their rights, and gave more of their time and attention to the real work of their Master. If a man sees a Church court contending long and fiercely for some small point utterly invisible to the unclerical eye, can we wonder if he contends fiercely for some alleged personal right which, perhaps, nobody sees but himself?

The fact is, a fierce contention for all our rights would make life intolerable. A passenger who feels too warm has a right to put up the car window. His neighbour who feels a draught has a right to put it down. The window cannot be up and down at the same time. The British Constitution makes no provision for such a case. There is nothing in the Magna Charta about car windows. An appeal must be taken to the second table of the Decalogue, or the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

Once upon a time we saw, or rather heard, what came very near being a collision between two men who insisted on exercising their rights as British subjects in a sleeping car. The occupant of one of the berths snored loudly. His was a marvellous snore. He could run up the scale and come down again without the slightest difficulty. We never heard an octave like his. Sometimes he went up and down the scale in a graceful sort of way, and then all at once he would skip from the lowest to the highest notes. When he had performed for half an hour or so the occupant of an adjoining berth put in a protest that was not particularly mild in its form. Now here was a case in which both had about equal rights as Canadians. Certainly the one has a right to sleep. Probably the other had a right to snore. There is nothing in the Confederation Act about snoring, but Canada is a free country, and if a man cannot use a first-class snoring apparatus in a sleeping berth that he has paid for, our forefathers fought for liberty in vain.

Would it not be an improvement if we all said less about our rights, and gave more attention to our duties? It is at times one's duty to contend for his rights, more especially when these rights are a trust; but strife about supposed rights often springs from jealousy, from abnormal sensitiveness, from selfishness, from vanity, from mere mulishness. It is often nobler to yield when no principle is at stake than to fight. A strong man can yield to a weakling on small matters, and make himself stronger by yielding. The golden rule is a better guide than Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.—*Knoxonian, in Canada Presbyterian.*

BABU SAGOR DUTT, a wealthy Indian who lately died at Calcutta, left an estate valued at thirty lacs of rupees, or \$3,000,000, of which he bequeathed twelve, or \$1,200,000, to establish and maintain an alms-house, hospital and school for the benefit of the native community.