

What renders the attempt to revive race feuds in Lower Canada still more inexcusable is the fact that the French-Canadian, so far from having any solid grievance to complain of, is really the *enfant gâté* of the political world. The fortune of war, and the shameful neglect of his home government, threw his country into the hands of the English; but all has been returned to him. His language, his laws, his religion, his institutions, all are intact. British capital and British enterprise laid the foundations of his commerce, built his railways, and developed the resources of his country to an extent which would have been impossible under the old régime; but British political influence has almost ceased to exist. A large proportion of the wealth and commerce of the leading cities is still in British hands, and the brunt of a heavy taxation is borne principally by the English-speaking community; but there are but few English-speaking members in the Provincial Assembly, and the city governments are entirely in the hands of the French-Canadian element. The Canadian *habitant* either is, or ought to be, one of the happiest of human beings. He lives a life of almost Arcadian simplicity, on his own farm, which he cultivates with his own hand, and on which he raises almost everything that is necessary to his existence. He is, by nature, far more given to vegetation than to agitation, but a certain want of industry and enterprise are more than compensated for by an extraordinary frugality, which enables him to lead a life of ease and comfort that would raise the envy of any peasant in old France. He grows his own wheat, oats, potatoes, and tobacco, raises his own cattle, and salts his own pork, while his wife, whose economy equals his own, spins his wool, makes his clothes, and keeps an eye on the poultry-yard. Apart from an occasional purchase of tea, or a Sunday dress for his *bonne femme*, he rarely contributes to the national exchequer, and, as his farm is his own, the rent-collector has no terrors for him. He is an inveterate politician, and the one great object of his political existence is to avoid taxation, and fall back, when possible, upon his foster-mother, "*Le Gouvernement*." As he knows the value of his vote to a nicety, and knows how much the Ministry of Sir John Macdonald has had to depend upon it for support, his success has been remarkable, and in this he has been well backed up by his village politician, who will work so hard for so little that he may almost be credited with having raised the art of wire pulling to the level of an exact science. Unless we go upon the supposition that the possession of wealth is necessary to ensure perfect happiness, the French-Canadian should be one of the happiest of mankind. Political grievances he has none, and political benefits have been lavished on him. If a nationality cry is to be raised in Lower Canada, it should surely come from the Englishmen, who, after ruling the country for many years, now find themselves in a position of complete political subjection, their influence gone, and their purses always open to the demands of the French-Canadian majority. If the English minority in Lower Canada were to give trouble it should surprise nobody; but exactly the reverse is the case, and such is the influence of race prejudice that we find the French-Canadian ready at a moment's notice to forget all his material advantages; and a few worthless politicians have found little difficulty in bringing about a nationality agitation which if carefully fanned might drive the country to the brink of civil war.

If the French-speaking population of the Province of Quebec could complain of either neglect or ill-usage at the hands of the present Government, it might be possible to fabricate some excuse for them; but, so far from this, they have been the spoilt darlings of Sir John Macdonald's Ministry, and have ruled not only their own Province but the Dominion itself. The settlement of the Riel question was one of the very few occasions upon which their wishes have been opposed; but they have not only had their fair share of political power, but they have held the balance of power in the Dominion. Nevertheless, they now turn against the Government which has cherished them in its bosom, and we find Sir John Macdonald threatened with dismissal from office—not because his peculiar system of government by patronage has corrupted the people—not because he has frequently had to put the interests of his party before the interests of his country—not for his sins, in fact, but simply because he has hanged a man who, with perfect justice, might have been hanged years ago for as cold-blooded a murder as was ever committed.

It is unnecessary to enter here into a prolonged discussion of the Riel controversy. The only defence which his best friends could make for his extraordinary conduct was to suggest that he was insane. To compare Riel with Cromwell may appear very like plunging from the sublime into the ridiculous, but in so far as sanity is concerned the cases are parallel. Cromwell, unless he was a terrible hypocrite (as seems highly probable) was quite crazy on the subject of religion, and the same may be said of Riel; but nobody ever yet ventured to suggest that the great Protector was not responsible for his own actions. That the management of affairs

in the North-west has been far from satisfactory cannot be denied; but this is very weak ground to take up, as the Canadian form of Government is cheerfully accepted by the people at large, and it may be added that the Gracchi preaching against sedition were consistent as compared with the French-Canadian protesting against the government of the wire-puller. But if any proof were wanted of the unreasonableness of the agitation, it might surely be found in the fact of such a man as M. Joly—a man who even in these degenerate times has preserved his character *sans peur et sans reproche*—preferring to retire from the political arena rather than have anything to do with so foolish and unpatriotic a movement. After this, further discussion is unnecessary. What must be quite apparent to every unprejudiced mind is that the whole affair simply amounts to this—that a considerable number of Canadians who speak French object to the execution of Riel because he also spoke French, and because they fancy that in some way or another he belonged to the same race as themselves.

AN ANGLO-CANADIAN.

#### COLONIAL OPINION OF MR. GLADSTONE'S POLICY.

[FOLLOWING is a letter addressed by Mr. Goldwin Smith to the Liverpool *Courier* on the issuance of Mr. Gladstone's Manifesto (which was contemporaneous with Mr. Smith's arrival in England). Brief reference having been made to this letter in the Press cablegrams, and comments made on it, we reproduce it in full for the information of our readers.]

Any patriotic Englishman who followed Mr. Gladstone, as I did in former years, must read with no common pain his direct appeal to party spirit to sustain him in the dismemberment of the Empire. The designation is his own, for the dismemberment of the Empire was the aim which, in a speech delivered in this city [Liverpool], he ascribed to Mr. Parnell, and Mr. Parnell is evidently satisfied with Mr. Gladstone's present scheme. The historical parallels adduced by Mr. Gladstone appear to me utterly irrelevant and delusive. If the Whig party became weak and discredited after 1793 it was because the course of its leaders was unpatriotic, not because some of its members were true to the country. That some of its members had been true to the country was the redeeming fact which saved it from ruin, enabled it to retain some degree of influence, and in time opened to it again the doors of power. In no instance in political history, so far as I am aware, has any public man or citizen injured his party, in the long run, by doing his duty to the country.

The portion of the Manifesto, however, on which, as a British-Canadian, I wish to touch, is that in which Mr. Gladstone claims for his Separatist policy the gratifying support of Colonial and American opinion. Among the manifestations of Colonial opinion he no doubt includes the resolutions which were passed the other day in his favour by the Provincial Legislature of Quebec, and which he gratefully acknowledged. The Province of Quebec is French, not British; it is growing more French and more Nationalist in its tendencies every day; its people sympathised with the insurrection of the French Half-breeds against British dominion in the Canadian North-West, and have been vehemently protesting against the execution of Riel. Its politicians also angle for the Irish vote, which is pretty large in Montreal, where, at a great Nationalist meeting the other day, General Burke, one of Mr. Gladstone's American partisans, was received with enthusiastic applause when he proclaimed that the man who would not murder a landlord was a coward. Above all, the priests who rule Quebec believe, no doubt as their brethren do elsewhere, that separation will bring with it the destruction of Irish Protestantism and the establishment of Roman Catholicism in Ireland. They have good grounds for that belief. The restrictions ostensibly imposed by Mr. Gladstone on the action of his Irish Parliament will evidently be mere moonshine. There is no legal mode of enforcing them; they can be upheld only with the bayonet; and if you shrink from coercing the Moonlighters, you will hardly venture to coerce the Irish Legislature and nation. Of the whole set, the restriction on the establishment and endowment of any religion is the least tenable and the most difficult to maintain; for if the Parliament of the United Kingdom is unfit, as Mr. Gladstone contends, to legislate for the Irish because it is mainly British, much more, being mainly Protestant, must it be unfit to legislate for the Irish in any matter concerning their religion. The public schools are a boon which Ireland owes to British connection, without which national education would no more have been introduced among her people than it has been introduced among the people of Spain, Naples, or Mexico. These would be at once handed over to the priests, and we know with what result. The separate schools which the Roman Catholics have succeeded in retaining for themselves in the Province of Ontario are, I believe, confessedly inferior to the common schools, though kept probably above their natural level by the stimulating