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QUEBEC SINCE CONFEDERATION.

"I refer to the spontaneous and powerful development of the spirit of association, and the evident increase of the power of the clergy and hierarchy."—BUNSEN'S SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Eight years having gone by since the establishment of the Dominion of Canada, it may not be amiss to examine how the new constitution has worked in the Province of Quebec during that period, and enquire closely into the position there held by those of British origin and of Protestant faith. That the times are ominous and danger threatens, there needs no stronger proof than the anxiety which pervades all classes of society, and the feverish disquietude which has seized the public mind. Into the causes of this uneasiness we propose now to examine.

Under the Union none of these symptoms appeared. Canada was peaceful and prosperous, and the Roman Catholic French-Canadian population of Lower Canada lived in quiet and harmony with their fellow-citizens of different origin and different religion. The Romish hierarchy, possessed of more freedom and independence than it has ever enjoyed in any other land—Italy, the place of its birth, not excepted—pursued its way, untrammelled by the civil power and avoiding interference with it. When Confederation was dis-

cussed, though many foresaw and foretold a possible future clashing between the different nationalities of Quebec, yet no voice was raised to proclaim the danger as likely to proceed from the clergy or find its source in the aggressions of the priesthood. It was thought that such as their conduct heretofore had been, such it would continue to be, and that supposing internal trouble should at any time arise, the priesthood, as it ever had been, would still be found advocating the cause of established authority, and by word and example preaching obedience to the laws and submission to the constitution. Though the Syllabus of 1861 and the Encyclical of 1864 had already caused much dissatisfaction and taken the world somewhat by surprise, they were, by many, looked upon as the effusions of an irritated old man suffering under the souring influences of misfortune and senility combined. No one dreamt that the Church seriously contemplated entering the lists against modern advancement and civilization, and practically arrogating to itself the universal dominion it claimed in the middle ages. When the Œcumenical Council, convoked in 1868, had in 1870 proclaimed the doctrine of "infallibility," and that to every one of the