

CIVIL LIBERTY IN LOWER CANADA.

In the recent debate upon Mr. Huntingdon's Argenteuil speech, Mr. Masson referred to the part I had taken in regard to the measure of Confederation, and to the safeguards which I insisted on, as representing the Protestant minority in Quebec,—arguing that these precautions were uncalled for in themselves, and almost humiliating to them (the French Roman Catholics) to grant. The position was also taken by himself and other speakers that the attitude recently assumed by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy concerned the members of their communion only, and afforded no just grounds for apprehension or animadversion on the part of any Protestant.

At the date of the discussion on Confederation, it may be admitted that appearances justified great confidence in the liberal and generous action of the French Canadian majority. Politically they had been for many years under the leadership of men of known and tried liberality. Lafontaine, Morin, and Cartier, were names synonymous with upright dealing and even-handed justice, irrespective of race or religion. Whilst at the same time the course of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy and Clergy had ever been distinguished by such devotion to their duty of inculcating piety and virtue, and such moderation towards all who differed with them, that it may