

homeward from Bellefeuilles' Mills the morning after St. Eustache, and dropping in on her neighbour, Madame Labelle, finds Labelle absent and his dame cheerfully rendering pig's lard, as unconcernedly as if last night's sky had not been red with the conflagration at St. Eustache and the fat not sufficiently in the fire elsewhere. The secret of her contentment was explained when it transpired in conversation that the worthy Labelle, instead of being away with the rebels as was suspected, had carefully hid in the bush, fearing a visit from the press gang.

A contrast between those methods of impressment and the manner of enforcing the now operative Military Service Act will not be here amiss. At both these crises it was the same party that resorted to violence. In the former case they endeavoured to snatch a verdict from the god of chance by a vigorous and blackguardly method of impressment that knew no mercy, recognized no rights of exemption, permitted of no appeal, granted no delay, allowed for no liberty of opinion or exigency of affairs, that took into account only in the smallest degree physical disability, and that had behind it no moral or legal right. It was the outcome of mob rule, and was naturally accompanied by the confiscation, or destruction, of the draftee's property. That it was but local was only due to lack of opportunity to extend its operations. When we consider that the excuse now given was the desire of domination in the affairs of the colony, with the unfettered control of the public purse and revenues, and the right of appointment to all political offices, how wholly inexcusable to a well-ordered mind appears the resort to armed rebellion, and the unwarranted and brutal system of impressment adopted to fill their ranks, and terrorize their compatriots, in the hope that they might attain that end. But some minds are cast in such a mould that a resort to violence is the natural argument employed to promote their own

particular brand of liberty, a brand that, like charity, which is said to begin at home, too often ends there also. And when the well-intentioned, but probably too lenient, provisions of the Military Service Act came into force, supported by an overwhelming majority of the nation, the descendants of these "democrats to the hilt" (from whom one would look for a firmer belief in the infallibility of majorities), would have none of it. Here was a measure which many think should have been put into force much sooner than it was, remarkably lenient in its provisions, affording ample opportunity for exemption, interfering as little as possible with economic requirements, and business and family obligations, and affording careful protection for the unfit. If anything was likely to inspire confidence, generally, in the fairness of the framers of the Act it was its proposed administration by the Department of Justice, and the placing the power of exemption in local hands. And it should surely have appealed to these keen contenders for their alleged rights, as necessitous on behalf of the nations enjoying democratic forms of government, not only as a step towards the insuring of the freedom of humanity, but to help in the preservation of the very principles of Christianity itself.

But for months the latent race feeling had been pandered to by anti-conscriptionist orators, and by a large part of the provincial press. Meetings had been held, societies attempted, rioting permitted; no motive was too vile to ascribe to the framers and upholders of the measure. No argument seems to have been too childish to advance against it, and such would have been a matter for laughter but that they were eagerly listened to and applauded. For instance, most of us will recollect that the first selective conscriptionist we have read of was King David, when he sent Uriah to the battle-front that he might steal his wife, but we would hardly look for his counterpart at the present. However, the writer expected, from the