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THE REVOLUTION IN QUEBEC.

THE results in Quebec of the recent Dominion elections are both cheering and alarming. They are at once a cause for gratitude and a call to strenuous, earnest, immediate work.

In this statement there is not the slightest reference to the political aspect of the case, but to the revolt of the people from ecclesiastical control in civil matters, their assertion of freedom to think and vote according to their own judgment.

Two things should be seriously pondered by the Protestant Christians of Canada: First, the fact of the revolt, second the meaning of it.

I. THE FACT OF THE REVOLT.

This is patent to all. The hierarchy threw all their influence in one direction, while the great majority of the people deliberately voted in an opposite direction. A few years ago such a thing would have been impossible. The command of the Church would have been final with multitudes who now have disregarded it.

The revolt does not imply any sudden change in the attitude of the people toward the Church. It is but the expression of a revolution in sentiment that has long been going on and more rapidly with each succeeding year. The revolt is the latest and strongest expression of that steadily changing sentiment, and its strength as thus manifested has been a surprise to all. French and English; Catholic and Protestant; priest and people; have alike been startled with its depth and power. Few would have believed it possible.

Many causes have combined to produce this revolution. It is a natural result of the demand for unreasoning submission, which always tends to make men grow restive; and it is a result, just as natural, of the growing light and knowledge which is penetrating everywhere.

This light has come from many sources. Hundreds of thousands have emigrated to New England and their intercourse and correspondence with their homes has done much to break the spell of Church power.

The French Press too has been growing more outspoken. It has demanded the rights of the people to control their schools; it has advocated various measures of reform; it has even dared to denounce scandals among the priesthood. Attempts have been made to stifle it; periodicals have been put under the ban, the faithful forbidden to read them, and in some cases they have had to cease publication or change their name; but the liberty that they represented could not be suppressed.

Among the agencies in this movement, and the healthiest of them all, is the work of French Evangelization carried on by the Churches, and more largely by our own than any other. The results at times have seemed small, and slow in their appearing; but that work has done its part, not merely in bringing on dissatisfaction with a blind submission to Rome, but in leading to a purer faith, one that asks no submission but to God; a faith that loves the light; a faith worthy of free men.

In one department alone of that work, the Pointe aux Trembles Schools, 3,500 young French Canadians have been educated during the fifty years since these schools began, and the results in their homes and among their friends, though quiet, must have been very great.

From the causes above mentioned it will be seen that two very distinct classes of agency, one purely secular the other religious, have had their part in the result presently attained. Of the latter class it is probable that the most effective was the late political campaign, presenting as it did, all sides of this question to the mind of the people as no similiar contest ever did before.

The ground thus gained will never be lost. Factions may change; hierarchy may ally itself with one or other great party in politics; but it will no longer drive the people at its will. When men taste liberty they always strive for more, and French Canadians will not rest, until the press, the tithes, the schools, and all else belonging to the people shall be freed from the control of the priesthood and men will live in the enjoyment of all their rights as British freemen.