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WE referred last week to the probability that the great debate then going on, might be decided on the basis of some compromise resolution, arrived at by conference between the leaders of the Government and those of the Opposition. This is, substantially, as our readers know, what took place. It is but fair, of course, to accept Hon. Mr. Laurier's express denial that there had been any compromise between the Premier and himself. Nevertheless, it is not only clear on the face of the motion that prevailed, but it was distinctly stated by Sir John A. Macdonald himself, that the resolution was framed up to a certain point after the pattern submitted by Mr. Blake. As a natural consequence, it partakes of the weakness and unsatisfactoriness of most compromises, in that it proceeds upon no fixed principle, or, to speak more guardedly, upon no obvious principle. Mr. Laurier did, it is true, accept it as a concession of the alleged Liberal doctrine of Provincial rights. But, on the other hand, Sir John A. Macdonald claimed that it was also in accordance with a certain view of the limitations of the powers of the Legislatures, both Provincial and Dominion, by the prerogatives of the Lieutenant-Governor and the Governor-General, respectively, which was, to say the least, rather startling. Upon that view we venture to remark below. We may first observe, however, that had the resolution in question, after declaring the adherence of the House to the covenants embodied in the British North America Act, and its determination to resist any attempt to impair the same, proceeded to pronounce it expedient and proper, and not inconsistent with the covenants, that the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories should receive from the Parliament of Canada power to regulate, after the next general election of the Assembly, not only the proceedings of the Assembly and the manner of recording and publishing such proceedings, but all matters connected with the printing and promulgation of its Statutes and Ordinances, it would have had the merit of conceding handsomely the right of the Northwest Assembly to manage its own affairs. There would have been left no sufficient excuse for the re-introduction of the delicate sub-

ject next session. It would have been difficult to show that the mere withholding of the powers in question until the people had had opportunity to pronounce upon the matter, and give a new Legislature their mandate, was not quite as consistent with the principle of full local autonomy as the bestowment of those powers, with a view to immediate action. The recollection, still lively in the minds of many, of the mischief that resulted from the unauthorized action of the members of the Legislature which hurried Nova Scotia into the Confederation, without waiting to consult the people, would, we cannot doubt, have prompted them to accept the postponement as quite in harmony with the soundest Federalism. Nor could it make much difference with those French and other representatives who may have been induced by Sir John's singular argument to accept the motion, seeing that if the printing of the Statutes and other matters referred to, are really outside the sphere of the Legislatures, the form of the resolution could have made no difference in that respect.

BUT what new and strange constitutional doctrine is this now set forth by the aged Premier—for new and strange we venture to affirm it is to ninety-nine out of every hundred Canadians! The Parliament and the Legislature have, we are told, nothing to do with the publication of ordinances, *i. e.*, with the Bills passed, after they have received the gubernatorial sanction which alone can give them the force of ordinances. It may seem presumptuous for journalists to call in question the statement of so high an authority in regard to such a question. But some of the consequences to which the doctrine would seem to lead, if pushed to its logical results, are so startling that we may be permitted, at least, to doubt whether the Premier could have been correctly reported on this point. In order to give Sir John's argument any force in the connection in which this doctrine was enunciated, it must be assumed that this sole power of dealing with the ordinances possessed by the representatives of the Queen or of the Governor-General, as the case may be, must be in some way independent of Parliament and people, since if it be merely conferred by the Constitution, it must be at the discretion of those who frame the Constitution, *i. e.*, in this instance, of the Dominion Parliament. The question thus arises, Whence can the prerogative be derived independently of the people and their representatives? If there is some source of governmental authority which is thus underived and absolute, can we any longer pride ourselves on having a purely representative and responsible system of Government? The money question, too, becomes an important one in such a case. At whose expense are the ordinances printed? If at the public expense, has the Governor or Government any authority to use any portion of the public funds, or people's money, save what is given them by vote of the people's representatives, or for any purpose not sanctioned by such vote? If not, is not this control of the purse, after all, supreme in all matters involving expenditure? What would follow if, in any case, the Legislature refused to vote the money for printing the ordinances, whether in one or more than one language? Suppose the Governor-General, or Lieutenant-Governor, with or without the advice of his Council, should for any reason decline to publish an important ordinance, what would follow? These and similar questions force themselves upon the unenlightened and unsophisticated lay mind in view of the Premier's declaration. Will not some authority give us more light upon this dark subject?

WITHOUT detriment to their loyalty to British connection, Canadians may well be excused if they feel a little curious and not a little anxious with regard to the negotiations now going on at Washington touching the fishery disputes. We have no fear that any final arrangement will be made to which the consent of Canada will not be formally an indispensable pre-requisite. The rumour that the concession of sealing privileges in Behring Sea is being taken into the account as to some extent an offset to concessions to be made by Canada on the Atlantic coast, is too absurd to be entertained for a moment. And yet the fact that negotiations are in progress at Washington, at which Canada is unrepresented, does undeniably look a

little as if the British Government were disposed to take the matter more entirely into their own hands than heretofore. Looking at it from the British point of view, such a course would not be surprising. The British Government is unquestionably and laudably anxious to come to a good understanding in every respect with the United States. It cannot be doubted that the pertinacity with which Canada has, rightly or wrongly, asserted her claims, has hitherto been the great obstacle in the way of an agreement. A respected correspondent took us to task, a week or two since, for an observation to the effect that loyalty to Britain and loyalty to Canada do not necessarily mean the same thing. We have no desire to discuss so delicate a question, with no practical end in view, otherwise we might cite our correspondent's attention to these fisheries questions by way of illustrating our meaning. No one can fail to see that England's interests and Canada's in the matter are quite distinct, if not absolutely divergent. England would, no doubt, willingly concede most of the points at issue, for the sake of ending the weary and vexatious contention, and establishing a complete *entente cordiale* between the two great Anglo-Saxon nations. Canada cannot afford to make so great a sacrifice, even for so desirable an end. How can a Canadian, then, consider the matter without being more or less conscious of a want of harmony between the impulses of his British and those of his Canadian patriotism? That the *modus vivendi* must be renewed is a foregone conclusion. It is far easier to make a concession of that kind than to recall it. It might be hard to show that Canada has suffered any pecuniary loss by the arrangement, though she has certainly received no equivalent for the privileges bestowed, a statement which is not so contradictory as it may appear. As to the point from which we set out, while we have, as we said, no fear that Canadian consent will not be made necessary to the ratification of any agreement that may be reached, we may esteem the Dominion happy, if its people do not find themselves called upon one of these days to sanction some very unpalatable agreement, seeing that no British diplomatist has ever yet shown himself possessed of an appreciation of Canadian rights in such matters, at all satisfactory to Canadians. The right to refuse assent to such an agreement would involve so many difficulties that no Canadian Government is likely to act upon it. [Since the above was written the Premier has announced that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries has been summoned to Washington to aid in negotiations. So far as appears, however, he goes without official standing or authority in the negotiations.]

FROM various quarters, official and unofficial, come very encouraging reports concerning the state and progress of the Indians in the Canadian Northwest. The Government Industrial Schools at Qu'Appelle, High River, and Battleford, are said to be doing an excellent work, as will no doubt the larger one to be shortly opened at Regina. These schools are evidently of the right kind, and are, it is said, being efficiently carried on. Inspector McGibbon is reported as saying to a representative of the *Empire*, "The boys are learning shoemaking, blacksmithing, carpentering, farming and gardening; while the girls are being instructed in baking, sewing, knitting and all kinds of general housework. They make first-rate servants, and the good that is being accomplished by these industrial schools cannot be overestimated." Mr. McGibbon admits, however, that the disposal of these boys, who will leave the schools at 16—far too early an age—is a problem yet to be solved. His suggestion that they might be given small farms is in the right direction. Certainly, neither boys nor girls should be permitted to go back to the reserves, save under conditions, if such are possible, that will provide a safeguard against their relapsing into the filth and barbarism from which they have been temporarily rescued. This suggests, too, the doubt whether these Government reports do not tend to give us far too rose-coloured a view of the situation. We are told, for instance, that there are at the Qu'Appelle school, 140 children, at the High River school, 50, at the Battleford school 60, and that the school to be opened at Regina will have accommodation for 200. This means that 450 Indian children will next summer be receiving a training that will fit them for citizenship. What about the other