

port of a measure of relief to them, and one declared by the Church to be of paramount importance. Two instances recur to my memory—Mr. Patrick, of Prescott, and the late Daniel McLachlin, of Arnprior. The indefensible conduct of those Irish Catholics of South Grenville and Carleton, who on that occasion voted against these gentlemen, cast dishonour on their whole race, and an indelible stain on their own character. Invincible ignorance is the only palliation for such inconsistency.

THE HABEAS CORPUS.

The writ of *habeas corpus* means the right to every one under arrest to be confronted with his accuser and brought to a speedy trial. It is the *palladium* of individual liberty. The *suspension* of that writ implies the contrary. It means that any person actuated by personal enmity or from any other motive, however frivolous or vexatious, can go before a magistrate, lodge information against any individual, have him arrested, cast into prison, there detained without trial or other formality during the term of suspension, without even a knowledge of the crime with which he is charged or the person of his accuser. (Reader, I might have spared you and me this explanation, for every Irishman is haplessly too familiar with the "suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.") It is unnecessary to occupy time in portraying or enumerating the dangers that are likely to follow in its wake. They are apparent to the meanest intellect. But the greatest of all dangers is in the precedent itself. Nothing short of the most extreme national peril can justify a Government in resorting to this final hope—this last plank of liberty's throne. It is one of those weapons, like the flaming sword of Michael, which should only be unsheathed when the nation's autonomy is threatened, when the life breath of the state is menaced by internal treason. It is no security against invasion.

In June, 1866, for the first time since the establishment of responsible government did a Canadian Minister venture to come down and propose to Parliament the suspension of this writ, in order to arm him with so formidable an instrument of tyranny and persecution. Parliament, unequal to the emergency, abnegating its supreme function, without a remonstrance, servilely responded to the call, and with indecent haste, suspending all its rules passed the odious measure in less than one hour. Where were the statesmen, the exponents of the constitution, the sentinels on the house tops, the defenders of the people's rights, the champions of popular liberty? Echo answers *where*, and adds aside in parenthesis, *paralyzed and demoralized by coalitions*. The pretext, was the "Fenian" invasion. Will any person possessed of ordinary intelligence seriously assert that if real danger threatened