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THE JESUIT DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The progress of the great debate in the House of Commons on the Jesuit Question proves that the heart of the country is still true and sound, and that its moral fibre is still firm. On the assembling of the House on Tuesday, after routine business, Col. O'Brien opened the debate by moving the following resolution:—

“That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor-General setting forth: 1st, That this House regards the power of disallowing Acts of the Legislative Assemblies of the Provinces vested in His Excellency-in-Council as a prerogative essential to the national existence of the Dominion. 2nd, That this great power, while it should never be wantonly exercised, should be fearlessly used for the protection of the rights of the minority for the preservation of the fundamental principles of the constitution, and for safeguarding the general interests of the people. 3rd, That in the opinion of this House the passage of the Act by the Legislature of the Province of Quebec entitled ‘An Act respecting the Jesuits Estates’ is beyond the power of that Legislature; firstly, because it endows from the public funds a religious organization, thereby violating the unwritten, but undoubted constitutional principle of the complete separation of Church and State, and of the absolute equality of all denominations before the law; secondly, because it recognizes the usurpation of a right by a foreign authority, namely, His Holiness the Pope of Rome, to claim that his consent was necessary to empower the Provincial Legislature to dispose of a portion of the public domain, and also because the Act is made to depend upon the will, and the appropriation thereby made is subject to the control, of the same authority, and thirdly, because the endowment of the Society of Jesus, an alien, and secret, and politico-religious body, the expulsion of which from every Christian community wherein it has had a footing has been rendered necessary by its intolerant and mischievous intermeddling with the functions of civil government, is fraught with danger to the civil and religious liberties of the people of Canada, and this House therefore prays that His Excellency will be graciously pleased to disallow the said Act.”

Col. O'Brien introduced his resolution in a fairly moderate speech. He was followed by Mr. Rykert, whose speech was the first surprise of the debate. We are only able to present our readers this week with the speeches of Mr. Rykert and Mr. Colby, the Deputy Speaker, —the latter pronounced to have been one of the most brilliant and eloquent delivered in the Commons since Confederation. Even at the early stage of the debate at which these speeches were finished, the crushing defeat of the party of bigotry was plainly apparent. Full reports of the speeches of Sir John Thompson, Mr. Mulock, Sir John Macdonald and Mr. Laurier will be published in our next number. As we write the debate is progressing, but this much is certain: that the wretched, fanatical and unpatriotic element which would plunge us into a war of religions in Canada, will never have received more tremendous rebuke than will be its when, in a few hours, the people of Canada, through their Parliament, pronounce on the subject. With the single exception of Mr. D'Alton McCarthy, Col. O'Brien's motion has been supported by not one member of any reputation or weight, or of even mediocre abilities. Mr. McCarthy's speech itself was not worthy that gentleman. It was, in fact, most ineffective; false in its facts, and unfair in its statements,—as witness, his use of the *Quarterly* article without any consecutiveness of reasoning or of argument, built, and very imperfectly too, upon the *Mail's* and Professor Goldwin Smith's articles, his speech was at best a trifling piece of small pleading, and was utterly demolished by the Minister of Justice who followed him. The Review is in a position to state that Col. O'Brien's motion will find in the House not more than 20 supporters. There are known to be only 8 Conservative “bolters.” Among these are the two Toronto members, Messrs. Denison and Cockburn, who will submit to the dictation of the Toronto rowdies who composed the mob which smashed the windows in the Catholic Churches of this city a week ago. In the case of Mr. Denison he will expiate his offence when he seeks re-election. He has chosen to disregard the opinions and wishes of his Catholic supporters; and The Review is in a position to announce that at the next general election it may be West Toronto will be contested by a Catholic Conservative gentleman. It only remains for us to add that the leaders of both parties, the Premier, and Mr. Laurier, have acted with great firmness and as men of principle and of patriotism, and that the high and honourable example they have shown will live for long in the public life of the nation, and will give them an additional claim to the gratitude of all who truly love, and look forward to the coming greatness of the country.

Col. O'Brien's motion has been defeated by a majority of 175 votes for the Government, only 13 members supporting it.

MR. RYKERT'S SPEECH.

I entirely dissent from the proposition of the hon. gentleman that the great majority of the people of this country are in favour of disallowance. The hon. gentleman has arrived at the conclusion, from what source I cannot tell, unless it be from the public press, but I will venture to assert that if the Province of Ontario were appealed to to-day without prejudice or religious bigotry, the vast majority would dissent from the proposition of the hon. gentleman. We are told that certain religious bodies are in favour of disallowance, and we are threatened by certain papers with decapitation and expulsion from public life by a certain organization if we declare this Act to be constitutional. I have heard it said that no Orangeman can stand upon the floor of Parliament and speak in favour of the allowance of the Jesuits' Bill; but I am one who speaks as an Orangeman, and I say that I am complying with the tenets of the Order in supporting the Government upon this question. It is one of the first principles of the Orange Order there should be civil and religious liberty. I may incur the hostility of a large portion of the people of the Province of Ontario, but I have on another occasion had an opportunity of facing public opinion, and I think the public fully understands the question. I say that I am not prepared to join in this unholy alliance against the Roman Catholics. I am not prepared to join in a crusade entered upon by a section of the people in Ontario against the faith of a large por-

portion of our community. We see the public press of Ontario day after day endeavouring to fire the public mind, and I am happy to say the movement has not originated from the Orange Order, but only from a certain class of people who are resolved to drive the Pope and Popery from this country, and this seems to be their sole object and aim. I am familiar with the history of the past in this country, and I am familiar with what took place in Canada previous to Confederation. The cry then was that the Protestants were being subjected to the domination of their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. Is it now to be said, after 21 years of existence, that we are to be found fighting against a large body of the people of the country and stand in the way of the progress of Confederation? No; we have done what we can to promote good feeling on this continent. (Ministerial cheers.)

I would like to know if we are to be misled by my hon. friend from Muskoka and array the Protestants against the Catholics. If the Catholics would drive every Protestant from the Province of Quebec, I would not blame them for that. They would be justified in so doing if the Protestants attempted to drive them from the Province of Ontario. I say that it is an attempt on the part of a certain portion of the press of Ontario, not to assist the Protestant minority in Lower Canada, but over the heads of the Jesuits to attack the Roman Catholic faith. I am not here to-day to defend or attack the Jesuits or to speak of their past history. I will discuss the