

“The greatest day in Col. O’Brien’s life was Tuesday, March 26, 1889, when in the House of Commons he moved as an amendment to the motion to go into supply :—

“ ‘That an address be presented to the Governor-General setting forth that this House regards the power of disallowing the acts of legislation of the Legislative Assemblies of the Province of Quebec vested in his Excellency in Council as a prerogative essential to the existence of the Dominion; that this great power, while it should never be wantonly exercised, should be fearlessly used for the protection of the fundamental principles of the constitution and for safeguarding the general interests of the people; that in the opinion of this House the passage by the Legislature of the Province of Quebec of an Act entitled “An Act respecting the settlement of the Jesuit estates” is beyond the power of that Legislature; firstly, because it endows from public funds a religious organization, thereby violating the unwritten, but undoubted, constitutional principle of the complete separation of Church and State, and of absolute equality of all denominations before the law; secondly, because it recognizes the usurpation of right by foreign authority—his Holiness the Pope of Rome—in declaring his consent necessary to empower the Provincial Legislature to dispose of a portion of the public domain, and also because the Act is made to depend on his will, and the appropriation of the grant thereby made is subject to the control of the same authority; and, thirdly, because the Society of Jesus is a secret and politico-religious body, the expulsion of which from every Christian community wherein it has had a footing was rendered necessary by its intolerant and mischievous intermeddling with the functions of the civil government.

“ ‘Therefore, this House prays that his Excellency will be graciously pleased to disallow the Act.’

“The force of character necessary to the presentation of this amendment before a hostile House is illustrated in the Parliamentary report of the day in the *Globe* that ‘there was not the faintest murmur of applause as Mr. O’Brien resumed his seat. His speech had been received in dead silence.’

“In the closing passages of this speech Col. O’Brien declared that he and those who stood with him were resolved ‘that this Dominion must remain British and nothing else, and that no