

Let there be no mistake about the refusal of the Government to veto the Bill for the Endowment of the Jesuits. There is nothing in the British North America Act to limit the exercise of the veto power. That it shall not be exercised merely on grounds of ordinary policy, unless the Provincial Legislature has exceeded its jurisdiction, is a good general rule, which once more we commend the Government for observing. The authority given to the Provincial Legislature over certain classes of subjects carries with it, like all authority, a liberty of error which must be respected so long as the legal power is not exceeded and the error is not manifestly subversive—legally or morally—of the principles of the Constitution or of the sacred objects of the State. But it would be preposterous to allege that the framers of the British North America Act, and the Imperial Parliament which passed that Act, did not intend the veto to be used as a safeguard against gross and palpable folly or injustice. What are these Provincial Legislatures, and of what sort of men are they composed, that on the most vital questions society should be delivered unreservedly into their hands? The Acts of an American State Legislature are subject to the veto of the Governor of the State, which is exercised frequently and with the best effect. The Legislature of Quebec has passed an Act compelling the Protestant minority in that Province to contribute to the endowment of a conspiracy avowedly directed against Protestant religion and liberty. It has done this at the instance of an able but unscrupulous politician, who styles himself a Liberal, and whose motives for buying the support of the Jesuits it is impossible to misunderstand. The Act not only contravenes common justice in the most flagrant manner, but is also a moral violation of the Constitution, since, as we have said before, religious equality and the separation of the Church from the State, if not formally proclaimed in the British North America Act, are thoroughly recognized and accepted as the rule of our constant practice, social as well as political. Negatively, indeed, they may be said to be laid down in the Act, in which, in an enumeration evidently intended to be exhaustive of the subjects of importance and capable of specification with which Provincial Legislatures are to have power to deal, no mention is made of religion. There is appended, it is true, a residuary power of legislating on "all matters of a merely local or private nature"; but it is hardly credible that such a subject as religion should have been intended to be tacitly included in a residuary power. No reason, so far as we can see, can be assigned for allowing the Quebec Legislature to pass this Act which might not have been equally assigned for allowing it to pass the Act forcibly converting the provincial bonds or any other measure of repudiation. We may give to the winds then the pretence that Sir JOHN MACDONALD, in allowing the Act to go into operation, has been influenced by any motives but those of party expediency and fear of the French and Catholic vote. The surrender is a decisive proof and an open avowal that those who wield the French and Catholic vote are the masters of the Dominion, and may commit legislative injustice when they please.

But we do not wish to be unfair to the Government. Its conduct in this matter has not been worse or more ignominious than that of the Opposition. Indeed, it may be said that by the conduct of the Opposition it has been placed in a strait in which, having to choose between desertion of its duty to the community and the risk of losing place, it is absolved by party morality for desertion of its duty to the community. The silence of the Opposition leaders when every dictate of patriotism and public morality calls upon them to speak is tantamount to complicity with the act of the Government, and deserves to be visited with at least equal reprobation. An Oppositor which fails to act as the organ of popular right when popular right

is assailed by the Government sinks into a faction, which no right-minded citizen can desire to see restored to power. Never did a political party commit a blunder more disastrous or more disgraceful than the Liberal party of Canada committed when, at the last general election, it allowed itself to be drawn into an alliance with the partisans of RIEL. Both the folly and the dishonour of the step were emphasized by the famous speech made a few short weeks before by Mr. BLAKE, in which he had declared that the political platform should not be built of planks from the scaffold, and that he would use no block of the future. Evidently against his own better judgment, though too much in accordance with his habit, Mr. BLAKE allowed himself to be entangled in an intrigue, the evil consequences of which are not yet exhausted nor likely to be exhausted for many a day. Even the cunning of the wirepuller, to say nothing of the larger wisdom of the statesman, ought to have warned schemers against dragging their party into so palpable a snare. RIEL, rightly or wrongly, had been hanged, and the feeling which had been excited about him among the French, frothy and artificial enough at best, was certain speedily to subside. As soon as it subsided, the French members, who for the moment had been obliged to pander to it, were sure to be brought back by the Tory leader. In the upshot, the Opposition netted at most a gain of half a dozen French seats, while in Ontario it lost fully as many, besides forfeiting its character. A lower price Satan never paid for a political soul. The true policy of a Liberal party in Quebec manifestly is: that of religious equality, repression of ecclesiastical aggrandizement, abolition of tithes, and limitation of the increase of church property. This policy, and the hope of future ascendancy which it carries with it, and which is confirmed by the whole course of events throughout the civilized world, the Opposition renounced in its unhappy eagerness to snatch a victory at a single election. Its present inability to act is the penalty of its fatal error. The pretence of super-sensitive regard for liberty of provincial legislation, which is put forward to cover a palpable betrayal of Liberal principles as well as acquiescence in flagrant iniquity, will be received with no more respect than was the sudden conversion of the Liberal leaders to the belief in the insanity of RIEL.

It is not the political organizations alone, however, or the organs which serve them, that have failed the cause of the country and of public right on this occasion. Other organizations have failed in the same manner, and essentially from the same cause. If Orangemen has any mission to lift above the level of mere cabal, it is that of defending British and Protestant civilization against the assaults of the Roman Catholic priesthood. By the passing of the Jesuits' bill it is brought fairly in the face of the enemy, who advances with the banner of aggression flauntingly nurtured in open and triumphant defiance of Protestant right. The trumpet sounds loud and clear. How do the self-elected champions of Protestantism and liberty act? They make a faint-hearted demonstration from which some of their leading men dissent; then they lay down their arms; go back to the too familiar pay office in which patronage is served out by Mr. MACKENZIE BOWELL, and resume their now established work of paralyzing Protestantism in the interest of a political patron. Their conduct half redeems the Jesuit, who, at all events, does not intrigue against his own cause. Some of them, we are happy to say, were ready to take a line more worthy of their name and profession, but it is too manifest that these are a minority. The apathy of the Protestant Churches, if not so striking as that of the Orangemen, is equally dis-appointing, and it arises from much the

same source. People flatter themselves, because there is no longer an established church or a formal connection between Church and State, that the Church is free, and that the spiritual realm is kept, as the Founder of Christianity ordained, apart from the kingdom of this world. But while the Methodist voter the vote of any Church is a political power and is itself controlled by political considerations, the principle is betrayed just as much as it would be by submission to Royal supremacy: indeed corruption in the subtler form is, as usual, the more profoundly depraving. It is by the political poison in their hearts that all the Churches are kept helpless and speechless in face of a monstrous aggression upon civil rights, committed by their religious foe, and fraught with danger to the interest of the truth which is in their keeping. Even the Evangelical Alliance nervously hushes the voice of protest, probably from the same fear of awkward political results. As to the feeling of the people in regard to this great wrong, there can be no doubt; we receive numberless proofs of it; it finds expression wherever two men speak together on the subject. But official organ or recognized leader it has none. There is nobody to give it utterance in Parliament or carry its protest to the foot of the Throne.

Since the abolition of the temporal power of the popes the energies of the papacy have been wholly turned to spiritual aggrandizement. Ultra-antient doctrines have prevailed, and the Jesuits, as their embodiment, has ruled at Rome. The aims of Jesuitism are not masked or doubtful. They are proclaimed in the Encyclical and Syllabus with a frankness which has made the ears of Christendom tingle. In those manifestoes upon war is declared against the great organic principles of freedom, civil and religious, and of modern civilization. The claims of the Church of Rome to universal dominion, and her right to use force, in other words to persecute, for the maintenance of that dominion, are asserted in language which would have satisfied INNOCENT the Third. The extinction at once of Protestantism and of liberty is the end proposed. What means are deemed lawful to accomplish that end the hideous annals of Jesuit conspiracy tell. The Province of Quebec is now almost losing the character of a civil community; it is being turned into a citadel and arsenal of ecclesiastical aggrandizement and propaganda. Economically it is being fast reduced to that state which the Church of Rome seems to regard as the Christian ideal, in which the people are devoted to holy poverty, while the Church, to save them from temptation, engrosses the wealth. The items of the Church's actual possessions, in the shape of land and buildings, are rated at not less than \$80,000,000; those of her yearly income, independent of these possessions, are rated at not less than \$8,000,000. To this is to be added the wealth of the ecclesiastical orders, of which the amount is unknown, but which in some cases, especially in that of the Sulpicians of Montreal, is certainly very great. To increase this store and the power which goes with it the spiritual tax, wherever it is always at work among the people from their cradles to their graves. A system of finance and money-lending, secretly but actively and skillfully administered, is at the same time aspeping into the coffers of the Church the gains which elsewhere accrue to financial corporations. The British and Protestant element in Quebec is evidently hastening to a doom which the corrupt and servile Toryism of the Province, so far from averting, does all that it can to precipitate. If we have a man among us with the faculties of a leader, independent of the corrupted or intimidated organizations, and with a faith in his convictions strong enough to forego present possession of power and look to the future for recognition, it is about time that he should come to the front. His appearance might change the scene.