

not without a protracted struggle that a majority of the country, designated as dissenters, could legally hold a church, or a burial ground, or dedicate its peaceful occupancy by living worshippers or by the ashes of the dead. Our ecclesiastical history, however, has been furnished by events too recent to need recapitulation to revive our recollections, awaken our emotion, or enforce our duty. We have had struggles here. They would be harder struggles in London.—The hon. member for Kent had better stay at home.

"Taxation without our consent" is, and ever will be an exciting topic; it is vulgarly called, "the argumentum ad pocketum." But in all ages and in all countries, every people have been anxiously alive to these rights of conscience, to those safeguards to independent faith, and to those securities, whether direct or indirect, bearing upon man's eternal relations, without which, as a religious and immortal being, he becomes liable to religious despotism or spiritual slavery. The control of our religious system, admitting it to be controlled at all, is far more important than the control of our monetary system. A nation enlightened by knowledge, human and divine, ever must be, and ever will be, free. But the moment the letters are put upon the better part of man, and those moral powers are enfeebled, upon which his exaltation depends, he becomes fearfully endangered. He must then either submit to grope in the darkness or languish in the degeneracy of the State; or, if all the noble powers within heave against the dreadful incubus, he must waste for relief through the blood, the carnage, and the revolutions, which have involved all Europe in the past, and which are impending over its future destiny, and hope for regeneration. This, it will be said, is not exactly our political or religious condition. We may well rejoice at it. But it is the very degree of light and knowledge and freedom we possess, which enables and disposes us to regard with concern, that element of evil, which we now desire to be swept away. We must not simply regard the amount, the number or seeming magnitude of a constitutional disability; but we must regard the principle violated, the security that principle affords, and the evils to which its abstraction may give birth. Without our wonted precaution against fire, a spark despised has kindled a devastating flame. It is the extinguishment of the spark, which gives the security.—Hampton could well afford to pay the 20s. demanded; but had he and others paid what was demanded, at the time demanded, and upon the principle demanded, they would have been slaves; and that slavery might have descended to us. And whatever a political assembly may say, to soothe the present and beguile the future, he (Mr. Rolph) was not prepared to say what might not be the religious condition of this or some coming generation, if this piece of heaven is allowed to work, and if our legislation upon these religious questions is to be merged in the distant, absorbing, changing and uncontrollable transatlantic power. They only ask, to be sure, for a little supremacy in a small class of cases. No the axe only asked for wood enough to complete its symmetry and handle; but so possessed, it became the small but efficient instrument for prostrating the finest forests.—The people of England, and most emphatically the people of Scotland, have been taught, by history and experience, the importance, the supreme importance, of maintaining their constitutional ascendancy in their own religious and ecclesiastical affairs. We only ask them with their usual gentleness and justice, to sympathize with our corresponding position, rights, and anxieties: It is just one of those powers not to be given or withheld by an arithmetical rule. It is a right which equally affects and interests a few and a multitude; a little church and a large one; the humblest chapel and the most magnificent cathedral; a Solomon's Temple and the hermit's shade; Great Britain and Ireland, and progressive Canada. It is the right which accountable beings in a community claim to guard against undue power from abroad over religious interests of their country, or of any individual in it. The exercise of religious dissension for any people for another, or by any Government for a people, invades the sphere of mind and conscience, and intrudes upon a domain where man is forbidden to reign; a region which he cannot occupy without usurpation, or govern without impurity. We have

good ground, therefore, to claim for ourselves the same right to vindicate and preserve our religious affairs in Canada, as the people enjoy in England and Scotland. The same privileges which belong to their larger parliament, appertain to our own; though to some it may seem comparatively small. Her Majesty is said to have the smallest watch in the world. It may be in a brooch; he believed it is in the facing of a ring—perhaps worn on the hand that shall record our liberation from our constitutional disability. This tiny watch, however, has the same wheels, though so small, and the same component parts as are seen so much larger and more conspicuous in the magnificent chronometer of St. Paul's in London, or of St. Peter's in Rome. And the smaller Canadian Parliament needs the moving powers corresponding to those in the Parent Parliament; that we may keep as good political time in Quebec as Britons do in London; that we may safely determine our longitude in the sea of Canadian politics; that our pendulum may properly vibrate between the safe limits of civil and religious liberty. The birds of the air have nests, and the princes of the earth have palaces; but the Lawgiver has bestowed upon both the very same physical laws—laws which are equally necessary to each for its construction and its maintenance. The air we breathe is as necessary for the moth as for the mammoth; for the insect as for man. And without an atmosphere with those vivifying elements of civil and religious liberty, in which the people of Great Britain exult and breathe and live, our little community cannot politically exist, or exist, must languish. It has been poetically said, the poor black beetle which we tread upon, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies. And Canadians would mourn as much over the funeral obsequies of the Canadian Parliament, as Britons could over the like fate of its more gorgeous parent. We, therefore, call upon the people of England, Ireland and Scotland in their united Parliament, to heal the wound our Constitution has received—to remove the unjust and painful abridgment of our legislative functions—to feel a national pride in elevating instead of depressing, in enlarging, instead of contracting, the political institutions of their fellow countrymen in Canada. Let us remind them by the very draft we now make upon them, that, however some may superciliously regard us as a shrub, we bear a fruit not found on many giant trees; that we have sprung from the roots of the rose, the shamrock and the thistle; that while we are proud of our origin, they may be well proud of their offspring; and we remove them freely to give us the elements necessary for our civilization and future development in this American soil and under American sunshine. It is sometimes cavalierly said, we want nationality. The Scotch have their St. Andrew's Day, the English their St. George's Day, and the Irish their St. Patrick's Day. But, during forty years, he had not known a corresponding jubilee for the national character and people of Canada. The late American colonies have their jubilee of the 4th July, coeval with their emancipation from an erring and unhappy policy. And the magna charta, announced by Simcoe and further sanctioned by the illustrious Durham, ought to be enough to elevate the feelings, cheer the prospects, and animate the nationality of Canadians. But against the letter and spirit of this magna charta, we are still troubled with disability calculated to lower the self-respect and depress the aspiring elements of Canadian character. It seems as if we might be again bound hand and foot by cord-like restrictions on our domestic policy. We can be allowed to legislate freely and unrestrictedly on the clergy reserves. We cannot be unceremoniously disappointed of Imperial pledges and guarantees, as sacred as those national treaties which cannot be repudiated without dishonouring international law and incurring the censure of the civilized world. It is these fetters upon our institutions; it is these dampers upon our energies, even when directed to the all-absorbing subjects of internal improvement and of civil and religious rights, which cause our colonial abasement and our colonial indignities. We cannot have nationality, we cannot stand up in the attitude and with the spirit and with the action of colonial macho, under these depressing agencies and these constitutional inferiorities. Never can we do so until that state is