

mission, it being his duty, as he says, so to do, to sell the property—asking him to see if there is any serious objection in the way of the Government selling the property, pending the final settlement of the Jesuits' Estates. It is sufficiently startling to find such a recital in a British Act of Parliament, and I venture to say it is unheard of, I venture to say that, in all the legislation passed by the Parliaments of Great Britain or the Legislatures of any of the Colonies, you will search in vain to find any so humiliating a statement as this very first paragraph of the Bill presents to you. But that does not seem to excite surprise in the power to which it was addressed, because the answer is in this form:

"I hasten to notify you that, having laid your request before the Holy Father at the audience yesterday, His Holiness was pleased to grant permission to sell the property which belonged to the Jesuit Fathers before they were suppressed,——"

So the permission is given—

"—upon the express condition, however,——"

So the condition is annexed—

"—that the sum to be received be deposited and left at the free disposal of the Holy See."

Thus the Province of Quebec is permitted to legislate. The first step has been gained in the settlement of this important question. The free Parliament of Quebec, entrusted under the British North America Act with important powers, and representing a mixed community, a community with which the Supreme Pontiff of Rome has no power to interfere as a temporal power, asks, and the Supreme Pontiff graciously grants permission to that Legislature, to deal with what, I think I will show to the satisfaction of every member of this House before I close, was recognised as a portion of the public domain. Mr. Mercier did not see his way to allow this condition to be imposed. It could not be at the disposal of the Holy See, but—and to my mind it is a distinction without a difference—it was to be retained as a special deposit to be disposed of hereafter with the sanction of the Holy See. I do not know whether there is very much difference between these two provisions. It is a difference in words, but not a difference in fact or in substance, as the sequel has shown. Practically, it has been a gift to the Holy See, and has been distributed as to His Holiness the Pope seemed best. Then, having obtained this consent, as a condition precedent to the legislation, we find that negotiations were entered upon, and the result of these negotiations is that the lands of the Jesuits' Estates are to be left intact. That is another concession granted by the representative of the Holy See; and, instead of that, compensation in money is to be made, and the claim is presented, which we find amounts to \$2,000,000. As \$1,000,000 of that is the property of this Dominion, I do not think we have got rid of that claim yet. I do not suppose that the Province of Quebec could do more than make an arrangement in regard to that property which belonged to that Province; but, in regard to that which belongs to this Parliament or to this Dominion, I suppose, by-and-bye, we will have our First Minister asking leave—because what can be assented to by the authorities here as right in the Province of Quebec would not be wrong in regard to the property belonging to the Dominion—we may have the First Minister here asking that the portion of that property belonging to the Dominion shall be dealt with by permission of his Holiness at Rome. I find further in these documents the following:—

"I deem it my duty to ask your Eminence if you see any serious objection to the Government's selling the property, pending a final settlement of the question of the Jesuits' Estates."

There is no doubt at all about the meaning of this. There is no doubt about the understanding which is arrived at. Before the Government are put in full possession, and in order that they may be put in full possession of these

estates, there is to be a compensation made, and, finally, the bargain is worked out, and the conditions of the bargain are, what? The conditions are that this arrangement is to be non-effective until it receives the sanction of His Holiness of Rome. It is to be ratified—that is the term used—but it means practically that it might be vetoed, and to make, no doubt, that there was no attempt at conciliation or at sparing the feelings of those who are known to entertain strong feelings on this subject, this matter was not submitted to His Holiness of Rome until it was brought before the Legislature of that Province. Whether that was by arrangement or not, I do not know. Whether it was paying proper respect or not to the Sovereign Pontiff to ask him to express his approval or disapproval, I do not pretend to judge, but the legislation of the Province is clearly made dependent upon the act of His Holiness the Pope of Rome. Not only so—and then I have finished my summary of the Act—but the sum of money which is granted, the \$400,000 granted which is payable out of any money of the public revenue is to be distributed, in effect, though perhaps not in the terms of the contract, under and with the sanction of His Holiness of Rome. Now, that is shortly the meaning of this legislation. I will have finished with the Act when I make a further observation, and I make it now, perhaps, a little out of place, but it must not be altogether lost sight of. This Act in effect does away with the purposes for which the Jesuits' Estates were appropriated, and I think that is a matter of such great importance that I can only feel astonished at the calmness with which my hon. friend from Stanstead (Mr. Colby) regards it, and the indifference with which it has been received among the Protestant portion of the Province of Quebec, as my hon. friend has stated. This Bill puts into the general fund the money which was granted for educational purposes. It misappropriates—I do not use the term in its technical sense, for I quite recognise the right of the Province to use the fund—but from a general standpoint it misappropriates this fund by providing that \$400,000 may be paid thereout to a certain institution. Now, having said so much as to the Act, let me say a word or two as to the property, and that brings me to what might be a long history and a long statement, and I hope the House will not be impatient with me when I deal with this somewhat complicated matter, which I will endeavor to make as plain as I can. I do not accept the theory which I have seen put forward in some quarters, that the Jesuits held their estates in trust for educational purposes. As far as I have been able to examine the deeds—and I have examined the report made in the year 1824—these estates were given to them in fee simple for all time. So far as I can judge from the history of the body at that time, it was not an uncommon thing for the Jesuit Fathers to accumulate both lands and goods in very considerable quantities. I find that one of the accusations made against them was avarice; one of the causes of the suppression of their order shortly after that, was the complaint made by the other orders of the Church, that they were avaricious, and that they accumulated wealth unduly in their order, notwithstanding the vow of poverty which they had taken. But however that may be, I think it is quite plain that they did hold these estates for themselves. Now, then, just let me trace the story of events by which this country became subject to the British Crown. We must never forget—I am afraid that some of my friends from the Province of Quebec do sometimes forget—that this is a British country, that by the fortunes of war that event was decided and the greater half of North America passed under the British Crown; and that being so, effect had to be given to the laws to which the country then became subject. Now, what were those laws? Granting, Sir,—which is not quite accurate—that the Jesuits held these estates at the time of the Conquest—I spoke before of the manner in which they held them originally—but