

Parliament, which represents the whole country, and as no government can afford to lose the support of any province, the power will never be abused. Writing to Lord Carnarvon on the 6th September, 1876, Mr. Edward Blake, for many years leader of the Canadian Liberals, said in regard to this :

“The Parliament of Canada is composed of the representatives of the seven provinces, each of which has, in its provincial character, like political rights. Ministers whose tenure of office depends upon their retaining the confidence of a parliament so composed are not likely to abuse a power, the exercise of which would obviously be jealously watched by representatives from the province, and each is alike interested in the maintenance of provincial rights, and therefore, in the principles upon which the power of disallowance is exercised. For the same reason, any abuse by ministers of their power would be quickly followed by the application of the constitutional remedy by parliament. The experience of ten years during which this power has been exercised does not indicate that the apprehended evils will follow.”

This was written before the Liberal agitation in Ontario, on account of the disallowance of the Rivers and Streams Act. This agitation appears to have altered Mr. Blake's view of the matter, but it seems to me that the fact that the Liberals in Ontario have been able to make so much political capital out of the disallowance of an Act in which the people in general were not greatly interested, proves that no government depending upon popular support, could with impunity arbitrarily exercise the veto power. With regard to the advisability of disallowing Manitoba's railway charters there was much difference of opinion in Canada, but it only required a short agitation in Manitoba, accompanied by expressions of sympathy from other parts of the Dominion, to induce the Dominion Government to discontinue the policy of disallowance, as soon as it could make arrangements with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the purchase of its monopoly privileges. Of course, if Ireland has no representation in the British parliament, as Mr. Gladstone proposes, there will be no such check upon arbitrary disallowance as exists in Canada. Many Canadians who oppose the abolition of the power to veto provin-