

apanages of the Kings of England, became as thoroughly French as Isle de France or Berri.

In India and in the numerous islands of the Atlantic or the Indian Ocean, once under French rule and now British, every vestige of French occupation and civilisation disappeared — with the insignificant exception of Mauritius and the puny trade posts of Pondichéry and Mahé.

In America, had England remained in possession of her own colonies, mostly peopled by settlers speaking English and practising all religions but the Roman Catholic (Maryland excepted), the fate of New France would likely have been similar to that of French Hindustan. The moral conquest would soon have followed the military and political occupation. But Providence had decreed otherwise. The English Royalists of Virginia and Carolina, the stern Puritans and Covenanters of New England, the mild Quakers of Pennsylvania, as well as the half-British and half-Dutch population of what was once New Amsterdam, all rebelled against the British King, and seceded from the British Empire. Alone, the new French and Catholic subjects of England remained faithful to their oath of allegiance and enabled Great Britain to keep hold of her new conquered dependency, while she was losing each and every one of the thirteen colonies established and peopled by her own sons.

Partly from gratitude, I presume, and largely from shrewd and well calculated policy, the British government thought proper to acknowledge to the French Canadians the right to live nationally, and granted them a guarded measure of political independence. Having found that the moral influence of the Roman Catholic Church was the safest guarantee of their own political influence, they granted to the authorities of that Church a measure of respect and liberty which was still denied to the Roman Catholics of Great Britain or other parts of the Empire. True, in the treaty of Paris, France had stipulated that the existence of the Roman Catholic Church would be acknowledged and respected in the colony. But France was then powerless to enforce any treaty provision against the ill-will of Great-Britain; and past and subsequent events have proved that treaty stipulations are frequently broken, when they are not backed either by force in the hands of the stipulator or by self interest on the part of the consenting party. Fortunately for French Canada, British self interest, long distance from England and territorial closeness to the American Republic, were all cause which militated in her favour and enabled her to secure religious and civil liberty, and eventually political autonomy, long before Ireland, far from America and close to England, was capable of achieving the same enviable result.

Upon the history of the half-secular struggle for Home Rule in Canada, I need not dwell at present. In justice to all, however, it should be remembered that although the French were the pioneers in this respect, as they have been in all spheres of civilisation in America, they were soon aided by a noble phalanx of English and Scotch settlers, and even by numerous descendants of United Em-