

Probably, never at any time did he wield more power than under the administration of Sir James H. Craig. His views were so much in unison with those of Sir James, that His Excellency deputed him to England, with a public mission threefold in its scope, the ostensible object of which was first, "to endeavor to get the Imperial Government to amend or suspend the Constitution ; secondly, to render the Government independent of the people, by appropriating towards it the revenues accruing from the estates of the Sulpicians* of Montreal, and of the Order of the Jesuits ; thirdly, to seize the patronage exercised by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec, the *cures* or church livings in his diocese, contending that no Roman Catholic Bishop really existed in Canada, none having been recognized by the Crown.

It has been stated that he had a fair chance of succeeding on two points, had not the great Lord Chancellor, Eldon, intervened to thwart his scheme. The correspondence exchanged between Mr. Ryland and His Excellency Sir James H. Craig, preserved in the sixth volume of Christie's History of Canada, exhibits Mr. Ryland at his best, and has led some to infer that "had he been cast in a different sphere, where his talents and attainments would have been more properly appreciated and directed," he would have played a conspicuous part. We find the Beauport statesman in 1810, in London,† consulted on Canadian affairs by the leading English politicians, and some of the proudest peers. The

* By an ordinance of the Special Council, obtained through Sir Poulet Thompson, in the troublous times of 1838-41, these gentlemen made safe their well-beloved charter.

† Mr. Ryland, writing to Sir James Craig, under date of 23rd August, 1810, thus describes his interview with eight Ministers of State, the Earl of Liverpool, Lord Bathurst, Mr. Percival, Mr. Peel, Lord Camden, the Marquis of Wellesey, &c. On entering the room I found it was a meeting of the Cabinet Ministers, eight in number. Lord Liverpool desired me to take a seat between him and Mr. Percival..... I then repeated an observation I had made in my first interview with Lord Liverpool, concerning Bédard in particular, as the chief leader of the anti-government party, who has now so committed himself as to render it impossible he be employed.....

H. W. RYLAND.

—Christie's History of Canada.