

LESSONS OF EUCHARISTIC CONFERENCE.

V.

The injury to a country ruled by a Legislature which Roman Catholics control does not end with misappropriation of public money or the breaking of Constitutional rule and practice. There is a further result. The dominance of a clerical party, the ease with which it defies opposition and victoriously carries out its purposes, creates a craven fear in the minority which leads to abject submission to whatever the majority proposes. The active and defiant opposition which was shown at first is succeeded by a complacent yielding, which ends in connivance, sometimes open assistance, in carrying out the designs of legislators who draw their inspiration from the black robes who hover in the background. Nothing is more humiliating than the spectacle of Protestants urging non-resistance to measures that are suicidal to civil liberty, counselling silence and compliance because opposition would be futile, and holding out the prospect of getting "something" from the party in power. The dog that has been kicked into submission, not even emitting a growl, will be given a bone. The poor fellow who feels the hand of a stranger in his pockets will be left a shilling or two if he smilingly says to his assailant, "It is all right." I cannot better convey an idea of this change in the sentiment of Protestants, this peculiar atmosphere, produced by forty-five years of Home Rule in the Province of Quebec, than by describing the Eucharistic Congress which was held in Montreal in September, 1910. That such a Congress should have been held in Montreal was not remarkable, for Catholics form the majority of its citizens; but the manner in which the members of that Congress were received, the perversion of municipal and Parliamentary functions to do them

honour, the glorification of the purpose of that Congress by Protestants, was remarkable, and of a significance which did not appear on the surface. With an assemblage of Catholics for a purpose peculiarly ecclesiastical, outsiders have naught to do beyond securing that their meetings be undisturbed, that they come and go in peace; but when such a gathering is made the occasion of showing how the Provincial and Federal Government is subservient to it, public money used to meet its expenses, troops detailed to add to its pomp, and the streets of a great city placed under its control, there is occasion for protest and pointing out the lessons it brings home to the Unionists of Ireland.

To hold a convention in honour of the Eucharist is modern; the first was held in 1899. The object of these annual gatherings is to glorify the alleged power of the priest to convert a wafer of flour into the body, blood, and divinity of Christ. They are not held for the benefit of Catholics, who do not need to be told that, for they already believe their priests have that power, but to flaunt the doctrine, with all the emphasis numbers and gorgeous ceremonial can give, in the face of the world, in the expectation of spreading it. These congresses, while designed to impress the public mind with the strength and magnificence of the Papacy, have for their actual motive the making of converts. The Congress came to Montreal as a propaganda of Papal doctrine.

The occasion was one for a conscientious upholding of their convictions by believers in the pure Evangel. How the Protestants of Quebec acted will appear from the narrative. Lord Strathcona is a Protestant, yet he contributed more munificently to the success of the Congress than any Catholic. The Canadian railway and steamship service was placed at the disposal of the delegates, and Lord Strathcona's magnificent mansion in Montreal, with its household and equip-