

THE JESUITS VS. THE MALL.

The Hearing of the Appeal from the Interlocutory Judgment De- livered by Judge Loranger.

The case of the Mail Printing Company (defendants in court below) appellants, and the Society of Jesus (plaintiffs below), respondents, came on for hearing, Thursday last, before Chief Justice Denison, Judge Teasler, Green, Chouinard and Bossé. This was an appeal from an interlocutory judgment striking out portions of the appellants' exception to the form to an action for \$50,000 damages for libel.

Mr. Lafamme, Q.C., and Mr. Smith, appeared for the appellants, and Messrs. Curran, Q.C., Geoffroy, Q.C., and Lemaitre for the respondents. Mr. Lafamme, Q.C., in opening the argument for the appellants, said the question at present was one of procedure. The action was brought by the Company of Jesus against the Mail Printing Company of Toronto, to recover \$50,000 damages for alleged libel. The plaintiff was described in the writ as "The Company of Jesus, a body politic and corporate having its principal establishment in the city and district of Montreal." The defendant pleaded an exception to the form, denying the quality assumed by the plaintiff and disputing its right to sue as a body politic and corporate for the reasons enumerated at length in the exception, which alleged the plaintiff's act of incorporation, 50 Victoria, chapter 25 (Quebec), to be unconstitutional and ultra vires of the Legislature of the province of Quebec. The exception to the form was as follows:—

The said defendant without entering into the merits of the present action and demand for exception to the form, which is irregular, immaterial, and void, and ought to be so declared by this honorable court and be set aside, and the defendant freed from further answering the same for the following among other reasons:—

1. Because the said plaintiffs, the so-called Compagnie de Jesus, or Society of Jesus, is a body politic and corporate as is falsely alleged in the writ and declaration in this cause.

2. Because said society hath no right to and cannot appear in this court and plead in said name of Compagnie de Jesus.

3. Because the act of the Legislature of this province (50 Victoria, chap. 25), whereby the said plaintiffs are made a body politic and corporate, was and is ultra vires of the said Legislature, and was never of any legal force or effect.

4. Because all the members of the said society whom the said act purports to erect into a corporation are, by the laws of the British Empire in force in this province, and in all laws of the province, and by the solemn vows which they have taken as such, including a vow of unconditional, absolute and passive obedience to the general or superior of their order or society, and by the rules and regulations of their society they are incapable of exercising any civil rights in this province, or of performing any of the necessary functions of members of an aggregate corporation such as the said act purports to create, and the said Legislature is incompetent to constitute them a corporation or declare them a body in this province.

5. Because the rules and regulations of the said society to which the said act purports to give the force and effect of laws, and which are binding upon said society and all the members thereof, prevent the said society or any of its members from holding property or exercising any of the functions or franchises which the said act purports to confer upon them.

6. Because the said act is repugnant to Imperial statutes and laws having the force of law in this province, and in effect purports to alter and amend the said statutes relating to and affecting said society, and to the statute relating to the Queen's supremacy (1st Elizabeth, chapter 1), and to the Quebec act (George 3rd, chapter 83), and in effect purports to give the force of law to rules and regulations of the said society which require all the members thereof to give primary allegiance and obedience to a foreign and alien power and authority, and to the Pope, to the General of their Order and to the Pope.

7. Because the said Legislature has only the right to incorporate "Companies with Provincial Objects," and the objects of the said society are not provincial.

8. Because the said Legislature not having the general right to incorporate companies or to create corporations, but only the above mentioned limited or restricted right, the objects of corporations purporting to be created by it should appear in the act or instrument of incorporation; and the said act (50 Victoria, chapter 25) does not disclose, define or set forth the objects of the said society, and does not in any way restrict it to provincial objects, but, on the contrary, implicitly purports to authorize it to follow and pursue objects that are not provincial.

9. Because the said act purports to declare a foreign and alien society whose objects are necessarily extra-provincial, a corporate body.

10. Because the objects of the said society are not provincial but extend beyond the province of Quebec and even beyond the Dominion of Canada and the British Empire, into every quarter of the globe, and the said society by its constitution and the rules which govern its very existence has a solidarity among its members throughout the world, and an indivisibility which prevents its being in any sense "provincial" within the meaning of the British North America act. And the said society and every member thereof, by solemn vows and obligations, and all that it or they can possess, are unconditionally subjected to a head or General who is an alien and not residing within the province of the British Empire, and who under the rules and regulations of said society, could now become a British subject, or conform himself to the laws of the Empire in force in this province.

11. Because the constitution and objects of the said society are inconsistent and incompatible with the constitution of this Province and of the Dominion of Canada, which is similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

12. Because the objects of the said society are the teaching, promulgation and propagation of the following doctrines and principles, which are inconsistent and incompatible with, and contrary to and subversive of the constitution of this province, and of the Dominion of Canada, and of the United Kingdom, and of the supremacy and prerogative of the Queen, and which said Legislature is not competent to authorize, that is to say, inter alia:—

A. That the Church of Rome is superior to the State and that the Legislature of Quebec has no right to legislate upon all the subjects assigned to it by the British North America act, and the constitution, without the permission and consent of the authorities of the said church.

B. That the Pope of Rome has the right to depose sovereigns and that he has the right to assume subjects from their allegiance.

C. That the Legislature of this province has not the exclusive right to make laws as to "The Solemnization of Marriage in this Province," as assigned to it by the British North America act, but that it is subject with respect thereto to the Church and the Pope of Rome.

D. That the Legislature of this province has not the exclusive right to make laws as to civil rights in this province subject to the constitution of this province and to the Dominion of Canada, and that, so far as at least as respects the rights of those professing the Roman Catholic religion, and especially the clergy of said church, and the members of said society, the said Legislature is subject to the Church and to the Pope.

E. That the Legislature of this province has not the exclusive right to make laws as to the capacity or qualification of the persons

who were to be incorporated. The appellants had a right to show that the legislature had been deceived, and they wished to show this by reference to the votes taken by members of the House of Assembly on the question put by the Chief Justice yesterday, he would say that if the Legislature incorporated three persons who were expressly stated to be outlawed, it would be difficult to contest their right to do so. But if the legislature incorporated three persons by name, and it was afterwards shown that they were outlawed, that the statute would remain without effect. There was another point which he considered very important, No. 10, which had been struck out, declared that the objects of the society were not provincial, but extend beyond the province and the Dominion and the British Empire, and the society has an indivisibility which prevents it being in any sense provincial within the meaning of the B.N.A. act. Now, who were incorporated? The preamble of the act to incorporate the "Society of Jesus," reads as follows:—"Whereas the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus have prayed to be constituted into a corporation; and whereas it is expedient to constitute such religious community into a body politic corporate like the other religious communities of this province." The act then purports to incorporate the Society of Jesus as a body politic corporate over the whole world. It was not such a society as the local Legislature had a right to incorporate within the meaning of the B.N.A. act. The local Legislature had no right to incorporate all the members of the Society of Jesus, with their rules and regulations,—a society where the members are nothing and the General is everything.

The Chief Justice—It is another Salvation army. Mr. Lafamme—Yes, it is a good deal like the Salvation army. The learned counsel proceeded to read from several authors to show that the Jesuits had not been favorably regarded in England, and that the laws in force in this province were entirely subject to an alien head, and at a word from him the persons who had applied for incorporation might disappear. Mr. Geoffroy—We would liquidate them then.

Mr. Smith followed upon the same side, and cited the case of Low v. The Montreal Telegraph Company, Ltd., 1887, 12 S.C.R. 381, in which the court laid down the rule that the merits of a plea cannot be tested upon a motion to reject it. The only question presenting itself now was whether the exception to the form was sufficiently libelled. That was all that was raised by the motion, and the appellants thereupon submitted that the question was not whether the allegations of the exceptions were sound or unsound as propositions of law, but merely whether they were stated with sufficient clearness to enable the plaintiffs to answer them. It was plainly stated in the exception that by the constitution and rules there was an absolute solidarity and indivisibility of the Society of Jesus, and that the members would prevent section or portion of it from being validly incorporated as a provincial company; that this was emphasized by the relation of absolute subjection of all its members by solemn vows and obligations to a General, who is an alien, and not resident within the British Empire. These allegations were sufficiently explicit to permit the plaintiffs to answer in law and in fact, and the parties should have been allowed to go to proof upon them.

Mr. Geoffroy, Q.C., for the respondents, answered that it was plain in the exception that by the constitution and rules there was an absolute solidarity and indivisibility of the Society of Jesus, and that the members would prevent section or portion of it from being validly incorporated as a provincial company; that this was emphasized by the relation of absolute subjection of all its members by solemn vows and obligations to a General, who is an alien, and not resident within the British Empire. These allegations were sufficiently explicit to permit the plaintiffs to answer in law and in fact, and the parties should have been allowed to go to proof upon them.

Mr. Lafamme—Our first answer is: Can such a question be raised upon a motion? If the facts alleged in the exception are not sufficient to take away the status of the plaintiff, that is a matter of defence; but it is not a matter of such slight importance that it can be attacked and thrown out on a motion.

Mr. Justice Cross—Suppose the Legislature incorporated thieves and vagabonds? Mr. Lafamme—They are living beings. The Legislature has authority to incorporate any one it pleases, but they must be existing beings; they must be answerable to the law. But here our contention is the Legislature has incorporated persons who have no civil existence and who are incapable of performing any of the functions of members of a corporation. By their vows and their rules they cannot possess property; they have no will of their own; they are subject to the will of another person who is not a subject of this realm. It must be inferred that they have deceived the Legislature; that they obtained their act of incorporation by fraudulent pretences. The party really incorporated, though not intended to be, is a foreign power. The courts, we contend, are entitled to see whether the Legislature has not been deceived.

Mr. Justice Cross—You speak of these individuals as being civilly dead. Under what article of the Code do they come? Mr. Lafamme—We allege that they are civilly dead, and for the present it must be assumed that our allegations are true. We don't think the merits come up at all now—only the sufficiency of the allegations. The Legislature has before it five individuals—three of them British subjects—who claimed to be incorporated, and they were incorporated, and naturally too, for the Legislature could not know that they were civilly dead.

The Chief Justice—How are they civilly dead? Mr. Lafamme—It is alleged they have made a vow never to own any property.

The Chief Justice—Supposing they have made such a vow, if one of the members leaves the society and buys land in Montreal, will he not have a title to that property? Mr. Lafamme—Then he is no more a Jesuit.

The Chief Justice—We have several examples of corporations composed of persons civilly dead, such as the Hotel Dieu; yet they are incorporated by the Legislature.

Mr. Lafamme—Yes; but they are incorporated as having their principal seat within the province.

The Chief Justice—I don't suppose the Act of incorporation of the Jesuits authorized them to purchase land in Russia or elsewhere out of the province.

Mr. Lafamme—The question is not that. Our religious corporations are in the position of corporations within the province. But these persons are members of a foreign corporation, who have renounced all civil rights and who cannot hold any real estate.

The Chief Justice—Is there any law to prevent a member of the society from breaking his vows? Mr. Lafamme—No.

The Chief Justice—Then the vow is binding only so long as he remains in the order.

Mr. Lafamme—I admit that. He can marry if he likes. But to return to my argument. I say the Legislature was deceived. These individuals pretended to act as corporations, but they are civilly dead.

Mr. Justice Cross—The power given by the statute, which would prevail? The Chief Justice—The power is given by the statute, which would prevail. The Chief Justice—The power is given by the statute, which would prevail.

Mr. Lafamme—Then my argument comes in, that the Legislature was deceived.

Mr. Justice Cross—Can we investigate that? Of course that is aside from the question whether it was right to throw these allegations out of your plea. It seems to me it was competent for you to speak of those regulations in your plea, the Legislature having recognized them.

The Chief Justice—It seems to me that the rules and regulations referred to in the statute are not those which regulate the Order of Jesus, but that they are the rules which shall be passed by this corporation then constituted. It is not the existing rules at all. I wish to ask you Mr. Lafamme, suppose two or more outlaws without civil rights are incorporated, could a court of justice set aside that incorporation?

Mr. Lafamme—I say, yes.

It being past 4 o'clock, the hearing of the case was adjourned.

Mr. Lafamme, in resuming on Friday said his clients did not contest the right of the local Legislature to create any corporation whatsoever, but that they were in complete ignorance as to the capacity or qualification of the persons

News of the Week.

Five cotton mills at Blackhawk, running 120,000 spindles, have resumed work. M. Goblet has abandoned the contest for a seat in the chamber of Deputies. De Giers, the Russian Foreign Minister, will go to Berlin during the czar's visit. The Mexican Consul at Antwerp, who committed suicide recently, was raised by losses at the gaming tables. A theatre at Mantua was burned on Wednesday. Two workmen were killed. The fire was incendiary. The German Government has decided that no measures shall be taken in retaliation for the incursions of the Italian frontier.

Van H. Smith first lord of the treasury, has announced that he has recently erected at Portsea, which cost \$22,000. The Duke of Coimbra, brother of the King of Portugal, is dead. He was 42 years old. He was a general of division and inspector general of cavalry.

Despatches from Orise say the Christians are fleeing to the mountains. Their cattle and other property are being stolen by the Turks. Many Christians have been imprisoned. The stevedores on the East India dock, London, who quitted work on the ground that the companies were not engaging the old hands as they agreed to do, have gone back to work.

Mr. John Loog, Liberal, has been elected to fill the vacancy in the House of Commons for Dundee caused by the death of Joseph P. B. Firth, also a Liberal. Mr. Loog was not opposed.

The owners of the steamer "Tonic" intend to substitute a smaller propeller for the one now in use on that vessel. It is believed that with a smaller propeller the speed of the steamer will be increased.

At the Sunday Observance congress at Paris a letter was read from Mr. Gladstone, who wrote that he attributed his long life and preserved faculties in great part to the privilege of Sunday rest.

Thirty thousand persons at Berne, the number required by the law, have signed a petition demanding a plebiscite to decide the question of the creation of the office of public prosecutor to assist the Swiss federal police.

A teacher at Odessa named Sause committed suicide. His wife was so much affected that she lost her reason, killed her five children, carried their bodies to the third story window and threw them out on the ground. She then threw herself out of the window.

Prince Bismarck received over 1000 telegrams of congratulation on the twenty-seventh anniversary of his appointment as President of the Prussian Cabinet. The streets of Friedrichsruhe were decked with bunting in honor of the occasion. At night there were illuminations.

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The Cologne Gazette says: General Obruchoff, chief of the general staff of the Russian army, urged that a second line of rails be laid to the western frontier. In spite of the opposition of the Minister of Finance the project is being carried out. This measure comprises the strategic network of Russian railways, increasing their capacity to mass troops on the German frontier.

At Monor, Hungary, Tuesday the Emperor Francis Joseph thanked the people cordily for their welcome and referred almost angrily to an insult offered during the recent manoeuvres to Austria and her flag. He hoped the miscreants guilty of the insult would be punished. During the manoeuvres some discontent was observed in the ranks of the Austrians instead of the Hungarian flag. A similar incident occurred at Uilo. The leading papers condemn the insult.

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Pagenstobber & Co, exporters of petroleum, started a New York, have assigned. The firm's liabilities are \$300,000.

Secretary Tracy, in his forthcoming report on naval matters, will recommend the advisability of constructing ten additional steel cruisers.

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Pneumonia has broken out among the cattle of Chester county, Penn., and adjoining counties. It is necessary to the destruction of great numbers of valuable animals.

An agitation is on foot to obtain the free importation of lead from Mexico into the United States, on the ground that the duty interferes with the smelting business and is detrimental to trade.

Thirteen unlawful cohabitants, violators of the Edmunds Law, have received sentence in the first district court at Utah. They refused to promise obedience to the law, and were sent to the penitentiary for terms of from two to six months.

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Charlottesville, Virginia, is in a state of terror through the evident determination of unknown incendiaries to destroy the place. Tuesday morning the first attempt was made, and by noon the fire department had been called out four times. Again by three o'clock four fires were started at once, all under such circumstances as to leave no doubt of incendiarism. Property valued at over \$100,000 was destroyed. A number of men are patrolling the streets with Winchester rifles, and every suspicious character is made to give an account of himself. So far no arrests have been made.

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J. J. Heffernan, wanted by the police in connection with the Cronin murder, has been found at Seattle, W. T. He denies that he had anything to do with the murder.

Pneumonia has broken out among the cattle of Chester county, Penn., and adjoining counties. It is necessary to the destruction of great numbers of valuable animals.

An agitation is on foot to obtain the free importation of lead from Mexico into the United States, on the ground that the duty interferes with the smelting business and is detrimental to trade.

Thirteen unlawful cohabitants, violators of the Edmunds Law, have received sentence in the first district court at Utah. They refused to promise obedience to the law, and were sent to the penitentiary for terms of from two to six months.

The Loflin and Rand powder mills at Orono, Pa., blew up Friday morning. William Shrop, Samuel Shotel and Henry Reed were killed, and a number of workmen injured. Nearly all the window glass in Orono was shattered.

The schooner "Alpha," Captain Hamill, having on board the owner, J. J. Kuehn, formerly special deputy collector, his son and a crew