

tical intrigues and social interference had set all parties against them. A year later saw them meet the same fate in Naples. Finally, in 1773, while still enjoying in New France, under a Protestant Government, that which was denied them in Old France under a Roman Catholic sovereign, Pope Clement XIV., acting at the desire of all those European Powers who had been suffering from the machinations of the Society, absolutely suppressed and abolished it. His reasons for doing so, as stated in the Bull which decreed its suppression were—the acts of its members in defiance of their own constitution, which forbade them to meddle in politics; the injury caused by their quarrels with local religious authorities, and other religious orders; their conformity to heathen usages in China and other Eastern lands; and the disturbances they had made in Roman Catholic countries, which caused the sovereigns thereof, of the same religion, to expel them from their dominions. And so the Bull goes on to say that seeing the Society had ceased to fulfil the intention of its institution, the Pope declares it necessary, for the peace of the Church, that it should be suppressed, extinguished, abolished, and abrogated forever, with all its rites, houses, colleges, schools and hospitals. Provision was further made for taking over and administering the property of the Society and for the conduct of its members.

Such, then, was the position of affairs in 1774, when the British Government, recognizing the fact that by the highest authority known to the Roman Church, and admitted by it as having absolute control, the Society had ceased to exist as a corporate or ecclesiastical body, gave instructions to the Governor-General of Canada to assume possession of its property as escheated to the Crown. In this the British Government violated no pledge—broke no contract. It simply took official notice of an event which had happened—of the demise of a society which left no heirs nor successors, as they might of the demise of an individual similarly situated. The property passed to the Crown as a matter of law, and of right. It could pass only to the Crown, whatever its ultimate destination might be, for there was no one else to receive it.

The manner in which the British Government exercised its rights was in perfect keeping with the good faith with which it had observed its treaty obligations throughout. Having assumed the property which had devolved upon it by the dissolution of the Society, it permitted those of the Jesuits who chose to remain to continue in possession till 1800, when the death of the survivor took place; and then it recognized the trusts attaching to the property, and, as far as circumstances permitted, it executed them. It received with favor the petitions of the Quebec House of Assembly, who, first in 1793, and on subsequent occasions, asked that the Jesuit estates should form a fund for the purpose of education, and finally, in 1831, Lord Goderich fully admitted the principle, and directed that the estates should be applied inviolably and exclusively for promoting education, as, in fact, they had been applied for many years previously. For that purpose the Government handed them over to the Province, in whose possession they have remained, and for whose benefit they have been used