

8. That their establishment has tended to dwarf the importance of the more truly local bodies as well as to weaken the Central Government, both of which should be strong; and which in combination are quite equal to the proper performance of the Governmental duties of the country.

9. That the present electoral system being based solely upon numbers, tends (except for certain fortuitous circumstances) to the disfranchisement of certain classes, and seems to demand some filtering or rectifying process which should render its results innocuous.

Now I have no favorite nostrum to air, no Platonic Republic, or other Utopian project to submit for popular acceptance, or rejection; but if the line of argument followed will bear criticism, if the difficulties pointed out are not illusory but real—a reconsideration of the whole question by the leaders of public opinion may be entered upon, without subjecting themselves to the charge of desiring change for its own sake.

The following questions bearing upon the matter, may be fairly submitted for discussion to the Canadian Press, and if discussed in a fair and patriotic spirit, and with the sole view of reaching a truthful solution, their consideration cannot but result beneficially to the community.

1st. Is not the machinery of the Dominion Government in association with the existing, or a modified system of Municipal, Township and County Councils, quite sufficient for the wants of the country?

2nd. Is the representation of minorities desirable, and if so, cannot some feasible method of securing it be discovered?

3rd. Cannot some plan be devised, whereby the administration of the day may be less subject than at present to undue influences on the part of individual members of the Legislative Branch? And would not a thorough reform of the Civil Service, and the abolition of the system of patronage, go far to remedy the evil referred to?

4th. Is it possible to devise some scheme which would permit of at least a few of the Legislative body being chosen, by a picked body responsible to the people, but not merely delegates chosen with a view to this duty?

5. Is there no way of restraining the tendency towards a too prodigal expenditure by Municipal bodies?

With reference to the first, pointing as it does, if answered affirmatively, to the abolition of the Provincial Governments, I have nothing further to say than has already been said. I am quite aware that the proposition will evoke, at the outset, a general, if not almost universal opposition in political circles, inasmuch as it would relegate to a narrower sphere, and one pecuniarily less desirable, many who now occupy leading positions. Besides, re-organization involves hard, continuous and painstaking effort even to achieve in theory, and still harder to lay acceptably before the people in such a way as to command their approval. Ennui and laissez-faire are the most powerful motors (if I may use a paradoxical expression) in the political world; and it requires a bold man to attack them especially when many who should co-operate with him are sure to be found in the ranks of the enemy. But the main objection urged will probably be, that the very *raison d'être* of the Provincial Governments, was the determination on the part of the Provinces, each partaking of marked national and religious characteristics, to retain in their own hands, the control of local legislation. As regards this, although I doubt very much whether the people were half so anxious on this behalf, as were politicians, and ecclesiastics—a compact is a compact, and should in spirit, be rigidly adhered to. Inasmuch, however, as the tendency of any change in the direction indicated, would be to throw the powers and privileges now granted to the provinces, into the hands of smaller bodies