

in its attempted passage through a Senate possessing a small hostile political majority. On the other hand, many a measure having passed through both Houses has come to an untimely end at the hands of the President's veto. Thus we see that the Presidential power, while effective in clogging the wheels of legislative machinery, is most important in furthering legislative progress. Again, while a British Cabinet is generally the representative of the majority of the people, the American President is often the representative of the minority. And this is not an accident, such as may occur in a general election under an unfair system of distribution of seats—for the system of electing a President was designed by the framers of the Constitution as a salutary check upon popular passion and rashness of judgment. The President was and is elected by men chosen by the people of the States; this body is known as the Electoral College. The intention was that this College—chosen by the States, not by the popular vote of the nation—should exercise a free choice in selecting the President, and not merely be instruments in registering the will of their States. Now, the original purpose of the Electoral College is lost sight of, and the written Constitution and the unwritten Constitution are directly in conflict. The electors still choose the President, but the votes they cast are the votes of the majorities of the States they represent. Under this system a majority of *one* in the State of New York will give thirty-six electoral votes to one candidate for the Presidency, while a majority of 140,000 in Texas will not give more than the thirteen electoral votes of that State to its favourite candidate. The result is that Hayes, with a popular minority of a quarter of a million, was elected over Tilden; and Cleveland, with a popular majority, was defeated by

Harrison. This is one of the anomalies of the Constitution, which proves that the presumed most Democratic nation in the world is really less controlled by the people than many nations with monarchical forms of government.

If now we turn to our Canadian Constitution, and enquire which of these two systems—the Cabinet or Presidential—prevails, we must answer, that it is the Cabinet System, in its fullest development. In all essentials we have faithfully copied the British Constitution in our form of Executive Government, and in the relations we have established between the Ministry and Parliament on the one hand, and the Ministry and the Crown, or representative of the Crown on the other hand. And this is not true simply of the Dominion, but of each Province, no matter how small the population. Our system of Responsible Government is, then, but a reflex of the British system. Our Governor-General and the various Lieutenant-Governors represent, so far as their legislative and executive functions are concerned, the Crown in English politics—their duties are more nominal than real. Like the British sovereign they have certain nominal rights, which, it is expected, they shall never exercise; and which, if exercised, would create a storm of indignation. The ruling force in Canada between one general election and another is the Ministry. In fact, if the history of the last fifteen years is to count for anything, we may conclude that during the period between general elections, the Ministry is practically absolute, and that instead of the Executive being controlled by Parliament, the extreme development of partyism has made it possible for the Ministry to dictate to Parliament. This may, however, be a passing evil, a phase of our political development which will soon vanish.