

THE NATIONAL FEELING OF NOVA SCOTIA.

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A NATIONAL feeling is growing up in Canada. It is clear, however, that our national sentiment is, like the sun in autumn, late in rising. Twenty-five years of union has not yet produced that strong individuality of nationalism which attracts the flower of the old world and surplus wealth of the people north of or upon the 49th parallel of north latitude. In seeking some explanation of this, I am led to suspect that the educational system of Canada has not paid any particular attention to the creation of Canadianism during the epoch of union. I am impelled to this conclusion by a scrutiny of the school life and system of Nova Scotia. The scholar and the school in Nova Scotia are thoroughly insular in their prejudices. There is a deep passive resistance to the Federal idea in the character of the Nova Scotian and I am seriously inclined to believe that under present conditions it is going to be as impossible to Canadianize Nova Scotia, as the French education of Quebec found it to Franco-Canadianize Acadia. If there is one thing that is being cherished, inculcated and taught in the schools of Nova Scotia, it is Nova Scotianism and the individuality of Nova Scotia. It is tacitly understood between scholar and teacher that Canada is an appendage which is surely quite the reverse of the Federal idea. The Federal idea aims at inculcating in the minds of the people, especially through the medium of the school, that Nova Scotia is an appendage of Canada. As a matter of form the Nova Scotian admits this, but as a matter of fact he denies it. Nova Scotia is so isolated from the great volume of traffic which circulates

through the Dominion that the province has, as yet, little sympathy with Canada. In summer the great highway of the St. Lawrence practically demonstrates that Canada begins at Montreal and in winter the traffic falls off into Portland and Boston. Traffic, the circulation of trade are the great binders together of peoples, and we find that the mighty volume of such, incident to the acceptance of Canada, as the short route to Europe, Australia and the East ignores Nova Scotia almost entirely. Nova Scotia the peninsula is shut off from it all. Even the Intercolonial Railway of Canada is not holding its own as a through route to the sea, and, after all, it seems quite natural that, these things considered, there should be a greater Nova Scotian sentiment in Nova Scotia than there is a Canadian in Canada. The Federal idea is excellent but it is not yet approved successful.

When adopted on the gigantic scale of the Americas or Canadas, its progress is slow. In the United States, where it has been longest tried, it is difficult to trace the good it has done to 60,000,000 people, steadily arraying themselves against themselves as the East, the West, the South and the Middle States and all deeply involved in debt. The Nova Scotian Parliament is on record as having passed a resolution in favor of secession from the Canadas so recently as a few years ago, and I am bound to admit that both in and out of the schools the youth of the province are instinctively Independents. If this is to be repaired and Nova Scotia drawn more closely into Canada, many reforms must be instituted and much more inducement held out to scholar and teacher to become Canadian.