

CONCERNING CITIZENSHIP.



THE deep, personal interest which the present writer has taken in all that concerns the University of Ottawa since he first had the honour of being connected with it, will, he trusts, excuse his apparent boldness in touching, with some freedom, on a matter which affects, more nearly and more seriously than any other, not only the welfare, the very existence, of this great institution of Catholic higher education, but the growth, the welfare, the life itself, of Canadian Nationhood.

In the Providence of God, the Canadian Nation is destined to consist of two main elements: the Anglo-Celtic, which includes the Scottish, and the French. Yet, in despite of this most manifest destiny, there is no problem apparently more hopelessly insoluble, more likely to make nationhood, in any true sense, impossible, than the strifes, the rivalries, the jealousies and suspicion which keep these two elements asunder.

Again, in the Providence of God, which "ordereth all things, both in heaven and in earth," the former of these two elements, the English-speaking, seems destined to predominate, west of the Great Lakes, if not throughout the Dominion, Quebec, of course, excepted. Yet, it seems no less probable that here, at the very centre of Canadian life, the French element, from sheer force of numbers, apart from all other considerations, must, for an indefinite period at least, hold the balance of power, if not the predominance. And it is this very fact, more or less clearly recognized by both elements, that is mainly, if not solely, responsible for the strifes, rivalries, jealousies and suspicion spoken of; for the race difficulty.

To the lover of his country, be his race or creed what it may, this question of the predominance of one element over another, with the responsibilities to God and to the nation which it necessarily involves, is, simply and without exaggeration, the most vital and important of all the considerations he is bound to take into account. For the Catholic Canadian, be his speech French or English, it has a yet deeper and weightier import; for the students of Ottawa University, set at the very heart of the nation's life, most of all. For, if there is any solution of the race difficulty available, is it not they, first and chiefly, who should be taught what that solution is?

To the students, then, of either race, I would say that predominance, of whatever sort, or however attained, so that it be