

CANADIAN INDEPENDENCE^(a)

(In order to draw attention to the purposes for which quotations are employed, italics not appearing in the original, are sometimes made use of.)

SOME differences of opinion are radical, fundamental and irremovable. Argument upon them is useless, and controversy harmful. Many other differences are mere misunderstandings. They are not real, but only seeming differences; and all that is needed for agreement is patience, intelligence, and clear statement—principally the last of these. In which of these classes of cases is the subject of Canadian Nationalism? Is disagreement as to it fundamental and irremovable; or is difference of opinion due to misunderstanding and confusion of thought?

I am a Canadian nationalist. I may be doing you injustice, but I shall assume that a majority of you are not—that you would call yourselves imperialists. And the question that I wish to discuss is, whether there is any substantial difference between us? Or, perhaps, the better question would be: Is there any reason why an imperialist should not be a Canadian nationalist? I am firmly persuaded that there is no such reason. And I feel certain that, if I can but clearly state the case, you will all agree with me. I do not mean that I shall be able to persuade any imperialist to abandon his desire for imperial federation or any other form of imperial political union; but I do believe that I can offer good reasons why such desire should not, meanwhile, be permitted to obstruct Canada's upward progress to nationalism. At all events, I shall urge nothing dogmatically. All that I ask is careful consideration of what I shall submit to you.

(a) The substance of this paper was delivered as a lecture in February, 1911, before the Canadian Clubs at London, Brantford, Hamilton and Kingston; the Women's Club at Kingston; and the Political Economy class at Queen's College.