

tirely neglected. It had been but an ephemeral body and its history was soon forgotten.

The causes of the failure of the League are not difficult to find. In its very origin it was an artificial organization and it never had the character of a non-partisan body, in reality it was an attempt to reconstruct the Tory party on a more popular basis. The attempt rent the League in twain. The conservative and democratic wings of the organization would not willingly coalesce. They stood on different principles and maintained different ideals. The Tory wing of the party always looked upon its opponents with a certain amount of scorn and suspicion as inferior in social and political standing and tainted with republicanism and other revolutionary designs. Few leaders of the Tory party identified themselves with the League. The great majority of them stood coldly apart and allowed the League to work out its own destiny. Even those who, like Allan, and Macdonald, were at first connected with the League, subsequently dropped out of any active participation in its affairs. The democratic section of the League, on the other hand, had no sympathy with the leaders or policy of the Family Compact. They desired the overthrow of the old regime and to create a new political party in line with the democratic spirit of the time. The two wings of the party were too evenly balanced in numbers and influence for either to dominate the other. The struggle between them was indecisive and could not go on indefinitely without soon destroying the League.

Unfortunately for the League it failed to develop able leaders to deal with the complicated situation. The President and the other executive officers were men of honorable character and influence in the community but they were neither astute politicians nor statesmen; they were experienced men of mediocre talent who had played but a minor part in the political life of the province. They could not make a commanding appeal to the general public or call forth the devoted services which are gladly rendered to a great party leader. The Hon. John A. Macdonald was the only outstanding member of the League and he failed to take a prominent part in its affairs which his preeminent ability and political astuteness would have warranted.

The policy of the League likewise failed to arouse popular enthusiasm or public interest. Although attractive in appearance, the scheme of a federal union, upon which the reputation of the League chiefly depended, fell signally flat on the electorate. The general public were not prepared to accept offhand such a far reaching constitutional proposition. They were almost entirely in the dark as to the national significance and importance of the proposed federation since no preliminary efforts had been made to educate them as to the advantages of an intercolonial union. Even the League, as we have seen, brought forward the scheme without any adequate consideration of the feasibility and character of the suggested federation. The scheme was presented and adopted as a political makeshift rather than as a careful piece of constructive statesmanship.