

CURRENTS AND COUNTER-CURRENTS

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Canadian Politics.

From a casual survey of a decade of domestic events it would appear that in Canada, to a large extent, the honorable and dignified profession of politics has degenerated into a mere trade; and success—as determined by the present standard of emolument and profit, rather than by the criterion of unsullied honor and trust, by which it was formerly distinguished—largely depends upon the extent of individual attainments in the arts of chicanery, insincerity and dissimulation.

While this is, in a large measure, unfortunately true, there is, however, a considerable body of worthy men engaged in political life, who, Pericleslike, scorn the merely mercenary opportunities of their profession; who, by virtue of the high order of their intelligence and integrity, adorn the sphere of their calling, and whose reputed virtues exercise a salutary influences over a large number of ambitious aspirants to legislative careers.

In Canada the political profession is paramount: literature, art and science seem quite subordinate to this widely prevailing, popular pursuit, and, therefore, it naturally commands a powerful influence in the formation of a national sentiment. The ennobling effect exercised by our universities and colleges upon many of our young men seems to become wholly lost when they enter the assemblies of state; the rapturous impressions formed from early acquaintance with the heroic and wise of the world's history appear to fade; self-interest, association, or prejudice, as the case may be, ministers to their case, independence is surrendered—often integrity as well—to the