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## SIR JOHN THOMPSON AND HIS CRITICS.

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SPEAKING generally, or in the abstract, every citizen of a free country, above the status of the lowest grade of intelligence, yearns for the high honor to serve his country and generation in a public capacity. Political success is the goal of ambition. To shape and mould his country's destiny is the public man's highest aspiration; to impress history's page with his mark, his aim in life; to add his mite to the general stock of human happiness, his incentive; an exemplar to generations unborn, his impulse. In pursuit, a vaulting ambition has not infrequently carried the aspirant beyond the limits of justice and moderation. To reach the summit, genius, in the giddy whirl of turmoil and excitement, intent only on success, has too often defiled her fingers and tarnished her robe. Her methods have not always been chaste, nor her tools choice. She has often built her trophy of heterogeneous materials. But in her well-stocked museum of patents and inventions; in her well-stored workshop of devices and contrivances; in her well-furnished magazine of shifts and expedients,—conversion to Catholicity, among English-speaking communities, as a means to an end, has no place. It is not a talisman to conjure with. It is not an *in hoc signo vincens* to batter

the walls of Jericho with. Change from Protestant to Catholic in Canada, as everyone knows, is so near akin to political suicide, that few survive the shock. Those few who manage to pull through the trying ordeal must be possessed of extraordinary vitality, of great vigor of mind and body; while those who subsequently scale the ramparts and plant their standard on the thrice-guarded citadel, must be gifted with rare mental endowments.

Assuming bigotry dead, and buried beyond resurrection—a consummation devoutly to be wished—as extinct as the woolly horse of the glacial period; yet are the chances of Protestant innings in the race for popular preferment out of all proportion. Among the many advantages of the Protestant over his Catholic competitor are:—

*First.* The advantage of numbers—in itself, no small start in the race. For though bigotry were no more, prejudice, which is but another name for preference, long outlives her twin sister. This is a factor sure to play an important part in the stakes.

Man naturally loves his ease. His longings are ever for peace and quietness. Whatever disturbs his repose finds a place in his black list. Necessity alone stimulates him to effort. Human nature is inherently pacific,