

Westminster Hall Magazine

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AS THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN PROCEEDS the usual acrimonious charges, appeals to selfishness, vote-catching rhetoric, and other artifices of the politician, partly obscure from the public mind the true issues involved. In the heat of an election, no measure is ever debated purely on its merits. But it is certain that the Reciprocity question is doing more than any other of recent years to destroy old party divisions. The last election was between two parties with what was virtually the same policy. In this one, opposing policies are remodelling the parties. Conservatism finds itself in alliance with fanatical rationalism for the defeat of a Liberal Government which stands for principles that were formerly adhered to by Conservatives. Bourassa, with his ultramontane sentiments, is upsetting the staunchest Catholics of Quebec from their allegiance to Laurier. This must react in the acquisition to the Government supporters of many former opponents who dread the political influence of Catholicism. Any Nationalist gain is thus likely to involve Conservative loss. Whether the Government will gain as much as it loses, only party propagandists can prophesy. They have the matter settled long ago, and altogether in their own favor. The assurance evidenced by some Vancouver papers is a psychological phenomenon which requires investigation.