

common consent as the coming Finance Minister of the Confederation. Such was the situation, as far as Mr. Cartwright was concerned, when Sir Alexander Galt made his memorable declaration of dissent from the policy of the administration and his determination to act independently of the party. This was the first break in the happy family.

Mr. Cartwright did not speak, as, indeed, it was not to have been expected that he would have spoken, on that occasion. It was known, however, that he sympathized with Sir Alexander's attitude, and from that day we may date the opening of the breach between him and Sir John Macdonald—a breach which subsequent events tended more and more to widen, till it culminated in his formal withdrawal from the conservative party and alliance with the liberals.

The records of party warfare are replete with instances of men who, from conviction, were compelled to reverse their political affiliations. With men of high principles and strong convictions, nothing could be more natural. The evolution of a public character in the disintegrating and fusing flames of political and parliamentary strife is the process by which leadership is attained. Earl Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone are familiar instances of it. Those who think it involves inconsistency have not sufficiently studied the currents of public life. Men are not always the same individually, nor are parties always guided by the same motives. Viewed in the abstract, it may, perhaps, be conceded that parties are broadly divided by opposing principles; but he need not be a very profound student of politics to arrive at the conclusion that, in these days at least, policies which dangerously undermine those principles can be made strangely interchangeable. A man may not leave his party, but his party may leave him, and it is sometimes a problem for severe personal equation to decide at what point a man must choose between his sense of what he believes to be right and his allegiance to his party.

Whether Mr. Cartwright ever faced this crucial epoch or not, I am not in a position to say; but of his consistency there can be no doubt. As I have already intimated, his career was a development. Born, as I may say, a conservative, brought up in an atmosphere of conservatism, taught to cherish lofty ideals of government, yet endowed with a mind of robust originality and profound analytical power, what could be more natural than that he should work out his