

I could enumerate several, but as my present object is merely to establish my charge of inconsistency, I shall content myself by referring to two questions noticed in the essay. Surely the question of Protection is one on which political parties might properly join issue. The essayist states that "Canada at this moment is the scene of a protectionist movement led curiously enough by those 'Conservative politicians' who are loudest in their professions of loyalty to Great Britain." The divisions in the Canadian House of Commons were, with two or three exceptions, strictly party, and the English newspapers have expressed their satisfaction with the result. It does not strike me as at all curious that Conservative politicians should have a predilection for protection, but on the other hand it does appear to me rather extraordinary that so advanced a liberal as the essayist should be an extreme protectionist. I am persuaded that the members of the Conservative opposition are not of opinion that their views on this question are inconsistent with their loyalty to the crown, but I only refer to them here to prove that there is an important question on which political parties are divided. There is yet another, viz., British Columbia and the Pacific Railway. On these questions Canadian parties are in avowed antagonism. The essayist admits fully their importance, for he thinks that it will be fortunate if some question "such as that respecting the pecuniary claims of British Columbia, which is now assuming such exaggerated proportions, does not supervene to make the final dissolution of the political tie a quarrel instead of an amicable separation." Surely a question from which such serious consequences are apprehended, is one important enough for the consideration of political parties in Canada, by whom alone it must be solved. I need hardly observe that there is not the slightest danger of any misunderstanding between the Imperial and Canadian Governments on any such question, nor, so far as I can foresee, on any other; and if the essayist really believes what he has stated, that "all questions are successively settled in favour of self-government," he need be under no apprehension on the subject. I think it must be admitted that I have proved by his own language that the essayist is most inconsistent in alleging that there are no questions in Canada on which parties can be honestly formed. Another inconsistency will be found in those passages in the essay in which the author treats of the Roman Catholic element in our population. There is, indeed, not only inconsistency; there is error in a matter of fact. It is assumed that the French Canadian and Irish Catholics, constituting 1,406,000 of the population, are anything but friends to British connexion. These, it is said, must be deducted "in order to reduce to reality the pictures of universal devotion to England and English interests." The political sentiments of the Irish "are generally identical with those of the Irish in the mother country." The French Canadians have "no feeling whatever for England." They are "governed by the priest with the occasional assistance of the notary." The priests "put their interests into the hands of a political leader, who makes terms for them and for himself at Ottawa, and as the priests are reactionists, Canada has long witnessed the singular spectacle of Roman Catholics and Orangemen marching together to the poll." While, in the passages to which I have adverted, the writer deducts the French and Irish elements from the loyal portion of the population, he in his "enumeration of the forces which make in favour of the present connexion," leads off with the "reactionary tendencies of the priesthood which leads French Canada, and which fears that any change might disturb its solitary reign." It is true that the essayist makes a "forecast" that "the ice will melt at last;" but I am much mistaken if the Roman Catholic Clergy will not smile with derision at the idea that one of the agencies is to be "the leaven of American sentiment brought back by French Canadians who have sojourned as artisans in the States," the other being "the ecclesiastical aggressiveness of the Jesuits." I shall not discuss the alleged "struggle for ascendancy between the Jesuits and the Gallicans," but shall merely observe that if any such struggle is going on, the contending parties contrive not to trouble their neighbours of other denominations with their controversies. The point of interest is whether the French Canadians and the Irish are satisfied with their present government, and the essayist, although classing them as disloyal, is compelled to admit that at present they are adverse to change, and he can only rest his hopes on his own "forecast of the future." I have said that there was an error as to fact in this portion of the essay. It is