

This vast system is worked out with the greatest simplicity and ease. It is elastic and facile in its movement. Provision is made for the continual changes in population, for the occupation of new territory, the addition of fresh municipalities, and the gradual absorption into the municipal system of the country. One looks at this piece of legal art from amidst the rough and intractable arrangements of England, with an envy at its superiority, which is scarcely tinged with a hope of ever being able to rival it. What is the reason of the difference in the treatment of such questions there and here? *They* are impelled by the general necessities of progress; *we* are obstructed by long-crystallized privileges and deeply-rooted institutions. There is bigotry in Canada, a bigotry of many sects and of many phases of thought, and it does complicate, nay sometimes obstruct, legislation; but it has not that immovable spirit, that conservative stupidity, which neither admits the inevitable nor looks for solutions. What is the reason of this? First, I think it is the fact that the whole body social and politic is in motion—nothing can stop its progress. Even Quebec, with ancient traditions and an old organization, is compelled to move on. The spirit of progress rushes into it and through it, and every man feels the impulse. The whole Dominion is instinct with life and the growth of life. I am no materialist, but I do believe in the awakening influences of material prosperity. Secondly, there is its distribution. In proportion as that prosperity is fairly distributed throughout a community will the community wake up and live. Restrict it to a few, surround it with privilege, vest it in fractions of society, net it round with complicated exclusive laws and customs, leave the great balance of society outside its benefits, and your material prosperity will only intensify the disintegrating influences just as it exaggerates the disproportion. In Great Britain we boast of our material prosperity, but we look with terror on its concomitant conditions. Economists may swear that it reaches and blesses the whole community, but a stroll in the slums of a city, or along the byways of a country district, gives the lie to the statement. If you want to