

The Halibut

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By G. A. Huestis, 1884.

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THE COLONIAL *STATUS QUO* vs. CANADIAN INDEPENDENCE.

THE advocates of a Republican form of Government for Canada are wont to dignify the object of their aspirations by the attractive title of Independence. So confident are they of the deeply rooted attachment of the people of Canada to the principles of the British Constitution, and the repugnance of Canadians in general to the system which must be substituted for it in the event of our separation from the rest of the British Empire is so evident to them that they instinctively seek to excite discontent with our present condition rather than enthusiasm for that which they hope is to take its place. This is sought to be done, negatively and positively, by the reiteration of that one word. By its constant use, coupled with that of such taunting phrases as 'clinging to the skirts of the Mother Country,' as descriptive of our present political condition, we Canadians are expected to be rendered dissatisfied with it, as the very opposite of that 'independence' to which, in all things, people of spirit naturally aspire. There is absolutely

nothing more in the case or the tactics of those who have invented this cry. Never, perhaps, in the history of the world, has so great a revolution been sought to be accomplished by the employment of means so trifling. We refer, of course, to peaceful revolutions, and the means by which they are brought about. For we all know that when the minds of any people are predisposed to revolt against a system of government with which they have become profoundly dissatisfied, the veriest trifle may precipitate an outbreak, and may seem to produce consequences to which it merely gives occasion, but which are really due to antecedent causes of quite different weight and significance. In such a state of affairs great may be the power of a phrase, a nickname, a word well or ill understood, caught up by an unthinking multitude.

'Bad dog, bad dog,' the Quaker cried;
'Mad dog, mad dog,' the people quick replied.

Under certain propitious circumstances, hopes of a successful revolt at-