

Empire. It would be difficult to conceive a position more injurious to the well-being of any country than this. In the event of England being dragged into a European war, it would of necessity follow that Canada would have to be placed on a war footing, and this, be it remembered, without yielding moral or material support to England, but merely in order to protect herself against possible invasion." There ye overburdened, tax-ridden people of Canada you have the reasons set forth in full why you should set to work, without delay, to become federalized, to lose no time in "incurring all the expense" to get up a standing army to protect the country "against possible and probable attack," and a navy "to guard your ports from invasion," so that when a Beaconsfield chooses to plunge the people of England in war, he may be able to involve you in it "as a matter of right," that you may "derive honour and glory." The country is in the throes of bankruptcy, and you must sink it beyond redemption in furnishing England "with material support;" not for any interest you have in the war; not for any great principle you have at stake; not for the preservation of your liberties and rights; not to advance the well-being of the people, but to "*derive honour and glory*." If this is not Jingoism run mad, I am at a loss how to properly characterise it. And these are the men who are clamouring through the *Canadian Monthly* of Ontario to be allowed to shape the political destiny of the country. No one, of the least pretensions to intelligence or common sense, but must see, on reading the above extract, that it is dead against Imperial Federation, and a powerful argument in favour of Annexation; and that, had the essayist laboured to present this view of the question, he could not possibly have done so in a stronger light.

The SPECTATOR is entitled to the credit of being the first paper in the Dominion, having independence enough to open its columns to the discussion of the state of the country, and the necessity of a change in its political condition. Since it brought this question to the notice of the public, a year ago, it has made astonishingly rapid progress, and will soon be *the question* of the day. The *Monthly*, above referred to, has, for some time back, been loaded with it. Several writers from Ottawa and Toronto have occupied its columns, some advocating Independence, others Imperial Federation, thus wasting their time and talents in vainly beating about the bush for its solution. From St. John, New Brunswick, comes what the same periodical calls "the loudest annexation bray"—and this annexation is, to my mind, the only way in which the question can be solved in the interest and well-being of the community. I have since the reprint from the SPECTATOR of the Political Destiny of Canada in pamphlet form, had opportunities of knowing the minds of many in the city on the subject. I have conversed with business men, traders, mechanics, lumberers, real estate owners, lawyers and others, and have failed to meet with but two who did not strongly express their conviction that annexation is the only salvation of the country, and I am fully convinced if the question was fairly put before the people generally nine-tenths of them who live by honest industry would take the same view, and rejoice at the change, and why should they not?

They see a country to the south of them, stretching alongside the whole extent of theirs and inhabited by the descendants of Englishmen and expatriated British subjects, prosperous and flourishing beyond what the history of any other country has ever before shown, while theirs is rapidly going to the dogs, they see a country rapidly paying off its debt, and will soon be able to free its people wholly from its taxation, while theirs is rolling up a debt which must at no distant day utterly swamp it, and crush them down with taxation. They see the young men, whom they have educated at their schools and colleges, making their way across the lines to where their talents will find employment and be appreciated; they see business men, machinists, mechanics, and the bone and sinew of the country migrating in swarms, which have swollen up, as computed by a gentleman who has watched its progress, to 100,000 in the last six months, and the outflow still keeps up and will continue to do so if not stopped by annexation, till officials will be its only remaining inhabitants; they see the real estate of the country unsaleable at a quarter of its former value, and its owners sinking under its taxation; they see the banking capital of the country transferred to New York and Chicago, there being no use for it here; they see an exodus from England filling every steamer to the States to overflowing, that they may find the means of living and bettering their condition which are denied them in their native land—that country to which our Canadian Jingos would fetter us at the expense of keeping up a standing army to enforce our allegiance and keep our noses to the grindstone, and, in the language of the *Bystander*, they see themselves "cut off, for political purposes, from the continent of which our country is economically a part, instead of obeying the dictates of nature and embracing the advantages which she has set before us. It condemns Canada anew to the commercial atrophy which such severance inevitably produces, and which is the main cause of her commercial ills, and of the present exodus of her citizens." And surely, seeing all this should cause them, if of ordinary intelligence, to rejoice in a change of nationality so certain to promote, enhance and perpetuate their own and their children's political, social and material well-being.

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THE "DIVINE RIGHT" OF MAJORITIES.

Our forefathers fancied they had accomplished much when, at great expense of suffering to themselves, they had succeeded in destroying the "Divine right of kings." They did not finish the work. Something remains yet for us to do. It is for us to abolish the "Divine right" of majorities.

This crusade has been begun and worthily pursued by such men as Prof. Goldwin Smith and others among us in their attack upon "party" and "party spirit." That is one phase of the evil which aids the rough-shod reign of majorities over minorities; but it is an outpost only, and not the citadel itself. The citadel and centre of the defect in modern representative government is the admission of the "right divine," as resident in a majority of the popular vote, to trample on the rights of others. Surely no one can fail to perceive that tyranny is tyranny still, whether it be exercised by one, as king, or by many disguised as a majority vote. The bulwark of our liberties is not the pious submission of the minority to deprivation of freedom at the will of a majority. The true bulwark of our liberties is the preservation of the individual right of each to freedom of exercise of his own faculties, and the prevention of control over the faculties of others.

Doubtless it is an improvement, gained for us by our forefathers, to be free from the divine right of one man, as king, to impose his will upon us. The transfer of that right to a majority of individual thinkers, each with an individual will to guide his thoughts, is an upward step; for in the multitude of councillors there is always more or less wisdom, at least an appearance of wisdom sufficient to delude the reason of the vast mass of humanity. But the iota of wisdom so found does not carry with it a "divine right" to rule.

At present the spirit of party in all so called free communities, has become king, and, since its divine right to reign is acknowledged so soon as the party attains a majority, any and every means are viewed as justifiable to attain that end. Then submission by the minority is set forth as a pious duty towards God and towards man. Such is the prevailing theory. It is looked upon by very many as the apex of advanced civilization and moral government. The authority of orthodox religion, as wrung from the utterances of the Apostles, is found willing and ready to back it.

Yet not always in the voice of majorities do we discover an unerring guide to rectitude. Majorities have been found too often animated by a spirit of sheer selfishness and love of dominion over the rights and property of others as fully developed in the aggregate composing it, as in any individual member of society who has, for the same reason, become a persistent, annoying, hindrance to the peace and progress of his fellows. There are men who struggle continually to take away and arrogate to themselves the liberty of others; and there are majorities whose alleged divine right finds exit in the same kind of effort. The infallibility of majorities has not yet been established by experience. It has only been thrown out as a "dogma" by means of which it is hoped the lines of power may still be retained by the unscrupulous. The right of the majority to rule all, should ever be secondary to the right of the individual to rule himself. For majorities, as well as for kings, the establishment of a well defined code is needed, within which to confine the functions of government.

Much of our legislation of majorities in modern times has exceeded these limits. The tendency seems to be to exceed them still more. Could there be a more glaring instance named than that blot upon the fair name of the last but one Liberal Government of England, the "Contagious Diseases Act"? What more hideous mockery of the individual claim to personal freedom? Virtue enforced by the policeman is alike an impossibility and an outrage upon humanity. And not till the stain is removed from its escutcheon will the present Liberal Government possess the full confidence of the Nation.

Much nearer home we find compulsory voting advocated, waiting only the attainment of a majority to spring into life. Yet such a measure would be a clear infringement of the individual right to withhold an opinion and a voting power till some one worthy of both offers for election. It is a project framed directly in the interests of government by majorities.

We rejoice in the blessings of a realized "N. P.," whose "booms" delight the land; and yet that measure is a direct and glaring instance of the rights of a minority trampled upon by the "divine right" of a majority. It means simply, that because they, the majority, think it well not to trade with other nations, therefore the minority shall be deprived of their liberty so to exercise their faculties. Such is the "true inwardness" of the "N. P." Those who vaunt its praises aim a direct blow at individual rights and individual liberty; and the end is not yet. For the interest of its advocates it seems almost a pity history should show so very clearly that increase—not decrease—of liberty, has always gone hand in hand with advancement, all through the ages.

Sober, and sober minded men, perceive the evil lurking beneath the fair exterior of the "Scott Temperance Act," and are only the more deeply convinced of it by the defeat of Mr. Boulton's precautionary amendment. Still true to the orthodox faith of the "divine right" of majorities, he only sought a guarantee that such majority should be actually found. He sought in vain.