

APPENDIX.

The Movement of 1849.

The Political Union movement of 1849 took rise in consequence of the adoption in 1846 of free trade by England, whereby the system of giving preferential treatment to colonial products in the British market was abolished, and of the repeated failure of the British Government to obtain for us a reciprocity treaty with the United States. Trade and commerce throughout the colony were greatly depressed. A manifesto was signed by leading Liberals and leading Tories and by prominent merchants of Montreal. The manifesto spoke of the prevailing depression, of the backwardness of Canada as compared with the United States, of the heavy public debt and excessive cost of government, of the evils arising from the colonial state which everybody regarded as a transitional state and which offered nothing fixed or permanent, and so on. It went on to discuss reciprocity, which, though desirable, would "yield but an instalment of the advantages that might otherwise be secured"; declared that Canada could not exist as an independent republic since independence would not open the North American continent to Canadian products nor give permanence and stability to the institutions of the country; and proceeded thus:—

"Of all the remedies which have been suggested for the acknowledged and insufferable ills with which our country is afflicted, there remains but one to be considered. It propounds a sweeping and important change in our political and social condition, involving considerations which demand our most serious examination. This remedy consists in a friendly and peaceful separation from British connection and a union upon equitable terms with the great North American Confederation of Sovereign States.

"We would premise that towards Great Britain we entertain none other than sentiments of kindness and respect. Without her consent we consider separation as neither practicable nor desirable. That it is the resolve of England to invest us with the attributes and compel us to assume the burdens of independence is no longer problematical; the threatened withdrawal of her troops from other colonies, the continuance of her military protection to ourselves only on the condition that we shall defray the attendant expenditure, betoken intentions towards our country against which it is weakness in us not to provide. An overruling conviction then of its necessity and a high sense of the duty we owe to our country, a duty we can neither disregard nor postpone, impel us to entertain the idea of separation; but whatever negotiations may eventuate with Great Britain a grateful liberality on the part of Canada should mark every proceeding.

"The proposed union would render Canada a field for American capital into which it would enter as freely for the prosecution of public works and

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