

There are four possible plans to choose from—Annexation, Independence, a continuance of the present status, and a closer union to Great Britain which might possibly result in Imperial Federation. Annexation is as extinct as the dodo. Independence at the present time is to say the least impracticable. Independence would involve the surrender of the enormous advantages of which I have just spoken. Canada would have to forego her aspirations as a commercial, maritime power, or imitate the example of Chili, and organize at vast expense a naval force, which for want of naval bases would be practically powerless 2000 miles away from Canadian shores. Reason and experience, says De Tocqueville, prove that no commercial prosperity can be durable, if it cannot be united in case of need to naval force. Independence would combine the extreme of political insignificance with the extreme of political peril.

Between the third and fourth alternatives the minds of a great many men are fluctuating. The advantages of the present system are so numerous and so great that it is perhaps true to say that the majority of Canadians desire no changes made. A closer identification with Imperial interests might increase the already existing danger of being drawn into Imperial wars in which Canada has no concern. The Venezuelan question is too recent to be forgotten. If you question these contented patriots, they will reply with a shrug of the shoulders which signifies that having made an extravagantly good bargain they would be fools to draw attention to it. The New Canadian Patriot however—young