

the Mother Country. The one economic change suggested is that England should place a preferential duty on wheat, to the advantage of the colonies. It is easy to see from which side this suggestion comes; as yet no practical suggestion has been made on the British side. When we consider that this is the sole outcome of ten years' agitation, it is easy to see that the accomplishment of the scheme is still very distant. Indeed if it ever takes place, it will be practically indistinguishable from the present state of things.

The next proposal is independence; and it is not impossible that this is a direction in which our aspirations may take form, if not permanently, at least for a time. So far as cultivating a national idea goes, it is probably the best, if not the only solution of the problem. But practically there seems little to be gained by it. Indeed from a purely material point of view it is difficult to see how any governmental change could improve the present state of things; it is scarcely asserted that it would. Those who urge a change, do so principally on the ground that our present position is inferior, and that a change would develop our national dignity and self-esteem. This view certainly deserves respectful treatment. Whether its accomplishment means a sacrifice or a gain, it sets before the people an ideal motive, and a more honorable, because more independent view of life. Indeed it is as natural an ambition as that of a young man, who, though perfectly content at home, leaves his father's house as soon as his means permit, and sets up an establishment for himself. Dependence for the nation as for the man means moral stagnation and ineffectiveness. Canada therefore, would seem bound to secure her independence at the earliest moment practicable; but for the present at least it is utterly out of the question.

For, at the very outset, independence demands that a country should be ready to defend itself against all comers. No country is really free that cannot do that. A country that owes its independence to the good-will or necessities of its neighbours knows nothing of genuine autonomy. There is no idea of law or abstract fairness governing the relations of different countries. We can establish a code to regulate relations between man and man, because there is always the state to see that the laws are carried out. A man may think himself shamefully used by the decision of some court; but he is bound to accept its decision. It is not so with nations. A code of international laws may be agreed upon; convenience may ensure their enforcement up to a certain point; but when the physically stronger is worsted in a suit, it has a further resource in a resort to arms. If it choose, it may go to war; if it is successful in war, the legal aspect of the case counts for nothing. There is no force majeure to see that it is enforced. Is Canada willing to accept this condition? It is not to be expected that England, if she consents to give Canada independence, would interfere to maintain that independence whenever it was threatened. Such a position would in fact be no independence at all; it would be but a veil for the existing state of things. Equally false would be any position by which her independence was guaranteed by the United States. So it appears that a real independence can

only be attained when Canada has so far developed as to be able to maintain her position by force of arms; or when the relationship of all countries has so altered that mutual independence is guaranteed, and arbitration has taken the place of war. Which alternative is more likely to be attained first we cannot pretend to decide.

Lastly, it is held that a union with the States would meet every difficulty. To the American mind Annexation seems so natural a thing, that it is difficult to understand the objections that are urged against it. To share the political privileges of American citizenship, to enjoy perfect liberty of trade with the entire continent, to secure the stimulus of American capital, free from the dread of political interference, might seem a lot that any people would gladly accept. Indeed it is easy to understand that many consider it only a question of time till the union is accomplished. But nevertheless there are arguments, and weighty arguments, to the contrary.

There is first what has been before referred to as the "loyalty cry," which no doubt influences a very large number of people. To be disloyal is to be cowardly, and to be called a coward, however unjustly is something that no man can endure. But a loyalty cry must not be taken too seriously. Loyalty is very well for a full stomach, but give a starving man his choice between a dinner and a flag and there is little doubt which he will take. Canadians are not starving and they are very loyal. Their loyalty is even one of the things that surprises English visitors. But if a conviction really grew that loyalty was standing between us and prosperity, we fear it would very soon be disposed of. Indeed, we see it done practically every day in the case of individuals who accept appointments in the States. Their affection has not changed, they say, but they feel that they must consider their wives and families first. The nation might apologise for accepting Annexation in much the same terms. Should a few well known men, who have been in the habit of guiding public thought, come out strongly in its favor, the way might easily be opened for a general change of sentiment. But this suggests a second and more cogent reason, why any immediate action will not be taken in the matter.

It is easy enough to spread an idea or a set of ideas among a people, but it is very difficult to convert them into a movement without leaders. As a rule leaders will be found ready to take advantage of a common tendency, but in a case like the present it is different. Certain barnyard fowls, as a homely proverb tells us, select separate eminences from which to make their voices heard. They would naturally resist an amalgamation of piles. Hence we need not attribute it to self-interest so much as to human nature if our statesmen prefer to preserve the present opportunities for preferment intact. To be a senator is no doubt something of an honor in the States, but seen through Canadian eyes, it is a small thing compared with a position as Cabinet Minister, a large salary, and the possibility of knighthood. It is plain that this must always be a very strong factor against Annexation, for not only would the majority of public men be against it, but

the movement, should such arise, would be practically without prominent leaders.

As we are dealing with the more sectional motives first, we may mention here that all manufacturing interests would certainly be dead against Annexation. They owe their existence—certainly their profits—to local protection, and could in all probability never compete with American rivals, under equal conditions. Their position is a natural one, and can easily be appreciated by Americans. They will always oppose any movement looking to closer relations between the two countries; and, as their influence is far beyond their numbers, they must always be regarded as one of the strongest forces working against Annexation. Their chief argument is that known as the "pauper labor" argument in the States. It may surprise Americans to hear that Canada has to fortify herself against the pauper labor of the United States; but that is practically the same thing as saying that Canadians cannot compete on equal terms with American workmen, and that, without protection, our manufacturers would be swamped by slaughtered goods from over the line. We are not discussing the economical question, but merely stating the arguments advanced.

These arguments, as we have said, are of a sectional character. There are others more comprehensive, and farther reaching than these, which must be discussed before any practical step is taken. In the first place Canada has a singular advantage in her present political position. Instead of a Cabinet, not necessarily in harmony with the desires of the nation, she has a ministry with seats in Parliament, where they are bound to defend everything they do, and are responsible directly to the people for all their actions. Then the result of an election becomes operative at once, and we never have the spectacle of a Government trying to maintain an abandoned policy after the verdict of dismissal has been announced. Again the amount of business that comes before the Canadian House is comparatively so small, that it can easily be kept up to date, unlike the English House and the American Congress, in both of which a vast quantity of business remains unfinished at the end of each session. It is obvious that the Canadian representatives at Washington would have little weight unless they held the balance of power between two parties—a position they would certainly not be allowed long to occupy. The difficulty in getting appropriations passed is now great enough; when those for every Canadian village from British Columbia to Cape Breton had to be lobbied through at Washington, the result is appalling to contemplate.

Another objection from the Canadian standpoint is the negro question. The writer heard a Republican explain the last election in the States by saying "that the Democrats could have done nothing except by suppressing a million negro voters in the South, in all respects as intelligent as themselves." It is not pleasant for Canadian aspirants to American citizenship to consider that their entire vote could be nullified by that of the negroes. Their chief knowledge of the negro comes from newspaper paragraphs giving their revolting crimes and more revolting punishments; and Canadians may be pardoned if they hesitate to unite themselves