

CONFEDERATION FROM THE ANTI-ANNA-POINT OF VIEW.

BY AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.

As the document presents the views of the annexationists of that day, many of which are applicable to the existing state of affairs, we reproduce it here. The following is the MONTREAL ANNEXATION MANIFESTO.

To the PEOPLE OF CANADA.—The number and magnitude of the evils that afflict our country, and the universal and increasing depression of its material interests, call upon all persons animated by a sincere desire for the welfare of the country, to unite in a common effort to combine for the purpose of inquiry and preparation, with a view to the adoption of such remedies as a mature and dispassionate investigation may suggest.

Belonging to all parties, origins and creeds, but yet agreed upon the advantage of co-operation for the performance of a common duty to ourselves and our country, growing out of a common necessity, we have considered, in view of a happier and brighter future, to merge in oblivion all past differences of whatever character or attributable to whatever source.

The general of the ancient policy of Great Britain, whereby she withdrew from the colonies their wanted protection in her markets, has produced the most disastrous effect upon Canada. In surveying the condition of the country, what but ruin and decay meets the eye?

With superabundant water power, and cheap labor, especially in Lower Canada, we have yet no domestic manufactures, nor can the most sanguine, unless under altered circumstances, anticipate the home growth or advent from foreign parts, of either capital or enterprise to embark in this great source of national wealth.

While the adjoining States are covered with a network of thriving railways, Canada possesses but three lines, which, together, scarcely extend over fifty miles in length, and the stock in two of which are held at a depreciation of from fifty to eighty per cent.—a fatal symptom of the torpor oppressing the land.

Our present form of government is cumbersome and so expensive as to be ill-suited to the circumstances of the country, and the necessary reference it demands to a distant government, imperfectly acquainted with Canadian affairs, and somewhat indifferent to our interests, is anomalous and irksome.

Fourth.—The independence of the British North American Colonies as a federal republic.—The consolidation of its new institutions from elements hitherto so discordant, the formation of treaties with foreign Powers—the acquisition of a name and character among the nations—would, we fear, prove an overmatch for the strength of the new republic.

Fifth.—Reciprocal free trade with the United States, as respects the products of the farm, the forest and the mine.—If obtained this would yield but an instalment of the many advantages which might be otherwise secured.

Sixth.—Of all the remedies that 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.

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 private enterprise as into any of the present States.

It would equalize the value of real estate upon both sides of the boundary, thereby probably doubling at once the entire present value of property in Canada, while, by giving stability to our institutions and producing prosperity, it would raise our public, corporate and private credit.

The value of our timber would be also greatly enhanced by free access to the American market, where it bears a high price, but is subject to an onerous duty. At the same time there is every reason to believe that our shipbuilders, as well as Quebec as on the great lakes, would find an unlimited market in all parts of the American continent.

In place of war and the alarms of war with a neighbor there would be peace and amity between this country and the United States. Disagreement between the United States and her chief if not only rival among nations would not make the soil of Canada the sanguinary arena for their disputes, as under our existing relations must necessarily be the case.

But other advantages than these having a bearing upon our material interests may be foretold. It would change the ground of political contest between races and parties, allay and obliterate those irritations and conflicts of rancor and recrimination which have hitherto disgraced our social fabric.

the United States a public service of the nation would be open to us—a field for high and noble distinction on which we and our posterity might enter on terms of perfect equality.

Nor would the amicable separation of Canada from Great Britain be fraught with advantages to us alone. The relief to the parent State from the large expenditure now incurred in the military occupation of the country, the removal of the many causes of collision with the United States which result from the contiguity of mutual territories so extensive, and the benefit of the larger markets which the increasing prosperity of Canada would create, are considerations which the minds of many of her ablest statesmen, render our incorporation with the United States a desirable consummation.

To the United States, also, the annexation of Canada presents many important inducements. The withdrawal from the borders of so powerful a nation, by whom in time of war the immense and growing commerce of the lakes would be jeopardized; the ability to dispose with the costly but ineffectual revenue establishments over a frontier of many hundred miles; the large accession to their income from our customs, the unretarded growth of the St. Lawrence—the natural highway from the Western States to the ocean—are objects for the attainment of which the most substantial equivalents would undoubtedly be conceded.

Fellow-Colonists.—We have thus laid before you our views and convictions on a momentous question, involving a change which, though contemplated by many of us with varied feelings and emotions, we all believe to be inevitable—one which it is our duty to provide for and lawfully to promote.

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