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EDITORIAL COMMENT.

SHALL WE EXPAND.—The expansion mania which has seized our American cousins since their war with Spain may in the near future extend to Canada, though not exactly the same kind of expansion. The British West Indies have been finding it pretty hard work lately to make both ends meet, and they have come to the conclusion that the best thing for them would be union with Canada. Now that the United States has gobbled up Spain's possessions, and become neighbors of theirs, they feel that the struggle they have been making will become unbearable if they do not receive outside aid, and to Canada they are looking for that aid. The question for us to decide is, therefore, shall we expand?

In considering this question, we must bear in mind, that the proposed expansion does not mean war. We are not going to wrest from someone else what justly belongs to him, nor are we going to force our government upon an unwilling people at the cannon's mouth. With us it will be merely the granting of a request, the extending of needed aid to fellow subjects. We are not asked to add a lot of half-civilized or wholly savage people to our population, but to include in our confederation British subjects, who, like ourselves, know and appreciate the blessings that the British flag bestows on every land it floats over.

Shall we do it? The question has been discussed to some extent in the Canadian press, and there are timid ones who have expressed doubts as to the advisability of admitting the islands into confederation. They think we could not govern them satisfactorily. With this opinion we do agree. Our system of government is as nearly perfect as any system in the world, and under it the islanders would practically govern themselves. They would come to us willing and fully prepared to maintain the constitution, and where the trouble is to come in under such conditions is, we confess, more than we can see.

The great fact to our mind is, that these people are brothers of our own and they are asking us to take them in. Can we refuse their request? With our doors thrown wide open for the reception of every kind of foreigner, some of very doubtful character indeed, who come to us without a penny, can we consistently close them in the face of our fellow subjects, who not only come themselves, but give us dominion over their rich islands, which lack only the aid we could give them to become veritable mines of wealth.

Such a course, we think would be very inconsistent, to say the least of it. A writer in *Events*, Ottawa, dealing with the question says:—"The taking in of the British West Indies is not expansion—it is concentration—the completion of confederation, and should be welcomed by every Canadian." This view of the case seems to cover the whole of it, and will, we believe be subscribed to by every Englishman who believes in the unity of the Empire and the concentration of its scattered colonies wherever practical.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.—There is still grave doubt whether the international conference will re-assemble. The Alaskan boundary was the sticking point, and that no nearer a settlement than before, although it is understood that a temporary arrangement has been made, with a view to avoiding an open conflict between the miners. The question seems to be greatly complicated, and the Americans, as usual, are not willing to approach it in a fair manner. They claim the territory in dispute and so does Canada, but Canada is and has all along been willing to submit its claim to an impartial tribunal, the Americans have not. When the Canadians proposed arbitration at the Conference the Americans would not agree except on terms which made arbitration useless. The Canadians, thereupon refused to proceed with the Conference, and referred the question to their Government, the Americans doing the same. So far everything was honorable and above board. The Americans may have been, in fact were, unreasonable in the stand they took, but they had a perfect right to take it if they wished. They were there to make the best bargain they could for their country, and they had a right to adopt any honorable means to that end. But no sooner had the Conference adjourned, and negotiations were commenced direct with England, and as the United States thought, behind Canada's back, than they began to try those disreputable tricks which have made American diplomacy notorious at every court in the old world. Knowing the strength of Canada's case, and the weakness of their own, they set about discrediting Canada, by the most barefaced campaign of falsehood, charging her with blocking progress by making unreasonable demands. The object was to injure Canada in England, and for a time it was partly successful. But with the publication in England of a parliamentary paper dealing with the question, the tables were completely turned, it being clearly shown that it was the Americans themselves who had made the unreasonable demands that blocked the progress of the Joint High Commission.

The result of all this has been to elevate the Canadians in the estimation of the English people and to lower the Americans to the mean level which they have always occupied in international affairs. There is no people in the world who hates such underhand work more than do the English, who are noted for being perhaps too blunt, but always strictly honest and honorable, in all their diplomatic relations with other governments. To them the conduct of the Americans was shocking, and the honesty of the Canadians gained by contrast to an extent which must be gratifying to every Englishman in Canada. Thus does trickery defeat its own ends, and serve to prove honesty the best policy.

DOMINION DAY.—On July 1st was celebrated the 32nd anniversary of the Confederation of the Dominion. More than ever does she deserve the title of "Our fair Dominion." For thirty-two years of rapid progress, together with the attitude she has on many occasions and at various times displayed, both in regard to her own affairs and when dealing with other nations cause her to be placed amongst the most enterprising of young countries on the globe. Scarcely known to us yet it is true that Canada and the Canadian people have become a cynosure in the eyes of other nations and people and the headway being made is considered a phenomena to all but ourselves.