

THE GROWTH OF NATIONALISM IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE¹

A CANADIAN who speaks to a company of Americans on problems of the British Empire usually feels under certain obligations to explain himself. It is not easy for Americans to understand why Canada remains linked with Great Britain. Canada is the only considerable state in America to retain a political tie with Europe. Since there was a time when all America was an appendage of Europe, it looks as if Canada is only a little belated and as if she has not yet found her political destiny. Every Canadian is aware of a certain condescension on the part of his American friends, the counterpart of what Mr. Lowell felt that foreigners showed to Americans. Occasionally one hears a suggestion that Great Britain should sell Canada to the United States. In a legal case in New York the other day Canada was described as "a colony or dependency of Great Britain".

A friend of mine, who held high office in the United States, used to offer me well-meant consolation as to the outlook for Canada. "The Constitution of the United States", he would say, "is almost a perfect instrument. You will be happy under it. Your obvious destiny is to join us. We do not wish to hasten the process. But our arms are open and we shall embrace you warmly when you come." What could be more alluring? I was so cruel as to say to him that Canada was reasonably happy in her existing relations, that the federal constitution of Canada has merits, even when put side by side with that of the United States, that the Canadians are a perfectly free people, with their destiny entirely in their own hands, and that they are helping to work out a political experiment as momentous for mankind as is the notable experiment in liberty which is being made by the United States. It is true that there are anomalies and apparent contradictions in the position of Canada. Her business at Washington is done, not through her own ambassador, but through the ambassador of Great Britain. Canada has no power to declare war and is technically at war whenever Great Britain is at war. But theories and their applications represent very different things. Canada takes just as much share in the wars of the British Empire as she chooses to take. In truth, too, the British ambas-

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