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## COMMERCIAL UNION.

Those who fail to discover the practicability of forming a commercial union with the United States; who accept the assurance given them by disinterested writers in the commercial capital of the Republic, that "it is impossible that the United States would ever admit Canada to any voice in their tariff regulations;" and who believe, on the authority of the writer of "Current Events" in the *Canadian Monthly*, that "the idea of discriminating against the mother country, while we are a dependency, is totally out of the question," have been honored by Mr. Goldwin Smith, in his *Bystander*, with the designation of "Anti-Continentalists." He, however, assures his readers that "the bottom has fallen out of the Anti-Continental policy; its mainstay, and the source of its life, British Jingoism, is no more." We sincerely hope that, if it is no more, the *Bystander* will cease to distress himself on the subject. Not a single number of that periodical has been issued without some reference to Jingoism, a term which conveys very little meaning to Canadians, although we have been assured by the *Bystander* that a wave of Jingoism has swept over the country. The advocates of commercial union in the United States are sincere. They make no secret of their real object, which is to annex the territories to the north of them to the Republic. We can scarcely imagine that any Canadian can be so deluded as to imagine that the people of the United States are anxious to promote the interests of Canada in their advocacy of annexation. If we were unaware of the proclivities of the learned

editor of the *Bystander*, we should scarcely imagine that he would be anxious to annex Canada to a country with such defective institutions as he considers those of the United States. In the very last number he assures his readers that the Republic "has escaped," though "the danger was great." "Every engine of force and fraud" had been plied, and, if successful, "civil war could hardly have been avoided." All these hazards are owing to "the perilous tendencies of the elective Presidency." This elective Presidency is "a most serious source of danger" in the opinion of Mr. Goldwin Smith, and, as the learned professor is a citizen of the world, he ought to lose no time in reforming the political institutions of the Republic before attempting to unite Canada to a country in which, in his opinion, there is periodically serious danger of revolution, or, at all events, civil war.

We own that we find it difficult to discuss the subject of commercial union seriously, because we are wholly unable to believe in the sincerity of its advocates. When we find the question put by the *Bystander*, "What is commercial union but reciprocity made complete, instead of incomplete, and lasting instead of unstable;" and when we find the *Montreal Spectator*, the latest convert to Mr. Goldwin Smith, enquiring what the difference in principle is, between an Imperial Zollverein and a commercial union with the States, we cannot but doubt the sincerity of the enquirers. We have made a quotation from the writer of Current Events, a few years ago. We should be glad if the *Spectator* or Mr. Goldwin Smith would state distinctly their views as to imposing discriminating duties against the Mother Country, and remaining a dependency. We are not aware that the *Spectator* has as yet avowed himself favorable to annexation, and he may possibly see some mode of reconciling the continuance of the connection with commercial union. There is another point on which there has not been as yet any sufficient explanation: How is the common tariff to be adjusted? What probability is there that a common tariff would exactly suit the requirements of the two countries? The advocates of commercial union have most carefully avoided details, and have placed their chief reliance on exciting discontent among the people at the depression which has so long prevailed, but from which the country is beginning at last to recover. The *Bystander* seems to imagine that those who point out the absurdity of his scheme of commercial union are in a state of alarm

at the progress which has been made. He even insinuates that, if the people could vote "under the protection of the ballot, the result would astonish the politicians." In almost the next sentence he admits that "power is in the hands of politicians, and the politicians, with few exceptions, have been bred in the Anti-Continental school." Why, we would ask, does not Mr. Goldwin Smith, or some one of his adherents, found a new party to carry commercial union, and appeal to the people "under the protection of the ballot." He admits that he is not "sanguine" as to the immediate issue of the debate, owing to "a conventional tyranny of sentiment which has precluded free discussion." This reference to some restraint upon free discussion is among the most extraordinary of the *Bystander's* statements. One would really imagine that the Canadian press had been under a censor. He tells us as if it was quite a recent concession, that "freedom of thought and discussion has at least been asserted." Mr. Goldwin Smith may possibly imagine that he has been the first person to claim free discussion, but he will find few to agree with him. The last thing that the advocates of commercial union desire is "free discussion."

## THE CHAPLEAU-PRENTICE AFFAIR.

We have decided to deal at present with only one branch of this rather complicated quarrel, but it is really the one of most importance to the public. We shall not at present enter on the subject of the personal charges preferred by Mr. Prentice against Mr. Dansereau, and inferentially against Mr. Chapleau, of having personal objects to gain with reference to the Quebec loan. We have no doubt that there is a great deal of evidence to be produced with reference to these charges, and we may or may not think the subject worth noticing hereafter.

What the public are interested in is the alleged ill-treatment of Mr. Prentice in his capacity as a confidential agent of the Quebec Government employed to negotiate a loan, which was taken out of his hands without notice, and, as he alleges, to his serious loss. The first and most important question is as to Mr. Prentice's position, that is to say, whether he ever was recognized as an agent of the Quebec Government, and if so, when did such agency commence. It must be obvious that a broker cannot act for two parties having adverse interests at the same time, any more than a lawyer can take fees from plaintiff and defendant. If we are not greatly mistaken, when Mr. Pren-