

tation in the national councils and a share in the responsibilities and achievements of the whole nation.

*Third.* Political union with the great English nation lying beside us on this continent, with whom we are intimately associated and connected by geography, race, language, laws and civilization.

*Fourth.* An independent nationality with our own flag and our own national responsibilities.

These four seem to embrace all the alternatives within the range of practical politics. Of course, it is open to the Canadian people to seek an alliance with France, Germany or any other nation, but such solutions are simply imaginative and do not represent any principle or reason. But each one of the four presented are natural, and on behalf of any one of them much can be said. All of them are in the minds of thoughtful people, and all are so far within the range of the possible and practical that they ought to be weighed carefully, and no decision should be reached until the contingencies which each presents have been maturely considered.

I am going to repeat the remark that no wise conclusion can be reached unless there be untrammelled discussion and, therefore, there must be no degrees of virtue in the advocacy of one alternative over another. There can be no discussion at all if such a thing as gag law be applied. Therefore, I lay down the wide principle that any citizen of Canada is absolutely free to advocate any one of the four alternatives presented, and as free to advocate one as another. Nor can the position of the citizen in any way affect this right. What is honorable for an independent citizen to do cannot be dishonorable for an office-holding citizen to do, and what is base and improper for a man holding office to say or do in respect of the destinies of his country cannot possibly be right and high-minded in a man not

holding office. In this view I must, with great reluctance, on account of the great respect and regard I have for Sir Oliver Mowat, respectfully take issue with his action in relation to his officer, Mr. Elgin Myers, Q.C. There is no man in Canada for whom I have greater esteem than the able and high-minded Premier of Ontario. I am his political friend and I trust his personal friend as well. Nor do I deny his right to remove officers serving under him who are distasteful to him. But with a full sense of the responsibility of my words, I declare that I know of no law, civil or moral, which prevents Mr. Elgin Myers or any other Canadian from advocating political union with the United States. That he is a sworn official has nothing to do with the case, so far as I can see. Sir Oliver Mowat is the Premier and Attorney-General of Ontario : is there any law which commands him to remain silent if his judgment becomes satisfied that the union of this country with the United States would be the best destiny available for his country ?

John Bright, one of the bravest and most patriotic Britons of modern times, while a member of the Parliament of Great Britain and under the obligations of an "oath," if that could make any difference, repeatedly advocated the union of Canada and the United States in the most clear and emphatic terms. Here are his words :

" I should say that if a man had a great heart within him he would rather look forward to the day when from that point of land which is habitable nearest the pole to the shores of the great gulf the whole of that vast continent might become one great confederation of states—without a great army and without a great navy—not mixing itself up with the entanglements of European politics—without a custom house inside through the whole length and breadth of its territory—and with freedom everywhere, law everywhere, peace everywhere—such a confederation would afford at least some hope