

room for expansion, and ample resources for growth, and the question whether that people shall achieve a worthy national destiny depends more upon the nature of the ambitions cherished by its citizens, the goal to which they accustom themselves to look forward from day to day, than upon all other things combined. The people, no matter from what noble stock descended, or with what grand opportunities endowed, who judge themselves incompetent or unworthy to carve out a national future for themselves, to shape a course and achieve a destiny all their own, will never emerge from a condition of dependence and pupillage.

It is, on the whole, a hopeful sign of the times that the leading statesmen of Canada have at last begun to realize the necessity of paying some attention to the question of the national future of the country, or whether it is destined to have a national future. It is encouraging that some of them have even got as far as to see with some degree of clearness that if such a thing as genuine Canadian loyalty is ever to be created, if the hearts of her children are to be fired with the sentiment which prompts the citizens of other lands, less than to sacrifice ease, comfort, wealth, even if need be to the life itself, for the sake of their country, the young sons of the Dominion must be encouraged to look forward to a higher destiny than mere colonialism, and that too at a time not so far distant to be an object of anticipation. It is to be regretted that even such men as Sir Oliver Mowat and Mr. Laurier, while recognizing the impossibility of continuing indefinitely the present colonial relation, still speak with bated breath of the independence which they foresee and approve, provided only that it is located far enough off in the dim distance.

The one thing upon which our statesmen, of both parties and of all grades, are agreed is in announcing annexation, which they refuse to signify by the more euphonious term chosen by its advocates, political union. We can agree heartily with them that absorption in the great republic would be an ignoble ending of all our hopes of founding another great American nation. But if these leaders would require a little more closely, especially if they could place themselves for the time being at the point of view of the younger and native Canadians, they could hardly fail to see that in representing or condemning the natural ambition of this class of citizens they are doing much to strengthen the forces which are making for annexation. We should like to press this point upon the consideration of Mr. Mills and Sir John Thompson, and even the Governor-General himself. For the large and influential classes of citizens who were either themselves born on the other side of the Atlantic, or whose sentiments have been derived from parents to whom the old land was home and native land, the views and arguments of such Canadian loyalty and British loyalty are synonymous. They can contemplate with equanimity an indefinite continuance of the colonial status. The mistake of the political leaders referred to is not in considering the views and feelings of this class of citizens, but in having insufficient regard to those of the other class, which is constantly becoming larger and more influential, and which, in the

nature of the case, is bound at no distant day to become the ruling force in Canadian politics, i.e., if enough of them can be kept in the country in the meantime. To these citizens Canada, not England or Scotland, is home and mother land. It would be easy to evoke from them a genuine patriotic enthusiasm on behalf of an independent Canadian nation, which they can never be made to feel towards her as a colony, though a colony of the greatest nation under the sun. To shut up the hopes and ambitions of such to a continuance of the present status, or to try to put them off with shadowy visions of a possible independence at some period in the distant future, is the readiest way in which to crush the budding germs of Canadian patriotism, and make them ready either to cross the border themselves, or to accept with indifference or complacency the idea of ultimate absorption in the great American republic.

Have our political leaders of either party sufficiently considered whether any other influence save that rooted in a natural and noble ambition on the part of young Canadians to become members of an independent Canadian nation, with boundless hopes and possibilities before it, can permanently check the forces which are making for annexation? Nothing can be gained by underrating those forces. We need not stay to enumerate them, nor do we care to do so. They spring from local contiguity, from commercial and monetary considerations, from the comparative dearth of capital and markets for the development of Canada's resources. They have no racial antipathies and no radical political differences to overcome. They derive strength from the fact that it is almost literally true, as Mr. Laurier declared in his recent speeches, that there is no Canadian family which has not at least one of its members domiciled on the other side of the line, while the cases are by no means uncommon in which one-half of all its members are to be found there. It is evident that very strong counter forces must be invoked to prevent the insidious growth of influences which would eventually carry the country into the political union which is even now boldly advocated by a few, and there is reason to fear secretly approved by others. If our statesmen are to save the country from the effects of "the inglorious policy of drift" which is now carrying it southward, it is time that they were to the fore with a national policy more powerful and attractive than any which has as yet been propounded. "Imperial Federation" has evidently failed as a word to conjure with. Prolonged colonialism is impossible. What other force save that of Canadianism can be relied on in such a crisis?

Why not independence? Assuming what no Canadian will deny, that the five millions of people who now occupy Canadian territory and are accustomed to the largest measure of home rule, are competent to manage their own affairs, there are but two quarters from which objection or difficulty could arise: viz., the Mother Country and the United States. We do not suppose that any intelligent Canadian now believes it possible that Great Britain would ever attempt by force to retain Canada as a colony after she had unmistakably expressed her wish to set up housekeeping on her own account. Such a thing would be contrary not only to the express declaration of many of England's representative men, but to the whole tendency of her modern views and

methods. No Government which should propose to use force for such a purpose could exist for a week in the present condition of British sentiment.

Equally futile, we make bold to believe, is the bugbear of hostility on the part of the United States, which some of our leaders never tire of holding up before us. The American Congress and press have their jingoes, as have other countries, and some of them are even louder-lunged than those of other countries, but there is at the heart of the nation a sentiment of justice and a love of freedom which would put it beyond the power of the fiercest jingoes to levy war for the destruction of the liberties of a kindred American people. This we believe would be our safeguard even were we so weak as to be utterly dependent upon the forbearance of our powerful neighbour. But the example of the American people themselves has taught us that five millions of freemen, the peers of any in the world in courage and manly vigour, "armed in the sacred cause of freedom," and aided by great natural forces ever ready to marshal themselves on their side, would be practically invincible. Then, besides all this, as there is every reason to hope that we should carry with us from our mother's household a mother's blessing, so there appears no good reason why we should not lay aside our old time, outgrown allegiance, but to replace it with an alliance which might be in some respects even closer. This idea has, we are aware, been scouted by some as unattainable. We should not wish it to be regarded as indispensable, because we have faith in the ability of Canada to make her own way. But if Germany and Austria, and even Germany and Italy can make a defensive alliance, on what ground could the right of Great Britain and Canada to do so be denied? It would be by no means a one-sided arrangement, for in case of a struggle between Great Britain and Russia, almost her only possible adversary, our coaling stations and trans-continental railway would be of the greatest service to her.

A mistaken notion, as it seems to us, pervades some of the speeches which are made from time to time upon this general subject, the notion, viz., that the Americans, as a nation, are eager for the annexation of Canada. We venture to affirm that if any of our public men who so think would travel incognito for a time in the United States and mingle freely with all classes of citizens, not only would that notion be dispelled but they would come back astonished, if not chagrined, at the inadequate knowledge of Canada and its resources which the average American, not of Canadian origin, possesses, and of the smallness of the place which Canadian affairs occupy in the thoughts of the great majority. The fact is that their own country looms so large in the eyes of most Americans that every other part of the continent is pretty much hidden from the range of their vision.

#### SIR JOHN THOMPSON'S SPEECH.

It is probably not too much to say that all Canada listened attentively to the speech which Sir John Thompson delivered under the auspices of the Young Men's Conservative Association, of Toronto, on Friday evening last. As the first free public utterance of the new Premier, it is naturally regarded not simply as the address of the leader of a great party, but