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**CANADA AND AMERICAN AGGRESSION.**

THE United States has always been an aggressive power. Its patriotism has been fed upon strife with Britain, its ambition has been stirred by the idea of one day possessing the whole continent. The inexorable law of its existence seems to have been the absorption of new territory, or at any rate the desire to obtain it. The great Republic coveted Florida and promptly seized it; coveted Louisiana and purchased it! coveted Texas and stole it; and then picked a quarrel with Mexico which ended in the acquisition of California. Had it not been for British power it would have obtained Canada long ago; as it was, the Republic got the fair valley of the Ohio, a great stretch of Canadian territory on the Pacific, and the State of Maine on the Atlantic.

This ambitious desire for the expansion of territory was founded on two principles—a sort of national, inherent earth-hunger, and a jealous hatred of Great Britain. Yet the Mother Country by its defeat of French power upon this continent and its influence in holding the Indians in check, really enabled the Thirteen Colonies to hold their own, after independence had been finally granted them. A great French Canada would have been far more dangerous to their early struggles after autonomy and a united existence, than were the peaceful and conciliatory British Provinces. But this was never thought of by them and from the time when Washington, through the medium of Arnold's invading army, addressed the loyal people of these Colonies down to the present day, the ambition of Sumner seems to have been the aspiration of the American nation; the Stars and Strips floating from the Gulf of Mexico to the North Pole. "We rejoice," said General Washington upon the occasion referred to, "that our enemies have been deceived with regard to you; they have persuaded themselves—they have even dared to say—that the Canadians were not capable of distinguishing between the blessings of liberty and the wretchedness of slavery. By such artifices they hoped to bind you to

their views, but they have been deceived. \* \* \* Come then, my brethren, unite with us in an indissoluble union! let us run together to the same goal." And this has been the actuating spirit of their warfare, military, commercial or political, so far as Canada is concerned, from the days of Washington to the régime of Harrison.

In 1812, the smouldering ashes of hostility originating in the war of the revolution again broke into active flame. Great Britain was still engaged in that life and death struggle with Napoleon in which the liberties of Europe, and it may be, of the world were bound up. The right of search claimed by Britain was more or less necessary to her in the contest going on, but was of course offensive in the last degree to the sensitive American Republic. Occasion was speedily found for action. An attempt to overhaul the U. S. frigate "Chesapeake" resulted in a conflict and its capture by the British ship "Leopard." The act was at once disavowed and reparation offered. But it was useless, and a proclamation was immediately issued excluding from all United States ports His Britannic Majesty's ships, while admitting those of France. England's difficulty had become America's opportunity, and from that time forth, as Sir Archibald Alison, the historian, says: "The object was to wrest from Great Britain the Canadas, and, in conjunction with Napoleon, extinguish its maritime and colonial Empire." Then followed the American destruction of the "Little Bell," sloop of war, under utterly indefensible circumstances, and the subsequent declaration of war on June 18th, 1812. And Sir Isaac Brock, writing six years before this date, describes the Americans as "being employed in drilling and forming their militia and openly declaring their intention of invading the Province the instant that war is determined on." Two years later he states that Jefferson and his party, though anxious to do so, dare not declare war, "and therefore endeavour to attain their objects by every provocation. A few weeks ago the Garrison of Niagara fired upon seven mer-