

# The Observer.

Vol. I.—No. 8.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, JAN. 2, 1892.

Price 5 Cents.

## Observations.

BY MARC MARIUS.

Periodically we have outbursts of what is known as anti annexation sentiment, or, as some cruel Liberals call it, "Jingoism." The appearance of Mr. Sol. White, M. P. P., on the platform recently in the role of annexationist, gave several of our public men an excuse for fulminating against American institutions and doing kotow to all that is British. Now that the affair has blown over, and the ship freighted with the destinies of Canada is once more sailing in smooth water, we cannot help thinking that the words of Falstaff might apply to the Annexation bogey: "I fear this Gunpowder, Percy, though he be dead."

For anyone to assert that there is a sentiment or leaning toward annexation in this country is to wilfully misrepresent the truth. A few may force themselves into the belief that Canadians are anxious to become members of the great republic to the south of us. Some may in secret cherish such a desire, still the bulk of the people are willing to permit us to work out our own destiny by evolution rather than by revolution. The latter may be a more speedy method, but the former if the slower has this merit, it is the more permanent. However, in a mixed community like ours it would be indeed strange if a few were not stricken with political strabism.

There is no reasonable ground for all this noise, over what may be justly considered a dead issue. What is the use of setting up men of straw, that we may knock them down again? The annexationists avowed and *in petto* are few in number. There are far more Canadians to-day in the United States, true to their allegiance to this country, than there are annexationists in Canada. Any person who has lived among the Canadian colonies in the United States can corroborate this. There are also far more people in the United States who would vote to annex that country to this one than there are Canadians willing to annex Canada to the United States. This is a plain practical truth, devoid of all sentiment, and all the special pleading of journalistic hair-splitters cannot change this fact.

There is also a good deal of maudlin sentiment over the exodus of Canadians to the United States. In the case of the farmer, to be forced to leave this country is a hardship, and a fault, which if it can be laid at the door of our political policy, no amount of Jingoism can condone. Still it cannot be denied that a great many Canadians have gone to the United States to better their condition, and they have invariably succeeded. "Vote to bring

back the thousands of Canadians in the United States," was the cry at a recent election. Now let us be sensible. What would the great financial, commercial and industrial interests of the United States do if these Canadians were brought back for good by the first train? What would their railroads do without managers, their financial institutions without presidents? Let us be merciful, and rest content, since our countrymen are spoiling the Egyptians.

But there is one feature in the sentimental comedy that is like the rose with its attendant thorn. One cannot criticise our political institutions, or policies, without being accused of treason, and denounced as an annexationist in disguise. Everybody is supposed to sit up at night with a lantern watching our Constitution and British connection. We hardly think this is Canadian sentiment. *The Mail* is frequently denounced as false to Canadian interests, simply because it does not indulge in buncombe and mock heroics. True Canadian sentiment as exemplified by all honest Canadians is like the love of Cordelia for King Lear. When Lear asked his three daughters how much they loved him, Goneril and Regan answered him in extravagant panegyric. When he put the question to Cordelia she answered,

"Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave  
My heart into my mouth; I love your majesty  
According to my bond, no more nor less."

Yet Lear found, when he was robbed and deserted by his daughters, that Cordelia's love was as she said herself, "More ponderous than her tongue."

The brave man is never guilty of boasting of his bravery, the honest man of his honesty, the patriot of his patriotism. Canadian sentiment is unobtrusive, but for this reason deeper and more lasting. And when we hear the extravagant panegyrics of political Gonerils and Regans we are constrained to repeat with Cordelia:

"What shall Cordelia say? Love and be silent."

The present municipal campaign is more prolific of candidates than any other within my memory. It would appear as if every citizen were out running for some office or another, and, as I am an exception, I feel like St. Athanasius, *contra mundum*. In the rush for office some one is bound to get left. The present situation reminds me much of an election which took place in a western town a few years ago. The place was a mining town that had sprung into existence almost in a night. Suddenly the citizens decided that a mayor was a necessity. A returning officer was selected and the voters proceeded to ballot. There were no nominations and everybody was supposed to vote for whoever he pleased. When the returning

officer counted the ballots he declared that no one had a majority, as there was but one vote for each candidate, and the only way he could account for this was that every man had voted for himself.

The women have introduced a new feature into the campaign by nominating one of their own sex in each ward for school trustee. Now, I do not believe very much in woman's suffrage, but this I will say, I do not think women will boodle or rob the public treasury. Who knows but the introduction of women into public office may be the purifying influence that is needed so badly to leaven the present political compound? Boodling is become such a fine art that hardly any man can be trusted. But I, for one, whilst believing that women should not be too forward in their demands for public recognition, am of the opinion that, as a whole, the weaker sex are the more honest.

If a woman is dishonest she is the creature of misfortune. The standard of honor and morality is higher among women than men, and even the most depraved of the sex have twinges of conscience altogether unknown to men. Business men find that their secrets are safer in the hands of women secretaries, and in the telegraph offices the "tickers" that send out the market reports are trusted alone to women, because when men had charge of the instruments false reports were often sent to help a confederate broker on change. Since women have been employed not a single instance of breach of faith has been known. A few women in the Public School Board may break the ring that at present exists there.

In looking over the list of labor jawnsmiths, who are constantly disturbing the peace during election times, I quite forgot to mention Harry Parr. Parr is an employe of the *Toronto News*. He is employed in the *News* office, and whichever way the *News* weather-vane turns there you will find Mr. Parr. Parr may try to assume that he is a great man in the labor party, but those belonging to organized labor know better, for Mr. Parr is now recognised as the cat which the *News* uses to pull its chestnuts off the stove.

By long odds the ablest speaker in the municipal campaign is A. W. Wright. If Mr. Wright had not been so good a party man he would today have held a high public office in this country, but Wright is too good natured, and has been used as a step ladder whereby others have climbed into office.

In the next issue I intend dealing with the police and the present system of locking up drunks. The topic is *apropos* of the season, and in conclusion I wish my readers a Happy New Year.