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CANADA AND THE FRENCH-CANADIAN

BY

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CANADA AND THE FRENCH-CANADIAN

AMONG the indirect results of the South African war, of a decade ago, were two which have had a vital bearing on the relations between Canada and the Empire. In the first place, the events of 1899 so inflamed colonial patriotism that within an astonishingly short time Canada and her sister dominions were sending contingents across oceans to aid the Mother Country in her struggle with the Boers. This outburst of patriotic fervour following close after Canada's tariff enactment of 1897, whereby preferential concessions were granted to Great Britain, gave an impetus to imperialism, a movement seeking closer Empire relations—at least, among the self-governing units of the Empire. The second result, referred to above, was even more unexpected. Because of the war and the sending of Canadian soldiers to South Africa many French-Canadian leaders were led to define their attitude towards the British Empire.

Notwithstanding their repeated expressions of loyalty and the statement of one of their leaders, that "the present attitude of the French Canadian is one of content,"¹ the bulk of Canada's French population will never love the English. The wholesale acceptance by French Canada of a Canadian nationalism in preference to one of a more British or imperial complexion is not due, however, to events of recent years. The situation can be explained only by reference to the commonly known fact that Canada is peopled by two races, which are dissimilar in language, religion, and traditions, as well as in origin. The races are descended from the two great European nations which for hundreds of years were hereditary enemies.

¹ Mr. Henry Bourassa, *Monthly Review*, October, 1902.

For a century and a half the presence in Canada of a strong French element has directly influenced the political policy and development of the country. Since the decisive battle on the Plains of Abraham, England has squarely and with unwonted sagacity and firmness faced the problem of dealing with an alien and conquered race. Although, as Parkman has said, "a happier calamity never befell a people than the conquest of Canada by British arms," yet Great Britain totally failed either to annihilate or to assimilate the French settlers left in the country in 1763.

Guarantees in regard to religious privileges figured prominently in the treaties which handed over the French colony to Britain. The capitulations of Quebec and Montreal began by protecting the vanquished from all danger of that religious persecution of which they stood most in dread. The treaty of Paris in 1763 confirmed these preliminaries and formally recognized the right of French Roman Catholics to continue their religious practices within the limits of English law. Finally, the Quebec Act, passed in 1774 by the British parliament, established permanently the civil, political, and religious rights of the French in Canada. These privileges include the official recognition of the French language, the French civil law, and the established Roman Catholic Church. The status of the French Church in Canada may be regarded, therefore, as resting on a species of *Concordat*, and the Quebec Act is virtually a treaty as well as a law. England's strict observance of the provisions of the Act has rendered British rule entirely to the taste of the Roman Catholic Church; and a tacit understanding may be said to exist between the two powers, civil and ecclesiastical. The Church, on the one hand, keeps the French-Canadians, practically all of whom are of the Catholic faith, loyal and contented. The British authorities, in return, have left the Church so free to exercise her authority in the Roman Catholic province of the Dominion, that it remains as it were a special preserve for the Church.

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This *entente* may be said to form one of the most vital elements in Anglo-Canadian relations. To be sure, when her own interests have been endangered, the Church has defended them fiercely, even at the risk of destroying Canadian unity. This was shown during the stormy controversy waged over the Manitoba School Question in 1896. The Roman Catholic divines plunged into the election campaign of that year which was to determine the outcome of the question. The bishops first issued a collective order inviting the electors to support only such candidates as would pledge themselves to restore Separate Schools to the Roman Catholics of Manitoba. Mgr. Langevin, in the course of an address at Montreal, said: "All those who do not follow the hierarchy are not Catholics. When the hierarchy has spoken it is useless for a Catholic to say the contrary, for if he acts that way he ceases to be a Catholic." "Your duty is clear before you," urged Father Charlevoix, in a sermon preached at New Richmond, Quebec. "You have to choose between the commands of your bishops and the misrepresentations of their enemies. You have to choose between Christ and Satan. If you despise Christ by disobeying the bishops, you must suffer, as the consequences of such action, the retribution that is sure to follow."

On the other hand, the Church has a complete and openly expressed regard for British sovereignty. The blessing of God is called down upon her English rulers by the Church in her religious services. Rarely has a foreign rule been accepted more absolutely. Despite the anti-British sentiments of scattered ignorant and isolated up-country priests, the liberality of the Quebec Act has assured to England the unceasing loyalty of the French-Canadian Church from the time of its enactment over a century and a quarter ago. "British rule suits us perfectly," declared a Canadian ecclesiastic of high rank. "Thanks to it, the position of our Church in Canada is excellent." During the American War of Independence, French-Canadians, encouraged by their priests, fought for England, and all attempts

to win them over to the opposite side failed completely. In the War of 1812 French and English-Canadians fought side by side to drive back the American invaders. The Church, moreover, has abstained from associating herself with insurrectionary movements in which religion has had no vital interest. Thus, in 1837, the Church withheld its approval when Papineau, the Quebec patriot, raised a revolt in behalf of French Canadian liberties; the Church took a stand uncompromisingly on the side of British rule.

The presence of the French in Canada also exerted an influence during the preliminaries of the confederation of the provinces, consummated in 1867. In Canada there was lacking that spontaneous national consciousness which would make the idea of union irresistible, and which, a generation later, brought about the federation of the Australian colonies. Confederation was mooted originally in Canada, with her rival races, as a device for minimizing the racial friction between Ontario and Quebec; and to establish a political system under which each province would be able to preserve its British and French nationality respectively.

The old problem of satisfactorily adjusting the relations between the Anglo-Saxon and the French elements in the population of the Dominion does not seem to be losing its difficulties. To be sure, the two races have united in evolving, within the space of a generation, a Canadian national sentiment which affects a kind of moral hegemony over the younger nations of the Empire in all matters relating to the imperial connexion. But with the more rapid growth in numbers of the English-speaking population the question of the rights of the minority party will become increasingly difficult to handle. The continuance of the exceptional privileges enjoyed to-day by the French seems likely to be threatened by the ever-increasing English majority at the polls; particularly so, if the tendency towards a loosening of the British tie progresses.

The population of Canada, at the present time, is estimated at about 7,000,000, of which number approximately 2,000,000 are of French origin. Their great stronghold is, of course, the province of Quebec, containing as it does the bulk of their race. The French population is augmented through immigration to so small a degree that it is practically negligible. On the other hand, of the 300,000 immigrants who entered Canada during the past year, considerably more than half were from the United States and the British Isles. Although the French of the Dominion have had and still have a remarkable birth-rate, the odds are so strongly against them that they must abandon the idea that they will ever prevail by force of numbers. Their future is assured, but it is becoming increasingly evident that Canada will never again become French and that the Anglo-Saxon will remain irrevocably in a majority.

Another line of cleavage exists between the two races. If we except the Irish element, which is quite considerable, it may be said that, speaking generally, the French of Canada are Roman Catholic and the British Protestant. This is one of the outstanding facts in the political situation of the Dominion. So great is the control of the Roman Catholic Church over the lives of the French-Canadians that it may be regarded as the principal factor in their evolution. Immediately following the conquest by Britain, the Church, convinced that the only way to keep the race French was to keep it Roman Catholic, adopted a policy of isolation as a means of safeguarding a racial individuality threatened on all sides by the forces of the New World. Dispersion and absorption are the dangers which have unceasingly menaced the unity of the Canadian French. In its efforts to segregate its people from the rest of America, the Church determined wisely to devote all its energies to maintaining its hold over the souls already belonging to it, rather than to attempt the more difficult task of making converts in the enemy's camp. To secure this end, the Church has multiplied the barriers preventing its people from coming

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into contact with the forces of Protestantism or of Free Thought.

In the eyes of the Roman Catholic clergy of Canada, modern France is a source of danger not less great than Protestant England. Despite their undying love for the land of their origin and their preciously guarded French traditions, the France of to-day is regarded with a feeling akin to fear, because of its free-thinking tendencies. The effort to minimize the influence of France on the French of Canada is especially difficult by reason of the community of language between the two. For this reason, the Canadian French Church exercises a strict censorship over books imported from Paris. Renan, Musset, and other French authors have come under its ban; with respect to Zola, it has been said by an Archbishop of Montreal, that his "name should not be so much as mentioned even from the pulpit, and whose books should not be admitted, not merely into any Catholic, but into any decent, respectable household." The secular school in France, the law against religious societies, the rupture with the Pope, and the separation of Church and State have strengthened the determination of the Canadian clergy to prevent a contamination of their charges by contact with official France. The dangers incident to living in a Protestant country under the flag of a Protestant power also must be combated perpetually. In this instance, language forms the outworks protecting Canadian Roman Catholicism. The policy of the Church, in this matter, is to continue to keep the mass of the French ignorant of the English language, and also to impose all hindrances possible in the way of marriages between Roman Catholics and Protestants.

The Canadian French Church is a powerful organization playing a not unimportant role in the evolution of even the Dominion as a whole. Were it not for the co-operation of the clergy, it would be impossible to secure a satisfactory equilibrium between the rights of the French minority and the British majority. The policy of the Church

has been summarized by André Siegfried in his illuminating volume, "The Race Question in Canada," as consisting of three articles. In the first place, it stands for a "complete and final acceptance of British rule." As mentioned above, the Church is in the enjoyment of a guaranteed security and liberty. The privileges it exercises would not be conceivable under the constitution of a state in the United States. Secondly, the "complete and final severance from France." Although the love of French-Canadians for France is ardent and lasting it is also of a platonic character. A return to France of to-day, with its free thought and radicalism, would result in a sort of bankruptcy for the Church. "I love France," is the word of a French-Canadian clerical of high rank, "but for no consideration on earth would we willingly fall under her domination." In the third place, the Church insists upon "the passionate defence of the integrity of the French-Canadian race." Had it not been for the faithful service of the priests, the race, in all likelihood, would have long since disappeared through dispersion or absorption. To-day the maintenance of Roman Catholicism appears to be as essential to the continuance of the French race and language in Canada as a century ago.

A grave problem, however, is involved in that fact. The French-Canadian race, it is true, has been perpetuated largely through the protection of the Church. They have been made, as a people, virtuous, law-abiding, and industrious, as well as prolific. But the price paid for the protection and service of the Church is exorbitant. As a class the race has been kept in a state of intellectual childhood and its members are still subject to antiquated doctrines and methods, due to the purposeful policy of the Church. The evolution of the French-Canadian race, however, has been interfered with thereby; this is especially serious in view of its rivalry with the Anglo-Saxons of the Dominion, who long since escaped from such thralldom. The French of Canada have before them two lines of development, either

one of which is attended by disturbing results. Either they will remain strict Roman Catholics, guided in all things by the Church, and thus find it difficult to keep pace with the development of their British fellow-Canadians; or else they will break loose, partially at least, from the authority of the Church, thereby endangering their existing unity and placing themselves more under the influence of Protestantism and Anglo-Saxon institutions.

However, in order to guard against a wrong conclusion being drawn from the foregoing, it should be stated with emphasis that the French-Canadians occupy an important place in the public life of the Dominion. Many of Canada's most eminent statesmen, of the past as well as the present, have been devout French Roman Catholics of the province of Quebec. Such men as Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the prime minister of the Dominion, the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, the postmaster-general, Mr. Henri Bourassa, leader of the French nationalistic movement, Sir Lomer Gouin, the premier of Quebec, stand fully abreast of the best and most progressive elements in Canadian statesmanship. Since the Act of Confederation, in 1867, the French have always sent about one-fourth of the federal representation to the House of Commons at Ottawa; and they control the political management of the province of Quebec, which is the largest in Canada in territory and the second in wealth and population. For a decade or more, the most prominent figure in the British Empire, outside of the British Isles, has been Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who combines in his person, to a remarkable degree, the virtues and graces of the two great races of Canada. And it is doubtful if the tone of the Canadian House of Commons has ever been raised higher than it was, by two Frenchmen, during the months following the sending of Canadian Troops to the Transvaal. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, eloquently assailed by his compatriot, Mr. Bourassa, for involving Canada in the Boer war, replied in a masterful speech achieving in this discussion one of the greatest successes of his career.

Having considered the watchful policy of the Roman Catholic Church in its guardianship over the French, and recalling the fact that Canada is peopled by two races so dissimilar, the question arises as to the relations between these constituent population elements. It may be said, in general, that race prejudices have had more than their rightful share of influence in determining the results of electoral campaigns. A notable example showing the truth of this statement was afforded by the federal election in November, 1900, when the people of Canada declared their judgement upon the first administration of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The contest turned largely upon the despatch of Canadian troops to serve in the Anglo-Boer war; the soldiers having been sent by a government at whose head was a French-Canadian. The French province of Quebec was hostile to the war, and was represented as "seething with disloyalty and honey-combed with sympathy for Britain's enemies." On the other hand, the English province of Ontario was aflame with loyal enthusiasm and proud of the Canadian contribution of troops to the cause of England. Nevertheless, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's government which equipped and despatched the soldiers to South Africa carried fifty-eight out of the sixty-five seats in the "disloyal" province of Quebec, and only thirty-four out of the ninety-two seats in the "loyal" province of Ontario. The French-Canadians, therefore, had the appearance of being the strongest supporters of a policy of which they did not approve. Manifestly, the French province had voted for Laurier because he was French and the English province had voted against him because he was not English.

The feeling of rivalry between these two adjoining provinces is traditional. After a hundred and fifty years of life as neighbours, under the same laws and flag, they remain foreigners, and, generally speaking, have little more love for each other now than they had in the beginning. To be sure, a degree of intercourse is necessary between the townfolk of the two races which gives rise to an increase

of small amenities and in many cases to real friendships. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, however, with masterful tact, has unwaveringly preached the doctrine of race unity, addressing himself to both races. On July 13th, 1910, in the course of his tour in Western Canada, the premier visited the small French-Canadian parish of Ste. Anne des Chênes, in Manitoba. In this Roman Catholic hamlet of 1,000 inhabitants with its race mannerisms and customs, its quaint architecture, and revered sanctuary, the French-Canadian prime minister spoke on the race issue. "We are sons and daughters," he said, "of the Old World—English, Irish, Scotch, and French. We love the past, we revere those gone before, but our duty is in the present. We have a great new country, our heritage. We are all Canadians. Under the British flag let us unite—every one of us, whatever our origin, loving the old not the less but our own the more—to make of our home land, Canada, *le pays de justice, de liberté et de bonheur.*" On an earlier occasion, while visiting the Mother Country at the time of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, he referred to the same issue in a manner almost too optimistic. "There is no race supremacy among us," he declared. "We have learned to respect and love those against whom we fought in the past, and we have made them respect and love us. The old enmities have ceased to exist, and now there is nothing more than a spirit of emulation."

It is unfortunate, however, that occasionally a French-Canadian visionary or anti-British patriot will voice sentiments calculated to stir up the ashes of race strife. For instance, in July, 1902, there appeared in the *Revue Canadienne* an impassioned article depicting the French ideal with much vehemence. The author rejoiced that France and England are hereditary enemies, he gloried in British humiliations in South Africa, and exhorted his fellow-French-Canadians to remember the blood shed to preserve their liberties. He expressed a confident hope that the French in Canada and New England would be strong enough in time to possess the east coast of North America. In the

meantime, his compatriots were urged to turn their backs upon Anglo-Saxon ideals and institutions, and to refuse even to use the English language. To illustrate his own contempt for those who yield to such temptations, he related an experience of his in a Chicago restaurant. Overhearing some Germans speaking in English, he and his companions forthwith arose and walked out into the street, disgusted at such a concession to the Anglo-Saxon. Those who proffer such counsel, fortunately few in number, may be imbued with a noble patriotism, but they clearly are not the truest friends of the French-Canadian. For good or for evil, the dominant race and dominant institutions in North America are Anglo-Saxon, and it is folly to shut one's eyes to facts.

In view of the rivalry, an incurable rivalry it would appear, between Canada's two races, and because of the antecedents and spirit of the French portion of the population, it is clear that the future of the Dominion is and will continue to be vitally affected by the attitude of its French inhabitants. Their will on such questions as the future of the imperial tie, Canadian independence, and annexation by the United States, cannot be ignored. By examining the attitude of the French-Canadian people towards each of these issues it will be possible to generalize to some extent upon the future political status of Canada. Although it is futile to attempt definite predictions in the field of political development, it is possible to observe national tendencies and to see the direction in which they point; and thereby to form an opinion as to probabilities.

In the first place, with reference to a possible future Canadian independence, the attitude of the French population may be quite clearly defined. It has been shown already that the French Church seeks a permanent bond with Great Britain based on the guarantees of the Quebec Act. After another decade or two, with an increasing inflow of Anglo-Saxons from the United States and Great Britain, it is hardly probable, under an independent govern-

ment, that any one race or religion should be permitted to enjoy such privileges as are the lot to-day of the Roman Catholics of French Canada. Therefore, it may be stated, with a degree of certainty, that the Roman Catholic Church, the strongest French influence in Canada, would throw its weight, without doubt, against a movement towards absolute independence. The severance of the British bond would bestow on the French few benefits not already enjoyed and it might easily be accompanied by the loss of many existing privileges. Mr. Bourassa, the brilliant leader of the French-Canadian Nationalists, frankly admits that although the word "patriotism" is lacking in his regard for England, the Frenchman in Canada is loyal because the advantages of such a policy seem greater than under any other feasible system. "Our loyalty to England can only be, and should only be," he declares, "a matter of common sense." In another connexion, with respect to the status of Canada, he affirms that the French-Canadian "asks for no change—for a long time to come, at least."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier's policy providing for a Canadian navy has been much criticised, by certain organs of the Conservative party, as being anti-British in its purpose. They argue that the development of a separate navy for Canada will tend strongly towards a complete independence, and that the premier's real intentions, although cleverly veiled, have an unmistakable separatist character. This view, however, is totally untenable in the light of his speeches and career. From a non-partisan point of view, Sir Wilfrid's naval policy may be summarized as follows: In Canada's relations with the Mother Country he has always insisted unequivocally for the greatest measure of autonomy consistent with the maintenance of the British bond. Since the form of Imperial defence ~~is~~ co-operation ~~is~~ which is most in conformity with the dignity of the self-governing states ~~is~~ is the development of their individual resources, this has been the plan adopted by Canada, as well as by Australia, her sister state. As far back as 1902, at the Colonial Con-

ference in London, Sir Wilfrid Laurier courteously but absolutely refused to discuss the question of imperial defence, feeling that the policy of direct contributions to the British, or an imperial, navy would "drag the Dominion into the whirlpool of militarism, that plague of Europe." No less an imperialist than Viscount Milner, in addressing the Canadian Club in Toronto in October, 1908, declared that he had no sympathy whatever with the statement that colonial navies and armies would tend towards separation. He argued that the development by the colonies of their own defence resources would in the end be to the best interests of the Empire.

Canada to-day enjoys, practically, although not theoretically, legislative and administrative independence. She makes her own tariffs; she taxes the products of Great Britain and her sister colonies as she pleases. Canada negotiates with foreign states for reciprocity arrangements; and she took a long step towards the management of her own foreign affairs by sending Mr. Lemieux, in 1907, to Japan, relative to the question of immigration. The virtual independence of Canada and her sister dominions has been acknowledged by the British government. The colonial secretary, at the Colonial Conference of 1907, concurred in the principle laid down by the British prime minister that "the essence of the imperial connexion" is to be found in "the freedom and independence of the different governments which are a part of the British Empire." By severing the tie with Great Britain, Canada would secure to herself few privileges and powers not already hers. On the other hand, she would forfeit the prestige, now enjoyed, arising from a membership in the largest empire in the history of the world; and she would be forced to take her place among the nations as an independent unit relying upon her own resources. This would necessitate enormous financial expenditures in the establishment and maintenance of naval and military forces, a diplomatic service, and many lesser accompaniments of sovereignty. Therefore, since the exist-

ing British connexion is thoroughly satisfactory to both English-speaking and French-Canadians, the eventuality of an absolute independence for Canada is so remote that it may be passed over as merely a far-off possibility.

A second political evolution which Canada may undergo is annexation to the United States. Historically, there seems little justification for faith in this contingency. Both in 1775 and 1812 British dominion in Canada was preserved, in the face of American invaders, by native Canadians. Again, in 1867 the idea of a confederation of Ontario and Quebec expanded into the conception of a federation embracing the whole of British North America largely through a determination to remain under the Union Jack rather than accept the Stars and Stripes. The dangers of American aggression appeared acute at that time; the hostile temper of the American North towards England found expression in Fenian raids against Canada; the Elgin Reciprocity Treaty was abrogated by the United States; Congress passed a bill for the admission of the Canadian provinces as American states; and it was suggested that England hand over Canada as compensation for the *Alabama* damages and other offences against the victorious North. Finally, as late as 1895, the Venezuela controversy resuscitated the old feelings of distrust and defiance. The interpretation of the Munroe Doctrine by Secretary of State Olney, to the effect that no European power could be tolerated any longer upon the American continent, was regarded by many Canadians as a denial of their right to choose their own political connexions. The Canadian population elements which have uniformly defended the British tie in preference to a possible union with the United States during the past hundred years and over, have been the French-Canadians and the descendants of the United Empire Loyalists—who were the exiled Tories from the victorious Thirteen Colonies.

The force of the historical tradition, however, is losing ground. Relations between the two Anglo-Saxon coun-

tries in North America are amicable, and the United States is fast coming to a realization that Canada with her resources and recent development must henceforth be treated as an equal. Never has this been shown more clearly than during the tariff negotiations between the two countries during the spring of 1910. It is significant that, at this time, the initiative was taken by the government at Washington, in sharp contrast with the experience of the thirty years following 1866. At the present time, the president of the United States and various lesser leaders of the government are advocating closer commercial relations with Canada.

Despite the masterful advocacy of annexation with the American Republic by the late Goldwin Smith, the present national tendencies in Canada do not point towards such union. Among the many well-known arguments advanced in favour of annexation are: the geographical contiguity of the two countries; increasing commercial relations along natural lines, north and south; the general identity of race, language, and institutions; the community of interests in the fisheries, coasting trade, and waterways, which would result; the cessation of smuggling which would accompany the assimilation of the excise and seaboard tariff. It has been urged further that such union would render unprovoked hostility by the United States against Great Britain practically impossible; also, that it is perfectly obvious that the forces of Canada alone are not sufficient to assimilate the French inhabitants.

The feeling which prevails among the French when they think of the United States is a mixture of admiration and distrust; admiration of her extraordinary material development and a distrust of her uncompromising nationalism. Thanks to their stubborn energies, the French-Canadians have secured for themselves a gratifying status in Canada, living an existence fashioned to their own liking, and maintaining their own language, religion, and traditions. Therefore, proud of such results, the French are

afraid of imperilling them by any change in the political situation of their country. They feel that a union with the United States might have for them undesirable results, since it is scarcely likely that the French would be successful in securing from the American republic such privileges as are theirs to-day under Great Britain. Furthermore, their influence would be lessened. Instead of forming one-third of the population, as they do in Canada, they would represent less than one-fortieth of the hypothetical state. The dangers of such union, however, would probably be preferred to the evils believed to be inherent in any scheme of close imperial federation. Under the United States system of administration the French-Canadian feels that he would, at all events, be able to preserve the self-government of his own province. The question of such union with the American republic is discussed by Mr. Bourassa in his candid and suggestive treatise entitled "*Grande-Bretagne et Canada.*" "A young nation," he declares, "has nothing to lose and everything to gain in having an alternative choice in achieving its destiny. Under the British régime we are able always to change our allegiance. Once we become Americans, the union is absolute, at least for a long period."

All things considered, the French, therefore, will continue, probably for an indefinite period, to show opposition to annexation proposals. And the English-speaking Canadian, at heart, is not much less of a Canadian nationalist than his French brother. But all seem agreed that closer commercial relations with the United States are desirable. It should be borne in mind that a commercial union of the two countries might conceivably pave the way for closer political relations at some future time. This desire for better trade arrangements with the United States, however, does not blind the Canadian to the claims of the Mother Country, as Mr. Fielding, the Canadian minister of finance, showed in a recent speech in London.¹ "In not

¹ Speech at Dominion Day banquet, July 1st, 1910.

one of our arrangements is there a line or a word which interferes with the right of Canada and the Mother Country to make preferential arrangements whenever they should do so. . . . We shall have future negotiations with other countries, but whether they take place with the United States or with any European country, depend upon it Canada will stand for that principle which she helped to establish, that the commercial relations between the Mother Country and the colonies are a part of their domestic family affairs with which no foreign country has a right to meddle."

In attempting to read the political horoscope of the Dominion the would-be prophet is forced, therefore, to dismiss as improbable, at any rate in the near future, both annexation to the United States and an absolute independence. Accordingly, by the process of elimination, the third solution is selected as the most likely one to prevail. A continuance of British connexion in some form or another would seem to meet satisfactorily the needs and desires of Canadians of both races. The French ask for nothing better than the perpetuation of a rule which has enabled them to expand so gratifyingly. The loyalty of the English-speaking inhabitants is a mixture of a natural race sentiment and a reasonable self-interest. Hence the *status quo* stands a good chance of lasting, provided the Mother Country does not return to that policy of colonial intervention which succeeded so ill in the past.

Mr. Asselin, a French-Canadian, discusses this issue in his pamphlet, entitled "A Quebec View of Canadian Nationalism." "We all, or nearly all agree," he says, "at the present time, that the existing political relations of Canada with the Mother Country need little change." In a recent speech, referring to Anglo-Canadian relations, Sir Wilfrid Laurier has said: "If the time ever comes, and may God forbid it, that the old home is in danger, our hearts and brawn will be ranged at her side against any enemy, no matter whence that foeman hails." On an ear-

lier occasion he declared. "Whilst remaining French, we are profoundly attached to British institutions." Another eminent French-Canadian — Sir Etienne Pascal Taché — once uttered a phrase which has become famous and which trenchantly describes the political attitude of his compatriots. "The last shot fired on American soil," he affirmed, "in defence of the British flag would be fired by a French-Canadian."

It should be emphatically stated at this point that despite their satisfaction with British connexion, the French-Canadians, almost to a man, and many of their English-speaking neighbours, are resolutely opposed to imperial federation in its various aspects. The ideal of the imperialists may be defined as a conception of the Empire as an organic whole, consisting of nations independent in local affairs and having distinct individualities, but by virtue of certain great common interests developing a common policy and a common life. They would have all matters having an interest to the Empire at large, such as commerce, defence, and immigration, subject to an imperial management in peace as well as in war. Lord Milner, in the course of an address before the Canadian Club of Montreal, in November, 1908, outlined his ultimate ideal for the British Empire as "a union in which the several states, each entirely independent in its separate affairs, should all co-operate for common purposes on the basis of absolute unqualified equality of status."

The widespread opposition to the idea of political, economic, and military federation is founded on the growing spirit of nationalism in Canada and her sister dominions. Canada is a colony essentially loyal and British, but passionately jealous of her liberties and thoroughly determined not to relinquish the least particle whatsoever of her autonomy. Even at the time of the decision of the Alaska boundary controversy in 1903, this determination to guard Canadian rights revealed itself. In the belief that her interests had been sacrificed by Britain, many newspapers

in the Dominion openly advocated the severance of British connexion and the proposal that Canada begin to fly on her own wings.

The imperialist, in urging as his fundamental principle a unity of action for common purposes, is advocating a policy which, in the eyes of the colonial, would imperil his rights of self-government. The attitude of Canada with reference to a military federation is, briefly, that she desires to enter no scheme for imperial defence which might interfere with her present freedom. By entering into such a compact she might find herself involved in wars occasioned by friction between Japan and Australia, between Great Britain and Russia, in Asia, or between various other possible combatants. Since no colony can be really self-governing which has not control of its defence forces, and as the desire for self-government is the strongest motive in colonial politics, therefore, the dislike in the colonies to any idea of military consolidation is almost universal. In harmony with this sentiment the Dominion, within the past decade, has assumed the expense and responsibility of garrisoning the naval ports of Halifax and Esquimaux; and recently Sir Wilfrid Laurier's government has adopted the policy of a Canadian navy—owned and controlled by the Dominion. The policy, therefore, is nationalistic rather than imperialistic. As quoted above, the premier's own words show, however, that Canada would loyally fall into line at any time that the Mother Country might be endangered.

Economic or commercial imperialism is the supreme hope of the advocates of imperial union. They believe that the road will be opened to the desired ideal by some scheme of preferential trade within the Empire. Canada established, in 1897, the principle of extending to the Mother Country preferential privileges, a policy now general with the self-governing states. Curiously, however, Canada, despite the preference she is extending to Great Britain and several British dependencies, stands aloof from

schemes for placing commerce on a common Empire basis. The principle of preferential trade lies in a system of mutual concessions in respect to tariffs, for the purpose of serving best the interests of the Empire as a whole. Here again, the imperialist runs afoul of the national self-assertion characterizing the autonomous states. Canada wishes to enter no tariff arrangement involving her in any common action, but desires simply to be left free to make her own arrangements with the Mother Country and sister colonies on terms of equality, entering into any specific agreement which by her independent action she approves.

A political federation of the Empire meets with even less favour than a commercial or military union. The project as yet is visionary. It has been urged by hostile critics that it would be practically impossible to determine an equitable basis of representation in the imperial council or parliament; that India and the crown colonies, in justice, also should be represented, thereby increasing the difficulties; and that it would be a superhuman task to satisfactorily harmonize the differing interests of the widely separated portions of the Empire. The Liberal premier of Ontario, in May, 1901, discussed this question at a meeting of the British Empire League, in Toronto. "In a federated Parliament of the British Empire, Canada would be subjected," he declared, "to the decisions of the representatives of all parts of the Empire—of men, that is to say, who have no knowledge of our social conditions or of our national aspirations." In the words of Mr. Asselin, the Quebec nationalist, "The idea of an imperial parliament legislating, even on some subjects only, for all the British realms, may appeal to the imagination, but no one as yet has shown how such legislation could be passed without the bigger and more powerful partners over-riding the will, now of this and now of that, colony."

The influence of the French-Canadian upon the course of imperial evolution was seen in an earlier recognition of the nationalist principle by the statesmen of the Do-

minion than by those of the other self-governing colonies. His loyalty towards Great Britain is one of reason and gratitude. Towards the Empire he has no feelings whatever. Therefore, as may naturally be expected, sentimental arguments in favour of imperialism do not appeal to him. Looking at the problems of imperialism from his purely Canadian standpoint, he naturally takes an attitude hostile to any scheme of closer Empire relations.

The road of Canadian political development seems to be leading, therefore, towards a paradoxical status; towards an independence accompanied by a voluntary continuance, by Canada, of a connexion with Great Britain, small though it be. Canada has little reason to complain of the usual course of her ordinary political life, and in the main she is satisfied with the government of the Empire as conducted from Westminster. Although imperial federation, either in the lump or by instalments, seems unlikely, yet the Empire is surely tending towards an ideal no less desirable, and much more practicable. The hope of many, both in Great Britain and the colonies, is a league of free states—Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa—girdling the world, which would be held together mainly by mutual advantages and partly by sentiment. Canada would possess nationhood and political equality with the United Kingdom, instead of being in subordination to the Colonial Office. There would be co-operation in war and peace under agreed conditions, and the likelihood of misunderstanding and strife would be minimized. Although but a dream, it is not inconceivable, and if it is ever realized, its coming will place the relations of the self-governing portions of the Empire on a more equitable and desirable basis. "We are going to build the British Empire," declared Sir Wilfrid Laurier, on July 25th, 1910, in the course of an address in the Canadian West, "on the rock of local autonomy, and that local autonomy is consistent with imperial unity."

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