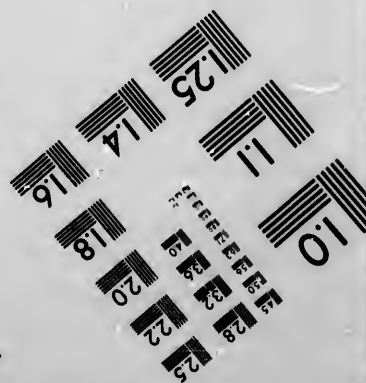
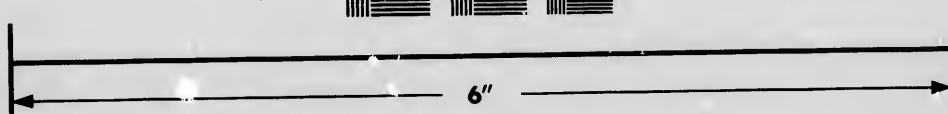
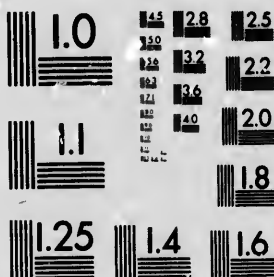


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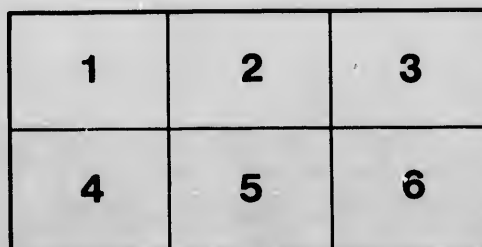
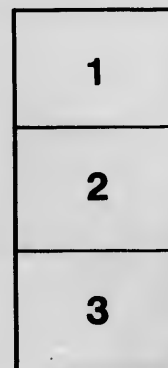
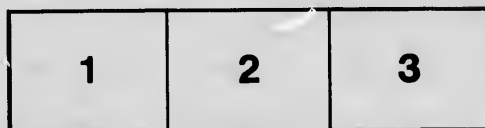
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A CANADIAN VIEW OF ANNEXATION.

ALTHOUGH the question of the annexation of Canada to the United States does not figure prominently in the political programme of any of the great parties on either side of the line 45°, there can be no doubt that it is one of those important dormant issues never wholly out of sight. To those in the Dominion who assert that "annexation is dead," I reply that its ghost is far from laid, that it will keep flitting through the political atmosphere, and assume more vigorous and aggressive life than it has yet shown. That it will be a *fait accompli* within the present generation, if not sooner, many of the far-seeing public men of Canada believe. There is no denying, however, that besides the place-holders, ministers, and aspirants to office and imperial favor, there is in the Dominion a loyal section of the population, largely composed of the "old fogies" of British birth and the Orangemen of Ontario, who will stoutly oppose its realization. I may also place on this side a number of English and Scotch merchants, above middle life, many of the clergy, together with a considerable body of timid Conservatives, who naturally shrink from the idea of radical change. But, on the other hand, there are multitudes, even of British Protestants, who set the slightest possible value on the connection with England, which they were only too glad to escape from in order to better their condition. As for the Irish Roman Catholics, who are intelligent, industrious, and law-abiding, and number about one-fourth of the entire population,—say one million,—their loyalty to Great Britain is unequal to the mildest strain. While they and their children, born and reared in Canada, may not ardently desire annexation to the United States at present, it is undeniable that the great majority would, were the question put to a quiet vote, prefer annexation, to the government under

which they live. Admitting that they are fairly satisfied with British policy toward the land of their adoption, they are by no means pleased with even the present treatment of Ireland, while any reference to the past produces the reverse of a soothing effect on the average Celtic mind. With reference to the present generation of native Canadians, say from forty years of age downward, and to the immigrants some time in the country, the majority, besides experiencing those cosmopolitan influences so actively at work among the most advanced communities within the last thirty years, have gradually come to regard the United States as an extension of the United Kingdom and Canada. They consider its people a race with which they must have business and social relations, and among whom many of them may, sooner or later, take up their permanent abode. The republic, in their estimation, affords them the most profitable sphere for their energies, and vast numbers of them annually enter it to push their fortunes. The fact that there is scarcely a family in the Dominion, French, German, or British, but has members or relatives living in the United States, operates as a mighty moral force in the interest of peace and closer communion. The feeling toward England is very different. However much she may be admired and loved by a great portion of the colonists, the masses of Canada feel that their fortunes, with those of their children's children, are involved in the fate of this northern continent.

As all men are influenced by their own interests, it is easy to understand that the trading classes would like free access to larger markets, which political and commercial union would afford. They keenly feel, particularly in times of depression, that their field of operations is very limited, with a population of only four millions, scattered over a territory nearly four thousand miles from east to west, with little more than an attenuated line of frontier and river settlements. Most Canadians are aware that the United States offer every variety of climate as well as of vegetable productions, to suit all constitutions, tastes, and necessities. The vast development of their manufacturing and mining industries, together with the rapid settlement of their wild lands, holds out substantial prospects of profitable employment to all comers of whatever race or craft. In fact, the marvellous expansion of the industry, commerce, and population of the Republic during the last twenty years, despite the terrible

losses, panics, and demoralization resulting from the Civil War, has produced a profound impression upon all Canadians.

There has long been apparent in Canada a tendency to "look to Washington" in times of hot party controversy, arising from real or fancied injustice on the part of this or that section or dominant faction. During the bitter party disputes of 1837 and 1847, in which French and British prejudices were keenly aroused, an annexation party was openly formed in Montreal and other places. Among the leaders were several prominent men of the day. Before confederation, Ontario Liberals talked of applying to the Government at Washington for that justice which the Conservative majority, led by the late Sir George E. Cartier, had long refused to concede. This kind of agitation has continued, more or less, ever since among the public men of Canada. In numberless instances it ends in the transference of their allegiance to the United States. Men of less ambition and of conservative tastes plod along in the old ruts while their circumstances remain tolerable, conscious, however, of the probable necessity, sooner or later, of a movement southward.

It is not at all strange that a widespread distrust of the future of Canada, under its present isolated constitutional and commercial system, should widely prevail in the Dominion. The progress of the country, notwithstanding the union of the provinces and the acquisition of the North-west, is lamentably slow compared with that of the adjoining Republic. The greatest emigrating races, the Irish and Germans, for the most part give it a wide berth. This region is only now being explored and surveyed for the attraction of pioneers and for the construction of a Pacific railway, upon which the future of the Confederation is staked.

One of the greatest misfortunes of the country is the enormous price it has had to pay for the union of the old provinces and the acquisition of the North-west. For instance, to satisfy New Brunswick and Nova Scotia,—the latter of which could hardly be even thus placated, a powerful minority threatening annexation till the additional bribe of a much larger annual subsidy was conceded,—the Intercolonial Railway, costing thirty-five million dollars, had to be constructed, entailing for several years after its completion a heavy annual loss to the country. Again, after paying the old Hudson's Bay Company several millions for Manitoba and the region farther north and west,

the Conservative government of Sir John A. Macdonald and the late Sir George Cartier, with the greatest recklessness, enticed British Columbia into the Confederacy by the promise of the building of a railway to the Pacific—through what the Hon. Edward Blake, the leader of the opposition at Ottawa, graphically describes as “a sea of mountains”—within ten years, viz., by 1882. Not one of the ministers had set foot on the prairies, or seen the Pacific, even by the American road, through a much milder and pretty well settled region. Only a few Hudson's Bay officials, adventurous sportsmen, zealous missionaries, and some of the half-breed population of the Red River, had any knowledge of the soil, climate, and general characteristics of the Canadian North-west. Even at present an army of surveyors is at work in the territory, a very large portion of which is enshrouded in darkness as thick as overhangs the center of Africa. It is true that, at an expenditure of several million dollars, large tracts near the Canadian Pacific Railway, and farther north, as also in British Columbia, have been opened up to settlement; but a large outlay must yet be incurred to make the Saskatchewan, Peace River, Athabasca, and other immense tracts even moderately known. Now, admitting, as I cheerfully do, the incalculable value of much of this northern region in an agricultural point of view, I much regret, as a Canadian who would like to see his country prosperous, its great cost and the perilous obligations connected with it. The Canada Pacific Railway will probably cost to Canada in money, land, and completed railway, one hundred and ten million dollars, in return for which the Syndicate is to expend not more than forty-eight million five hundred thousand dollars. The *Toronto “Globe,”* from which I have taken the above figures, says, in reference to this,—“a bargain which places the whole North-west at the mercy of a monopolist corporation!” This is paying dearly for a trans-continental railway, even though one-third of the price is land, which would be of no great value without it. Unquestionably the new railway is being rapidly constructed, at the rate of two or three miles a day, and there is good prospect of its reaching the Rocky Mountains by the end of the coming year. Considering the impracticable nature of the country, fair progress has been made in British Columbia, on the Ocean and Fraser River sections; but the most difficult and expensive sections, through the mountains, across the Rockies,

and north of Lake Superior,—a wintry, mountainous, inhospitable region,—must subtract heavily from the future enormous profits of the company on the prairie sections and the lands utilized in speculation.

The contract with British Columbia was a blunder on the part of the Government. Appeals to national good faith, threats of imperial displeasure, and all kinds of party devices were employed by the cunning, interested party leaders to reconcile a startled, apprehensive people to the myriad oppressive consequences involved in this agreement. The country showed its disapproval in the political revolution which transferred power from the Tories, in 1873, to the Liberals, though the former had for years enjoyed an overwhelming majority.

It must be confessed that the construction of the Canada Pacific Railway and the other costly efforts made to open up and make known the advantages of the North-west, attracted a larger immigration the last couple of years than was ever witnessed before. Probably 80,000 settled in that country, the forerunners of a much larger influx. The Dominion will thus receive some compensation for her immense outlay; but, *per contra*, the bulk of the new-comers are from the older provinces, mainly Ontario, which need all their own, and more, to develop their abundant resources.

Beyond doubt, the main element of popular uneasiness and uncertainty—I might say alarm, on serious reflection—consists in the rapid increase of Government expenditure and the public debt. The disbursements for all purposes rose from \$13,687,928, in 1868, to \$24,205,092, in 1874, and thence to \$31,810,000, by Sir Leonard Tilley's estimate, in 1882. There was no proportionate increase of the population, which was about 3,363,201 in 1868, and is now probably 4,418,714. The taxation was \$4.07 per head in 1868, against some \$7.02 now. The net debt at Confederation, in 1867, was but \$75,728,641, and in 1881, \$155,395,780; gross debt, 1867, \$93,046,051; 1881, \$191,861,537, the latter showing an increase of 115 per cent. This picture is still further darkened by the certainty of material additions to the load of debt and taxation within the next decade, while a considerable period must elapse before any substantial return can be expected from the gigantic outlays on public works and the North-west. Indeed, some of the former may be styled non-productive, as regards the public purse, notably the canals,

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which have cost some \$40,000,000, and the trifling income from which will doubtless have to be sacrificed to offset the abolition of the Erie tolls.

Thoughtful persons contrast the experience of Canada with that of the United States in the matter of national responsibilities, and thence draw conclusions highly favorable to the latter. The reduction of the American debt, now \$1,392,245,450, by over \$800,000,000 since the close of the Civil War, the year just expired witnessing the extinction of \$162,289,150 of the total, is a feat unparalleled in history, notwithstanding the doubt that many reasonably entertain as to the wisdom of subjecting the present generation to such a strain. Such an achievement, however, has proved an impressive advertisement of the resources of the Republic abroad, if it has oppressed to some extent the masses at home.

There can be no denying the fact that one of the results of the late Civil War was the postponement of the closer union of Canada and the United States. The enormous war debt has also been held up, *in terrorem*, before Canadian eyes to excite contentment with their situation and aversion to "Yankee connection." But events are too strong, and nothing can arrest the tide of popular opinion, which ceaselessly, though calmly, flows in the direction of closer connection, if not political union, with the republic. A great many straws might be pointed to at this time, to show how the wind blows; but I need only indicate one or two: On the 13th of December last, the Corn Exchange of Montreal, numbering several hundred merchants, petitioned the Federal Government in favor of the abolition of canal tolls, and the obtainment of a new reciprocity treaty with the United States.

Nobody in his senses is ignorant of the fact that even reciprocity would lead to a material increase of Canadian trade with the United States, and that such would be beneficial to both nations; but who could set bounds to the mutual advantages of a commercial or, better still, a political union? The fructifying influences of that wondrous American enterprise, supported by illimitable capital, would soon vigorously develop the great resources of Canada. Her vast solitudes of forest and prairie, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the southern boundary to the most northerly line of profitable cultivation, would be converted into the comfortable homes of prosperous millions. Under all

her disadvantages, climatic and commercial, including heavy duties at the American frontier and a protective tariff designed to put a check upon importations from Great Britain and the United States, her export trade in the year ending June 30, 1882, reached one hundred and one million dollars, or three million dollars in excess of the previous year, and her imports one hundred and nineteen million dollars, or fourteen million dollars above those of 1880-81.

To show what the Dominion, with her enormous undeveloped resources, is capable of becoming, under the quickening influence of a close and friendly union with the Republic, and how much the latter has to gain by free access to such a ready mart for trade, I may state that a recent parliamentary blue-book sets forth that the surplus revenue of Canada, for the past six months, reached \$5,546,262; or, at the rate of over eleven millions for the year, or four and a half millions over 1881-2, notwithstanding the abolition of important duties last spring. These may seem small results to the people of the United States, but they are unquestionably substantial for Canada.

One of the most powerful factors in the work of radical change in the position of the Dominion is, undoubtedly, the straitened financial condition of the majority of the provinces. While New Brunswick and Nova Scotia can barely meet their local engagements in prosperous years, they enjoy little or no prospect of any material improvement in circumstances, with a constant drain of their population to the United States and the North-west, and but little to attract foreign emigrants. Both provinces feel that their natural interests draw them toward their nearest and best market,—the adjoining Republic. The province of Ontario enjoys fair prosperity, having a better soil and climate than her sister provinces to the eastward, and boasts of a surplus of between four and five millions. The province of Quebec, with its debt of over eighteen millions and the distracted state of its political parties, including the lack of sympathy between French and British, is in a deplorable condition. For the last few years the ordinary income has fallen short of the disbursements, while the prospect now is a gradually increasing expenditure with no corresponding augmentation of revenue. The provincial resources have been squandered for the benefit of partisan lumbermen, speculators, and new railroads in which members of parliament possessed a large personal

interest. Her condition is critical and prospects most gloomy. To escape the costly machinery of a local government, many of the people are looking to legislative union, which, however, would be most repugnant to the French Canadians. The latter, rather than accept this, would, with the Roman Catholic clergy at their head, advocate annexation to the United States.

The population of this province, despite the fecundity of all races, the French Canadians in particular, has been for twenty years almost at a stand-still. A quarter of a million of French Canadians settled in the New-England and other States, with crowds weekly leaving the province to join them, notwithstanding the pathetic appeals of their clergy, is not a cheering outlook; indeed, many of its most intelligent citizens see no hope for the province short of annexation. Meantime the province possesses abundant resources in cleared and wooded land, minerals, water-power, and fisheries, which might yield, with more capital and enterprising inhabitants, handsome results.

The London "Spectator" has lately produced a sensation in many quarters by the assertion that there is a great deal of republicanism in England, though in the latent, non-demonstrative form; that this feeling spreads quietly, leavening popular opinion to a considerable extent, and that it bids fair to keep on expanding, with the prospect of momentous results in the not distant future. Of course it is admitted that the official and aristocratic class, with the leaders of the principal parties, form the head and front of the monarchical party, and they usually make much ado about their sentiments. But they touch the great middle and lower classes at only a few points, affecting their opinions and conduct but slightly, and would probably be carried away like corks on the stream of any wide-spread popular movement. The "Spectator," not a disloyal or sensation-loving journal, and one of great influence among the intelligent classes, illustrates the strength of the republican feeling by recording the general admission, when the question of monarchy comes up in conversation, that another George the Fourth would not be tolerated,—would end, in fact, the existing constitutional system.

Now, these assertions and conclusions are still more applicable to Canada, in which republicanism has been growing more popular every day. It is not that the bulk of the people concern themselves much with the merits of republicanism or monarchy in the abstract, but they do draw practical conclusions as to the suc-

cessful operation of the former in the United States. They find there a captivating illustration in the existence of the most powerful and prosperous nation on earth,—a nation whose prospects of future greatness overshadow those of all the other leading nations put together. Canadians feel that they have lost enormously in the matter of immigration, the application of the necessary volume of capital to the development of their great resources, and an extensive beneficial trade with their American cousins and neighbors. And this is mainly owing to the miserable artificial line of separation maintained by a small, noisy, political class, principally for party effect and the gratification of traditional prejudice.

The indifference of the Queen's ministers in regard to changes in colonial opinion was shown by the conferring of knighthood upon Sir A. T. Galt, some years ago, though he had previously informed them that he advocated Canadian independence. The ultra loyalists, political aspirants to imperial favor, and new-fledged knights, who form the nucleus of a petty official aristocracy, were bewildered and shocked beyond description at the behavior of the Gladstone-Bright ministry on this occasion. In the opinion of those sticklers for permanent British connection, it was to the last degree unwise to waste such honors upon an Independent, an "Annexationist in disguise," while true, blue-blooded loyalists played their little fussy parts unnoticed by her most gracious Majesty. But yet, spite of the Independence contamination, both Canadian parties, Liberals and Conservatives, have gladly coquetted with Sir A. T. Galt, employing him and catering for his support, the latter party having given him his present appointment of Canadian High Commissioner at the Court of St. James. Late dispatches from England state that this gentleman has again changed his opinions. He now advocates Imperial Federation, which some of his Ottawa masters do not well like, it is believed.

Returning to the main point, the explanation of the preference of so large a body of the Canadian people for annexation is to be found in the settled conviction that it would at once greatly increase the trade of the Dominion, and, in a short time, its general prosperity. Then there is the Independence party to be noticed, comprising not a few of the most intelligent men in both party camps, perhaps more in the Liberal. The Conservatives strive to damage the Liberal cause by calling its

leaders and followers Independents, or "Annexationists in disguise," which accusation will help more than hurt them with the young, practical, and intelligent portion of the people. Hon. Mr. Huntington, Postmaster-General in the last Liberal, the Mackenzie Government, was an avowed Independent.

In analyzing the elements of Canadian public opinion, in order to convey to the reader some idea of the forces operating in the direction of Annexation, I have not by any means exhausted the subject. I prefer moderation in both statement and forecast. But I can not pass over such telling indications of public sentiment as the efforts of the Liberal party, last winter, in the Federal Parliament, to obtain for the Dominion the right of making her own commercial treaties, nor the recent speech of Mr. Edgar, a Liberal leader, in favor of Canadian commercial independence. I may here, too, mention that at a caucus of the Liberals held at Ottawa, on the 13th February last, the policy of Canadian Independence was generally indorsed by the party.

It may be asked by some of my American readers why, if these statements with regard to Canadian public opinion be correct, there is no systematic agitation for annexation afoot, no propaganda of republicanism to bring about a union of the two nations. Several reasons might be given in explanation of this matter, only a few of which I will notice. In the first place, in ordinary times, in the absence of burning questions and harassing popular troubles, most people feel a natural aversion to entering upon revolutionary crusades, involving much notoriety, sharp collision with the partisans of the old system, with other *désagréments* usually experienced by radical reformers at the outset. Many also prefer to take the easiest and quietest method of securing the benefits of annexation, by themselves silently migrating to the Republic, and encouraging thereafter all their friends to follow their example. This, the quickest and most effectual remedy, renders a resort to noisier and more tedious experiments unnecessary. And should the present state of things continue, the people of the United States will have the satisfaction of yearly annexing many thousands of Canadians, as a preliminary to the annexation of their territory itself, a little later. Perhaps, on the whole, it will be best to have the people first,—the country will be sure to follow afterward.

The difficulties besetting the formation of a united, compact state out of a chain of widely scattered provinces, reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, appear insuperable. Dumb-bell like, the greatest bulk and weight is at each end, the connecting bar being represented by some one thousand two hundred miles of lacustrine shores, rocky deserts and portages, varied by swamps and lakelets,—the forbidding, silent wilderness stretching from the head-waters of the Ottawa to Thunder Bay, and thence to Manitoba. What, then, can a candid thinker conclude from the above facts, save that the present and future interests of the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island can be best promoted by a close and friendly union with the American Republic? The Northern and Eastern States adjoin these provinces, and supply them their nearest and most profitable markets, and have long been connected with them by the bonds of good neighborhood and mutual trade. There is everything in the natural, social, and commercial circumstances of the two countries to favor such a happy consummation, which could not fail to gratify the pride, stimulate the energies, and enormously augment the wealth and resources of the two young Anglo-Saxon nations of North America. Already over a million of Canadians, French and British, intelligent and enterprising, have founded homes in the Republic, the number yearly increasing. There is no reason why the remainder should not sensibly anticipate the future, and unite their and their country's fortunes with the greatest and most prosperous nation the world has ever known.

P. BENDER.

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