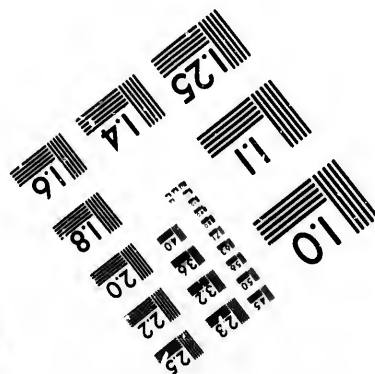
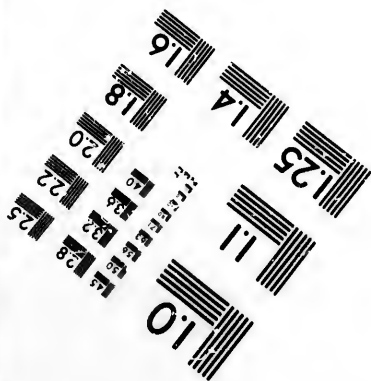
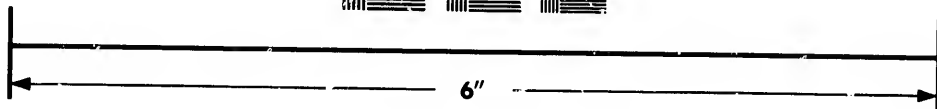
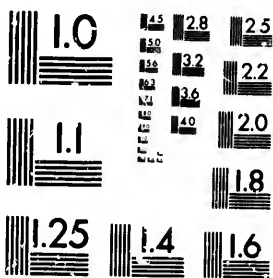


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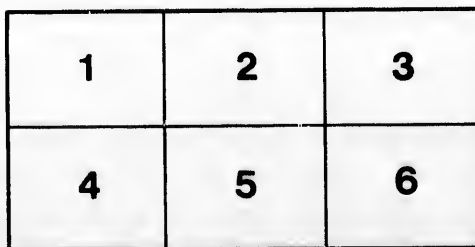
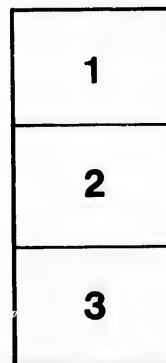
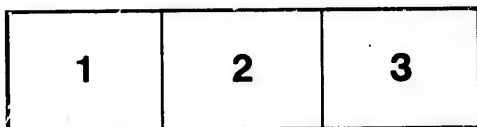
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IS CANADIAN LOYALTY A SENTIMENT OR A PRINCIPLE ?

BY

ALPHEUS TOLD, C.M.G., LL.D.

NOW and again this question is mooted, either in the press or in other public utterances, wherein the loyalty of the Canadian people to the person of the Sovereign, and the sincerity of their attachment to British institutions, may chance to be discussed. Certain writers have doubted the depth and reality of this feeling, alleging that it was ephemeral, and predicting that it would never stand the test of time, or of failing commercial prosperity. With men of this class, all principle is liable to be subordinated to pecuniary interests, and the preference for one form of government over another is apt to be regarded as mainly an affair of the pocket.

That some amongst us are open to such temptations is undeniable, to whatever cause it may be attributed. But these persons are not fair representatives of the genuine opinion of the country; they are not amongst the bone and sinew of our population. It may be worth while to consider this subject a little carefully, to ascertain whether there is any definite and reliable foundation from which our vaunted loyalty has sprung, and upon which it bids fair to remain secure.

Professor Seeley, in a recent lecture before the University of Cambridge, on the character of Bonaparte, impresses upon students the vast importance of the study of history, especially that of our own times, as affording the key to the solution of most of the political problems of the day. And he urges them to reflect whether 'the task of welding together into an inseparable union history and politics—

so that for the future all history shall end in politics, and all politics shall begin in history—be not the best and worthiest task to which they can devote their lives.'

These remarks, from one of the most profound thinkers and most learned teachers in England, are deserving of careful attention. They afford a clue to the inquiry which we propose to undertake in this paper.

The materials for our researches into the actual worth of Canadian loyalty, and its probable trustworthiness under trial, are abundant and accessible to all.

Within the past year, the venerable and respected ex-Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, Dr. Egerton Ryerson, published a history of the Loyalists of America, and their times, from 1620 to 1816. From this elaborate and painstaking work full particulars may be gathered concerning the first settlement of Upper Canada.

Shortly before the Independence of the United States was achieved, the whole of the territory now known as the Province of Ontario was a wilderness, inhabited only by wandering tribes of Indians. In Lower Canada there were a few thriving settlements of French Canadians, and the other British-American colony of Nova Scotia possessed but a scanty population.

During the continuance of the struggle between the Imperial authority and the revolting American colonies, some devoted Loyalists sought refuge in Canada and Nova Scotia from the hardships to which they were exposed

in the old colonies because of their fidelity to the British Crown. But it was not until the close of the War of Independence, that any considerable number of political refugees were driven to this necessity. The circumstances which at last compelled so many to abandon their former homes are fully narrated by Dr. Ryerson, the accuracy of whose statements is confirmed by the fact that in every instance the particulars are either quoted from American historians, or corroborated by their admissions.

From Dr. Ryerson's careful investigations much can be learnt that will modify popular impressions regarding the events of this exciting period.

Although it is clear that from the outset separation from the Mother Country was the aim and determination of the leaders of the extreme party, yet the great bulk of the colonists were unwilling to break the tie of their allegiance. Until Independence was actually declared, the principal moiety of the community refused to contemplate the possibility of this result. But the leaders of the rebel faction were resolute and too often unscrupulous. They coerced the simple farmers and labourers who opposed their schemes, and persecuted all who persevered in resisting them. For several months before, as well as after, the final issue of the struggle, the condition of the loyal adherents to British supremacy was humiliating and even perilous. They were subjected to every species of insult and contumely. They were liable at any moment to arrest and imprisonment, and to the seizure and confiscation of their property. For refusing to side with the rebel party, they were threatened with banishment, and even with death. Leading partizans of Congress vehemently advocated the 'wholesale hanging' of Loyalists. In 1776, the New York State Convention resolved, 'that any person being an adherent to the King of Great Britain, should be accounted guilty of treason and suffer death.'

Similar laws were enacted against Loyalists in other provinces, who continued to advocate the cause of the British Government. In South Carolina alone was there a humane and compassionate policy pursued towards the defeated Royalists.

Under these circumstances, their only safety was in flight. After the British troops evacuated Boston, upwards of a thousand citizens left the place. These men publicly declared that, 'if they thought the most abject submission would procure them peace, they never would have stirred.'

The laws in force against the Loyalists remained un repealed until long after the peace, in 1783. It is true that Congress—pursuant to the Treaty of Peace, and in accordance with the practice of European nations in similar cases—recommended to the several States of the Union to encourage those who had been compelled to expatriate themselves to return, and to grant them compensation for the loss of their property. But this advice was ignored. On the contrary, some of the States evinced a disposition to proscribe rather than to indemnify, and even to enact further confiscations against the sufferers. The Royalists not unreasonably complained of these proceedings. It seemed to them most cruel and unjust that merely for supporting the government under which they were born, and to which they owed a natural allegiance, they should be doomed to suffer all the penalties of capital offenders.

It is, therefore, no matter for surprise, that but a small number of the Loyalists who fled the country at the outbreak, or during the progress, of the War of Independence, returned, when the conflict was over; and that, out of some thirty thousand persons who abandoned their possessions after the peace—and while the enactments against their lives and property were still in force—comparatively few either desired or were able to return, when the new government permitted them

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to do so. For they had sacrificed their property and forsaken their homes, and had voluntarily chosen poverty and exile, rather than relinquish their cherished convictions, or participate in an act of rebellion which they abhorred.

At this eventful crisis, these staunch and noble-hearted refugees were kindly welcomed to British soil by the Imperial Government, and liberally treated in their new abode. The term U. E.—signifying United Empire Loyalists,—was affixed by the Crown, as 'a mark of honour' upon the families who adhered to the unity of the empire and joined the royal standard in America, before the treaty of separation in 1783; and a list of such persons was ordered to be made out and preserved amongst the archives of the State, so that these patriots might be individually discriminated from all future settlers. Free grants of land were given to the U. E. Loyalists, and further grants guaranteed to their children, when they should become of age.

The number of persons who, first and last, were entitled to the honourable appellation of U. E. Loyalist, cannot be exactly determined. It is known, however, that up to the close of the war about 13,000 souls, including many of the well-to-do class, had removed to Nova Scotia and to the Island of St. John, afterwards called Prince Edward Island. By this influx, the population of Nova Scotia, then comprising the future Province of New Brunswick, was in one year more than doubled. About 10,000 made their way, with considerable difficulty, and encountering many hardships, to the western part of the Province of Quebec, which was subsequently set apart as Upper Canada, a province of which the U. E. Loyalists were the actual pioneers and founders, as before their arrival it was a wilderness. It is with their future that we are chiefly concerned in this brief essay.

These faithful men brought to their forest homes in the wilds of Upper Canada the same noble qualities of loyalty to their sovereign, of sterling integrity, and of reverence to God, for which many of them were previously remarkable. They roared their families in industry, simplicity, and frugality; and as occasion served, helped to build up this new province of the British Crown in conformity with the sound principles of law and order which had animated and distinguished their own lives. Their occupation, at first, was to clear the land, and cultivate the hitherto unbroken forest. Several touching narratives of the sufferings to which the early settlers were exposed at this period are given in Dr. Ryerson's second volume, in the shape of personal reminiscences. But they soon triumphed over natural obstacles, and gradually converted the wilderness into a fertile and prosperous land; 'planting with their hoes the germ of its future greatness.'

Many of the original band of U. E. Loyalists attained to a patriarchal age, and evinced a mental as well as a bodily vigour which eminently qualified them to fill useful and prominent positions in their adopted country. In the annals of Upper Canada, and of the Eastern Provinces, amongst the legislators, the magistrates, the clergymen, and those engaged in all the active and honourable pursuits of life, the names of U. E. Loyalists and their descendants—during the hundred years which have elapsed since their removal thither—have been and continue to be specially conspicuous.

In providing for their material wants, the U. E. Loyalist immigrants did not lose sight of the importance of continuing to cultivate a military spirit, so that they might be able, if necessary, to defend successfully the Empire for which they had already made so great a sacrifice. A considerable number of the refugees had borne arms, on the Royalist side, in the Revolutionary War. The gallant Scot-

tish soldiers who composed the New York Regiment under Sir John Johnson, when peace was proclaimed, accepted the offer of the British Government and settled on lands granted to them in Canada. These warriors were the pioneer settlers in the counties of Stormont and Dundas. They and their children, mostly Protestants, were reinforced within a few years, by an influx of Roman Catholic Highlanders, who chiefly took up their abode in the adjacent county of Glengarry. Together, these sturdy Scotchmen have proved themselves to be a valuable class of settlers, steadfast in retaining the language and customs of their forefathers, but no less devoted to the British Crown, and ready at any moment to risk life and property for their faith and fealty.

Within thirty years of their expatriation, events occurred which tested the willingness and capability of the British Canadians to fight in defence of their new homes and of the flag they loved so well. The War of 1812-15 broke out between England and the United States. Upper Canada was the principal battle-ground of this conflict. Meanwhile its population had increased to about one hundred thousand souls. The inhabitants eagerly responded to the call of the Government to organize and protect the frontiers of the Province from the assaults of the enemy. The story of their gallant and successful resistance of the invaders is too well known to need repetition. Suffice it to say that, with the help of a few hundred British troops, Upper Canada repelled the large armies of the Americans. Throughout the campaigns of this war, which lasted over three years, the forces of the United States were tenfold greater than the number of the Canadian soldiery. The Provincial militia, it need scarcely be said, was mainly composed of the sons of U. E. Loyalists, and their courage and endurance shewed that they were worthy scions of a noble race.

The spirit which animated the Canadian militia during this unequal conflict, is apparent in the Address of the Lieutenant-Governor, General Brock, to the Upper Canada Legislature, at the opening of the war, in 1812; and in the patriotic reply of the Assembly to his eloquent appeal. Brock concluded his speech in these stirring words:—'We are engaged in an awful and eventful contest. By unanimity and dispatch in our councils, and by vigour in our operations, we may teach the enemy this lesson, that a country defended by Free Men, enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their King and Constitution, cannot be conquered.' The answer of the Assembly was couched in the same vein of fervent loyalty and lofty patriotism. These admirable documents were widely circulated throughout the Province, and contributed materially to stimulate and strengthen the people to face with intrepidity the impending struggle.

In Lower Canada, a similar attachment to the Crown and Government of Great Britain was displayed. The French Canadian *habitans* vied with their Anglo-Saxon brethren in loyalty and deeds of valour. It was by the joint efforts of both nationalities that Canada was preserved to the Empire. This must never be forgotten, and the hearty co-operation of all Canadians in a common cause at this trying time will, it is to be hoped, be a pledge of enduring fraternity in the future. But our present purpose is to trace the fortunes of the U. E. Loyalists and their descendants in British America, and to note the influence of their conduct and character upon the present generation of Upper Canadians.

In less than a quarter of a century from the close of the American war, another occasion presented itself for proving the sincerity of the attachment of Upper Canada to the British Crown. Agitating political questions were rife in the Province. They be- gat a wide spread desire for a more

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popular form of government. The Imperial authorities were slow to accede to the demands of the reform party. Ambitious and unscrupulous demagogues strove to excite, in the rural population, a spirit of discontent and disaffection towards Imperial control. By their persistent efforts an insurrectionary movement was provoked in certain parts of the Province, and encouraged by the majority in the Assembly. At this juncture, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada was Sir Francis Bond Head, a half-pay officer and a staunch Loyalist, though inexperienced in political warfare. With great boldness, but with an assured conviction that the mass of the people were sound in their allegiance, the Governor determined to send all the Imperial troops out of the Province, to aid in suppressing an outbreak of more serious proportions, which had commenced in Lower Canada. He resolved to trust wholly to the loyalty and good faith of the people in Upper Canada to sustain the Government. For this apparent rashness, Sir Francis was much blamed by many at the time. But the result proved that he understood the disposition of the people he had been deputed to govern better than his critics. Whilst denuding the province of every British soldier, the Governor spread abroad spirit-stirring proclamations and addresses, calling upon the Upper Canadians to rally and unite in support of their institutions and of the Crown, and by their own unaided efforts to put down this wicked and unnatural rebellion. His appeal was not in vain. From all parts of the Province volunteers hastened to Toronto, and very speedily this foolish and unwarrantable insurrection was extinguished. The policy of Sir Francis Head's proceedings for suppressing the rebellion was amply justified by the result, however hazardous it may have appeared at the moment. But it did not meet the approval of Her Majesty's Government. The Ministers then in office had

evinced a disposition to temporize with some of the men who were prominent in encouraging the revolt. Sir Francis Head's actions were of too decided a character to please his masters. Accordingly, soon after public tranquillity was restored, his Excellency was recalled. The Duke of Wellington, and other leaders of the Conservative party, warmly espoused his cause, but to no purpose. For his assumed rashness, and for refusing to be a party to attempts to conciliate the men who had secretly abetted the insurrection, Sir Francis was thenceforth made to suffer, by exclusion from any further employment in the service of the Crown. A narrative of his Administration, which he afterwards published, reveals many interesting particulars which would seem to afford ample ground for his justification. But apart from the personal question between Sir Francis Head and the Imperial Administration—as to whether he acted with becoming prudence in the execution of his delegated powers at this critical juncture—there can be no doubt as to the effect of his policy upon the people of Upper Canada. In summoning them at this crisis to rally round the old flag, and to prove the sincerity of their affection to the British Crown, he was not mistaken. The great bulk of the inhabitants heartily responded to the call. Not only was the rebellion speedily suppressed by Canadian volunteers, unaided by any Imperial soldiers, but at the next general election the disaffected party was reduced to political insignificance.

Thus far, it had been unmistakably shown that Upper Canadian loyalty was no mere passing sentiment, but a genuine and enduring principle, ready to find expression with renewed vitality and enthusiasm, whenever the necessity for its manifestation should arise.

From that period until the present, we have been happily free from the operation of disturbing influences re-

quiring the special display of patriotism in Upper Canada. And yet events have occurred which serve to indicate the unabated loyalty which animates the people. Irish discontent, culminating in Fenianism, has more than once threatened to ravage our fair Province with fire and sword, with the avowed intention of thereby compelling the Mother Country to yield the redress of Irish grievances. But our gallant volunteers were always on the alert, and these ridiculous attempts were frustrated without difficulty, and with very little loss of life. Repeatedly, since the grant of local self-government to Canada, her Parliament and people have spontaneously tendered the services of our brave militia to aid the Imperial troops in foreign warfare, or when conflicts were anticipated in Europe. These offers were dictated by devotion to the Crown and Empire, and were further proofs of the unselfish loyalty of Canadians. Annually, since 1875, the sum of 50,000 dollars has been granted by the Dominion Parliament for pensions to the surviving veterans of the War of 1812, in addition to large amounts yearly voted for pensions to the widows and orphans of militiamen who had lost their lives in defence of the country. This munificent liberality testifies to the high estimation in which Canada regards the efforts of those of her own children who fought to maintain our connection with England, and to uphold the national honour.

Meanwhile, it is gratifying to note, that the hostility and estrangement between Canadians and the citizens of the American Republic—natural at a time of separation and of internecine strife—has wholly died out, and is replaced by sentiments of mutual esteem and good-will. As was happily expressed by our excellent Governor-General, in his recent speech at Winnipeg, our people have learnt to recognise the fact 'that the interests of the Empire and of the United States may advance side by side without jealousy

or friction, and that the good of the one is interwoven with the welfare of the other.' We may not, indeed, admire or approve of the political institutions of our neighbours, but we have learnt to respect the American people, and account many of their enlightened efforts to promote the public welfare, and to purify and elevate society, as deserving not merely of praise but of imitation.

It is wholly foreign from my desire, in this essay, to criticize American political institutions, or to direct attention to what may seem defective therein, further than may be absolutely necessary to the purpose in hand. But I cannot refrain from giving utterance to one or two thoughts on this subject, in order to vindicate, from my own point of view, the wisdom and foresight of our forefathers, when they deliberately preferred the loss of property and the perils incident to their flight into the wilderness, rather than forego the blessings of British supremacy and of monarchical rule. These observations will not, I trust, be deemed intentionally disrespectful towards our American cousins.

In severing their connection with England, the United States abandoned a political system wherein politics and religion were advisedly if not inseparably connected. This union, in the pithy words of Lord Eldon, was not designed 'for the purpose of making the Church political, but the State religious.' Christianity, in fact, is part and parcel of the British Constitution, and the entire framework of our polity is pervaded with the ennobling influences and restraints of religion.

The practical effect of the union between Church and State has been the preservation in Great Britain of a high standard of honour in the administration of public affairs, both foreign and domestic, which is specially observable in the relations of her government with other countries.

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The United States have deliberately departed from this ancient and solid foundation. They claim that 'the people are the source of all political power.' They have left out of their Constitution any acknowledgment of the existence of a Supreme Being. They have prohibited not merely the establishment of religion in the land, but also any national preference of Christianity over Judaism, Mahomedanism, or infidelity. The American people are undoubtedly remarkable, in certain aspects, as a God-fearing community, yet they have always rejected the thought of any necessary connection between religion and politics. Now-a-days, it is unhappily a prevalent idea that the exercise of no political rights should be affected by a man's repudiation of a belief in God. The painful scenes recently exhibited in the House of Commons, in the Bradlaugh case, are sufficient evidence of this. But the distinction to which I point, in comparing the English and American Constitutions, is apparent by the fact, that in the United States there is nothing to hinder the presence of an avowed atheist in Congress, whilst in England the proposal to admit Bradlaugh into Parliament is justly regarded as breaking down the barrier which has hitherto restrained those who openly discard belief in the existence of God, and in the divine obligation of an oath, from sharing in the councils of the nation.* Notwithstanding the time-serving spirit of the Government, who were afraid to take a decided stand on this question, the religious instincts of the people—more faithful

* It is true that the taking of an oath or an affirmation, by a member elect, is equally prescribed by American as by English law. But there is a material difference in the character of this obligation in the two countries. In England, the affirmation by a member elected to Parliament is essentially a religious act, as much so as taking the oath. The primary law enjoins an oath. But to meet the scruples of certain Christian denominations, who object to the use of an oath, at any time, they and they only are permitted, on such occa-

than their leaders to the true principles of the Constitution—have thus far prevailed to close the doors of parliament against an avowed infidel and blasphemer.

At the time of the separation of the American colonies from Great Britain, the expediency of a permanent alliance between religion and politics had not become an open question. The existence of this alliance was indisputable. It was wrought into the fabric of our national polity. Such a connection does not necessarily require the perpetual union between Church and State, or forbid different Christian denominations to exist, as in Canada, upon a footing of perfect equality. But it implies and involves the distinct responsibility of a Christian government to respect the revealed laws of God, to enforce the decorous observance of the Christian Sabbath, and generally to protect and uphold the institutions of Christianity. In these particulars Great Britain has been an example to all other nations.

On the other hand, we cannot be unmindful of the fact, that in the United States—notwithstanding the abundance of individual piety amongst the people—there is a grievous lack of the restraining influences of government to repress the abuses of free thought, in social and religious matters. Witness the liberty allowed in that country to the origin and establishment of Mormonism in the western territories, and to the reckless blasphemies of Ingersoll—both of them awful growths and developments of free thought, working incalculable mischief to multitudes—but wholly disregarded by the civil authorities. Such abominable and injurious outcomes of the right of pri-

sions, to make an affirmation instead. In the United States, the alternative use of an affirmation in lieu of an oath has no such origin. It is expressly permitted, by an article of the Constitution, to any person who for any reason—as, for example, because, like Bradlaugh, he disbelieved in the existence of God,—might prefer to affirm, to do so; instead of taking the prescribed oath.

vate judgment could not assuredly have originated or have been permitted to take root in England, or in any of her colonies.

In cherishing her connection with the Parent State, Canada has retained the inestimable advantage of stable Christian government, which affords to individuals the utmost possible freedom consistent with wholesome restraints upon the excesses of democratic opinion or the license of profanity. So long as we continue to uphold institutions which confer upon our people such manifest benefits, we are politically safe. Crafty or thoughtless propagandists may strive to instil into credulous ears a preference for republicanism :—the supposed material gain we might derive from 'independence'

or 'annexation' may be plausibly urged, by politicians who can see no difference in principle between a monarchy and a republic ;—but unless Canadians have forgotten the lessons of their past history, we need not fear for their future. If we have interpreted the history of Upper Canada aright, we may rest assured that Canadian loyalty is no mere transient emotion, liable to be affected by the fleeting changes of popular sentiment, but an enduring principle, powerful enough to enable us to withstand many vicissitudes before consenting to exchange our free institutions, protected by the British flag, and subject to the supremacy of British law, for any other form of government upon earth.

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