

God of peace! The indignant inhabitants have addressed to the Prefect of Vaucluse a letter in these terms:—"We, the undersigned, proprietors and inhabitants of the commune of Mormoison, deeply convinced of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, and sincerely moved by the scandalous effect it produces, declare our firm and immovable resolution to separate ourselves from the said church, and to unite ourselves with the Evangelical Church of France, in which we wish to live and die. We are firmly convinced that it is impossible for us to be saved in a Church such as that which we have abandoned with all our heart." This movement is not free from human alloy and worldly motives. The inhabitants of Mormoison are not yet instructed in the doctrines of the Gospel. But it is a first step—a decisive step; and if a pious pastor be sent among them it will be a permanent conquest for Protestantism."

TO THE PEOPLE OF CANADA.

The number and magnitude of the evils that afflict our country, and the universal and increasing depression of its material interests, call upon all persons animated by a sincere desire for its welfare to combine for the purposes of inquiry and preparation with a view to the adoption of such remedies as a mature and dispassionate investigation may suggest.

Belonging to all parties, origins and creeds, but yet agreed upon the advantage of co-operation for the performance of a common duty to ourselves and our country, growing out of a common necessity, we have consented, in view of a brighter and happier future, to merge in oblivion all past differences of whatever character, or attributable to whatever source. In appealing to our Fellow-Colonists to unite with us in this most needful duty, we solemnly conjure them, as they desire a successful issue and the welfare of their country, to enter upon the task at this momentous crisis in the same fraternal spirit.

The reversal of the ancient policy of Great Britain, whereby she withdrew from the Colonies their wonted protection in her markets, has produced the most disastrous effects upon Canada. In surveying the actual condition of the country, what but ruin or rapid decay meets the eye! Our Provincial Government and Civic Corporations embarrassed; our banking and other securities greatly depreciated; our mercantile and agricultural interests alike unprosperous; real estate scarcely saleable upon any terms; our unrivalled rivers, lakes and canals almost unused; whilst commerce abandons our shores; the circulating capital amassed under a more favourable system is dissipated, with none from any quarter to replace it. Thus, without available capital, unable to effect a loan with Foreign States, or the Mother Country, although offering security greatly superior to that which readily obtains money both from the United States and Great Britain, when other Colonists are the applicants;—crippled, therefore, and checked in the full career of private and public enterprise, this possession of the British Crown—our country—stands before the world in a humiliating contrast with its immediate neighbours, exhibiting every symptom of a nation fast sinking to decay.

With superabundant water power and cheap labor, especially in Lower Canada, we have yet no domestic manufactures; nor can the most sanguine, unless under altered circumstances, anticipate the home growth, or advent from foreign parts, of either capital or enterprise to embark in this great source of national wealth. Our institutions, unhappily, have not that impress of permanence which can alone impart security and inspire confidence, and the Canadian market is too limited to tempt the foreign capitalist.

While the adjoining States are covered with a network of thriving railways, Canada possesses but three lines, which, together, scarcely exceed 50 miles in length, and the stock in two of which is held at a depreciation of from 50 to 80 per cent.—a fatal symptom of the torpor over-spreading the land.

Our present form of Provincial Government is cumbersome and so expensive as to be ill suited to the circumstances of the country; and the necessary reference it demands to a distant Government, imperfectly acquainted with Canadian affairs, and somewhat indifferent to our interests, is anomalous and irksome. Yet, in the event of a rupture between two of the most powerful nations of the world, Canada would become the battle-field and the sufferer, however little her interests might be involved in the cause of the quarrel or the issue of the contest.

The bitter animosities of political parties and factions in Canada, often leading to violence, and upon one occasion, to civil war, seem not to have abated with time; nor is there, at the present moment, any prospect of diminution or accommodation. The aspect of parties becomes daily more threatening towards each other, and under our existing institutions and relations, little hope is discernible in a peaceful and prosperous administration of our affairs, but difficulties will, to all appearance accumulate until government becomes impracticable.—In this view of our position, any course that may promise to efface existing party distinctions and place entirely new issues before the people, must be fraught with undeniable advantages.

Among the statesmen of the Mother Country—among the sagacious observers of the neighboring Republic—in Canada—and in all British North America—amongst all classes there is a strong pervading conviction that a political revolution in this country is at hand. Such forebodings cannot readily be dispelled, and they have, moreover, a tendency to realise the events to which they point. In the meanwhile, serious injury results to Canada, from the effect of this anticipation upon the most desirable class of settlers, who naturally prefer a country under fixed and permanent forms of government to one in a state of transition.

Having thus adverted to some of the causes of our present evils, we would consider how far the remedies ordinarily proposed possess sound and rational inducements to justify their adoption:

1.—"The revival of protection in the markets of the United Kingdom."

This, if attainable in a sufficient degree, and guaranteed for a long period of years, would ameliorate the condition of many of our chief interests, but the policy of the empire forbids the anticipation. Besides, it would be but a partial remedy. The millions of the Mother Country demand cheap food; and a second change from protection to free trade would complete that ruin which the first has done much to achieve.

2.—"The protection of home manufactures." Although this might encourage the growth of manufacturing interests in Canada, yet, without access to the United States market, there would not be sufficient expansion of that interest, from the want of consumers, to work any result that could be admitted as a "remedy" for the numerous evils of which we complain.

3.—"A federal union of the British American Provinces." The advantages claimed for that arrangement are free trade between the different Provinces, and a diminished governmental expenditure. The attainment of the latter object would be problematical, and the benefits anticipated from the former might be secured by legislation under our existing system. The markets of the Sister Provinces would not benefit our trade in timber, for they have a surplus of that article in their own forests; and their demand for agricultural products would be too limited to absorb our means of supply. Nor could Canada expect any encouragement to her manufacturing industry from those quarters. A federal union, therefore, would be no remedy.

4.—"The independence of the British North American Colonies as a Federal Republic."

The consolidation of its new institutions from elements hitherto so discordant—the formation of treaties with foreign powers—the acquirement of a name and character among the nations—would, we fear, prove an over-match for the strength of the new Republic. And, having regard to the powerful confederacy of States continuous with itself, the needful military defences would be too costly to render independence a boon, whilst it would not, any more than a federal union, remove those obstacles which retard our material prosperity.

5.—"Reciprocal free trade with the United States as respects the products of the farm, the forest, and the mine."

If obtained, this would yield but an instalment of the many advantages which might be otherwise secured.—The free interchange of such products would not introduce manufactures to our country. It would not give us the North American Continent for our market. It would neither so amend our institutions as to confer stability nor ensure confidence in their permanence; nor would it allay the violence of parties, or, in the slightest degree, remedy many of our prominent evils.

6.—Of all the remedies that have been suggested for the acknowledged and insufferable ills with which our country is afflicted, there remains but one to be considered. It propounds a sweeping and important change in political and social condition involving considerations which demand our most serious examination. *This remedy consists in a friendly separation from British Connection and Union upon equitable terms with the great North American Confederacy of Sovereign States.*

We would promise that towards Great Britain we entertain none other than sentiments of kindness and respect. Without her consent we consider separation as neither practicable nor desirable. But the Colonial policy of the Parent State, the avowals of her leading statesmen, the public sentiments of the Empire, present unmistakable and significant indications of the appreciation of Colonial connection. That it is the resolve of England to invest us with the attributes and compel us to assume the burdens of independence is no longer problematical. The threatened withdrawal of her troops from other colonies—the continuance of her military protection to ourselves, only on condition that we shall defray the attendant expenditure, betoken intentions towards our country against which it is weakness for us not to provide. An overruling conviction, then, of its necessity, and a high sense of the duty we owe to our country, a duty we can neither disregard nor postpone, impel us to entertain the idea of separation; and whatever negotiations may eventually with Great Britain, a grateful liberality on the part of Canada should mark every proceeding.

The proposed union would render Canada a field for American capital, into which it would enter as freely for the prosecution of Public works and private enterprises as into any of the present States. It would equalise the value of real estate upon both sides of the boundary, thereby probably doubling at once the entire present value of property in Canada, whilst, by giving stability to institutions, and introducing prosperity, it would raise our public, corporate, and private credit. It would increase our commerce, both with the United States and foreign countries, and would not necessarily diminish to any great extent our intercourse with Great Britain, into which our products would for the most part enter on the same terms as at present. It would render our rivers and canals the highway for the immigration to, and exports from, the West, to the incalculable benefit of our country. It would also introduce manufactures into Canada as rapidly as they have been introduced into the Northern States; and to Lower Canada especially, where water privileges and labor are abundant and cheap, it would attract manufacturing capital, enhancing the value of property and agricultural produce, and giving remunerating employment to what is at present a comparatively a non-producing population. Nor would the United States merely furnish the capital for our manufactures. They would also supply for them the most extensive market in the world, without the intervention of a Custom House Officer.—Railways would forthwith be constructed by American capital as feeders for all the great lines now approaching our frontiers; and railway enterprise in general would doubtless be as active and prosperous among us as among our neighbors. The value of our agricultural produce would be raised at once to a par with that of the United States, whilst agricultural implements and many of the necessities of life, such as tea, coffee and sugar, would be greatly reduced in price.

The value of our timber would also be greatly enhanced by free access to the American market, where it bears a high price, but is subject to an onerous duty. At the same time, there is every reason to believe that our ship-builders, as well at Quebec as on the Great Lakes, would find an unlimited market in all the ports of the American continent. It cannot be doubted that the shipping trade of the United States must greatly increase. It is equally manifest, that, with them, the principle material in the construction of ships is rapidly diminishing, while we possess vast territories, covered with timber of excellent quality, which would be equally available as it is now, since under the free trade system our vessels would sell as well in England after annexation as before.

The simple and economical State Government, in which direct responsibility to the people is a distinguishing feature, would be substituted for a system, at once cumbersome and expensive.

In place of war and the alarms of war with a neighbour there would be peace and amity between this country and the United States. Disagreements between the United States and her chief if not only rival among nations would not make the soil of Canada the sanguinary arena for their disputes, as under our existing relations must necessarily be the case. That such is the unenviable condition of our state of dependence upon Great Britain is known to the whole world, and how far it may conduce to keep prudent capitalists from making investments in the country, or wealthy settlers from selecting a foredoomed battle-field for the home of themselves and their children, it needs no reasoning on our part to elucidate.

But other advantages than those having a bearing on our material interests may be foretold. It would change the ground of political contest between races and parties ally and obliterate these irritations and conflicts of rancour and recrimination which have hitherto disfigured our social fabric. Already in anticipation has its harmonious influence been felt—the harbinger may it be hoped of a lasting oblivion of dissensions among all classes, creeds and parties in the country. Changing a subordinate for an independent condition, we would take our station among the nations of the earth. We have, now, no voice in the affairs of the Empire, nor do we share its honours or emoluments. England is our Parent State, with whom we have no equality, but towards whom we stand in the simple relation of obedience. But as citizens of the United States the public service of the nation would be open to us,—a field of high and honourable distinction on which we and our posterity might enter on terms of perfect equality.

Nor would the amicable separation of Canada from Great Britain be fraught with advantages to us alone.—The relief to the Parent State from the large expenditure now incurred in the military occupation of the country,—the removal of the many causes of collision with the United States, which result from the contiguity of mutual territories so extensive,—the benefit of a larger market which the increasing prosperity of Canada would create, are considerations which, in the minds of many of her ablest Statesmen, render our incorporation with the United States a desirable consummation.

To the United States also the annexation of Canada presents many inducements. The withdrawal from their borders, of so powerful a nation, by whom in time of war the immense and growing commerce of the lakes would be jeopardized—the ability to dispense with the costly but ineffectual revenue establishment over a frontier of many hundred miles—the large accession to their income from our Customs—the unrestricted use of the St. Lawrence, the natural highway from the Western States to the ocean, are objects for the attainment of which the most substantial equivalents would undoubtedly be conceded.

FELLOW-COLONISTS,

We have thus laid before you our views and convictions on a momentous question—involving a change, which, though contemplated by many of us with varied feelings and emotions, we all believe to be inevitable:—one which it is our duty to provide for, and lawfully to promote.

We address you without prejudice or partiality—in the spirit of sincerity and truth—in the interest solely of our common country,—and our single aim is its safety and welfare. If to your judgment and reason our object and aim be at this time deemed laudable and right, we ask an oblivion of past dissensions; and from all, without distinction of origin, party or creed, that earnest and cordial co-operation in such lawful, prudent, and judicious means as may best conduct us to our common destiny.

Signed by 937 persons, chiefly citizens of Montreal.

[The following is a counter address or protest, also got up in this city, but we have not ascertained to what extent it has obtained signatures.]

We, the undersigned, inhabitants of the City of Montreal, owing and acknowledging Allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, having read a certain address to the people of Canada, in which separation from British Connection and a Union with the United States of America are recommended as presenting the only practical remedy for the evils which affect this Province—do hereby *Solemnly and Deliberately Record Our dissent* from the precipitate and ill-advised conclusions which the authors and signers of that address have arrived at.

We believe there is nothing in the present depressed condition of Canada, which may not be promptly and effectually remedied by the adoption of a well considered system of Legislation, without having resort to a measure revolting to our feelings, revolutionary in its character, and tending to a dismemberment of the British Empire. These views we are prepared to maintain by all constitutional means. Anxiously alive to the importance of promoting the material interests of this our native or adopted country, and of preserving unanimity and good will among all classes of our fellow citizens, we cannot but express an earnest hope that means may be devised without delay, to restore prosperity to this province, cement the ties which have so long existed with the Mother Country, and allay an agitation which may otherwise prove formidable. —*Montreal Witness.*