

ESSAY ON ANNEXATION.

Respectfully inscribed to His Excellency Sir EDMUND WALKER
HEAD, Baronet, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief
of the Province of New Brunswick.

[CONCLUDED.]

But what says New Brunswick, with her 200,000 inhabitants?

A few persons of the City of Saint John meet at the Hall of the Mechanics' Institute. They discuss the subject of *Independence*—a modest word for annexation, at all events this political condition is to form its advent—notwithstanding the paucity of their number, there was a sad want of unanimity, so necessary to command a profitable discussion, and the result has grievously proved that the last injunction of the affectionate Joseph to his departing brethren, “see that ye do not fall out by the way,” was wholly unheeded, even before our retiring friends had commenced the first short stage of their fearful journey. But had their decision been unanimously in favour of annexation: What then? They represent no Provincial interest or general feeling, and all their future resolutions, be they what they may, can afford no certain criterion by which we may judge the real sentiments of the people of New Brunswick. Long and assiduously as the question has been industriously agitated by one paper in this Colony—and by none in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island—it meets with but a sorry response from the country at large. Old Cheops is not less unruffled in the midst of his ponderous pyramid than are the inhabitants of our rural districts, and from whom widely different conduct was so anxiously expected. Potatoes and turnips, oats and backwheat engross their attention far more profitably. It is my humble prayer to the “GIVER OF EVERY GOOD GIFT” that our agricultural friends may have additional cause, during recurring seasons, to ensure this grateful equanimity. When the subject is discussed by our staid and considerate country cousins, our City agitation never disturbs the calmness of their colloquies. The spirit of our street oratory, or the fire of Institute declamation, is effectually dissipated and quenched by the impervious density of its immediate atmosphere.

We need not lay the flattering unction to our souls that there is

Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,

residing beyond the confines of the Marsh Bridge on the one hand, or the Lunatic Asylum on the other, who echoes one indignant sentiment, or participates in the heroic emotions of our City orators.

“In our halls is hung,
Armour of the invincible Knights of old.
We must be free, or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakspeare spake.”

Yet that freedom is not found in the land where slavery is a boast, and repudiation is a national attribute.

The tiny fly on the hub of the rapidly revolving chariot wheel, vainly supposed that he kicked up all the dust which its revolutions created. We can perceive the insect—observe the wheel, but as to the dust—it will never mar the simplicity of the picture.

A little more time than that which is embraced by sixty six years has passed by, when, shortly distant from each other, two small bargues were discovered winding their way into the estuary of the River Saint John. The rude and sullen aspect of the seaboard were scarce relieved by the few humble dwellings which here and there presented themselves, amidst the wild and broken scenery of PARR TOWN. The stunted and scattered trees lent, by the absence of vigorous growth and pleasing foliage, to impart a still more melancholy aspect to the cold and cheerless prospect which then presented itself. These vessels landed their passengers, consisting of a few anxious parents and mournful children, and a melancholy group who had deeply participated in their common misfortunes. A stately and expensive edifice near the eastern terminus of the South Market Wharf now marks the spot where many of these people encamped on the first dread night of their landing. The cold ground formed the resting place of some of them.

I

Loyalist of old! your memory is dear,
The CAUSE will forever ennoble your name,
You honor'd the Crown—your God you did fear,—
Rever'd be your motives and brilliant your fame.

II

Dark was the prospect, and gloomy the day,
When loyalty prompted our fathers of yore,
From the land of their birth and hopes—far away,
Seeking a home on a wilderness shore.

III

Home, lands and wealth were then left behind,
Yet principle cours'd through the current of life,
The cause of their Monarch absorb'd all the mind,
And union was found 'stead of hatred and strife.

IIII

We honor the worth of these true men of old,
Who clung to the crown of their King and his cause,
The sons of such Sires are now proud to uphold
OUR QUEEN, HER SCEPTRE, OUR COUNTRY AND LAWS.*

* The above was composed by me at the instance of a descendant of one of these people, and sung by him at the Hall of the Mechanics' Institute on the evening of the 18th May, 1846. The song was rapturously encored. Almost any annexationist may amend the rhythm—poetry there is none—will he appreciate the sentiments?

I need not say to the descendants of these persons, honor their memories, revere their integrity, and at all hazards, maintain the sacred principles which they have bequeathed to you. Those weary pilgrims are now recognised as the *founders of our Common Country*. They have left you a fair inheritance. Your forefathers have nearly all passed away from an ever changing and flitting scene, but their early privations can never be forgotten, whilst the record of their loyalty, patriotism and devotion form the brightest pages of our country's history. The price of deals may rise or fall in the British markets, and a superabundance of Ships will ensure a depreciation in their value; yet the *principles* of your ancestors will ever remain the same. They are identified with every consideration which recognises in British rule the fullest enjoyment of rational liberty, and the most permanent guarantee in the possession of all that you hold dear. Prompted by these principles they hailed as a blessing a close connexion with that Country, which is the first in intellectual and moral excellence, first in true liberty, and whatever else which dignifies and adorns mankind. Amidst the ephemeral tumults, as evanescent as “the shadow which passeth away, and continueth not,” the DESCENDANTS OF THE LOYALISTS OF '83 look calmly on and smile in derision at the harmless ripple which denotes—the *puddle in a storm*!

A letter from the Grand Master of the Orangemen of British North America, dated Belleville, 31st July, 1849, and addressed to his official in this City, has, since the publication of the first portion of this article, been placed in my hands for perusal. It contains the following emphatical language:—“I hope the question of ‘annexation does not find favor among our brethren, avoid it as ‘you would a snake. The league had its meeting at Kingston,—‘they set their faces against it.’”

I have just had the Belleville Intelligencer of the 12th September last placed in my possession. This paper contains the following extract from the Grand Master's address to his brethren:—

“I desire to bring under your notice the feeling which some are striving to arouse in this Province to favor Annexation with the United States. I am sure, so far as the brethren generally are concerned, the idea will be scouted at. But it is hardly to be expected, that amongst a body of men as numerous as the members of our loyal and religious Institution, some may be found who may unguardedly lend an ear to the insinuations of the enemy. We should let those who are not of us, but who on certain occasions are glad to be with us, clearly understand that our allegiance does not depend upon our adversity or prosperity. We should let them understand, and that too in a most emphatic manner, that we are not strangers to persecution, and that our fathers were persecuted before us; and, although the fang may now set closely in their hitherto undisturbed sinews, that we see no more reason now to cry for Annexation than when we alone, of all the vast body who defended the Crown's integrity, were the persecuted. Our allegiance is firm to the Protestant Throne and the Crown of Great Britain; and we will not so deny our faith as to refuse to receive evil from the hands of our Maker, because he has given us good. I say let it be clearly understood that Orangemen denounce Annexation, and I am sure that we shall not be long troubled with its phantom for discussion. And if a time shall arrive that we are to become a separate State amongst the nations of the earth, I see no reason why we should not labor to make that State monarchical as we now are. I see no reason why the Parent State should not hereafter be able to make her Colonies Monarchies, according to the British Constitution. And it would be a glorious thing to see a descendant of the House of Brunswick—a scion from the present parent stock—a son of our beloved Queen—Monarch over that portion of this Continent now proudly obedient to the British rule.”

At the close of the extract the editor makes the following remark:

“It was our intention to have placed this portion of the Grand Master's address before our readers some time ago, but could not find room for the extract; it comes now quite opportune. Since this address was delivered, the League had held its meeting, and the spirit manifested at the Convention, when the question of Annexation was then spoken of, only shews, that the opinion expressed in the above paragraph, is also entertained by the Conservatives as a body. It merely gives utterance in an official manner, to what he knew to be the feelings of the brethren generally.”

I need not say what the course of *ten thousand united* men will be in New Brunswick, if ever the question of *Annexation*, or that raised by its maudlin twin-brother—“*Independence*,” seriously present themselves.

At the risk of exhausting the subject, I shall now quote the language of the *People of New Brunswick*, as uttered by their representatives in legislative session assembled, in an address to Lord Metcalfe, Governor General of B. N. America. The address was adopted by the House of Assembly, on the 22d Feb. 1844, and will be found in the Journals. It contains the following paragraph:—“We appreciate too highly the *inestimable blessings* we ‘enjoy under our benign government, where the rights and privileges ‘of all are well known and defined, to disregard any attempt’ [‘To annihilate them in toto, as the annexationist demands? No. But in the language of the address,] ‘at *infringement*, whether aimed ‘at the Crown or the people.’”

CAN OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT DO NOTHING TO PROMOTE THE HAPPINESS AND INDUSTRY OF THE PEOPLE, AND TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF PRODUCTION? I answer—They can do much.