

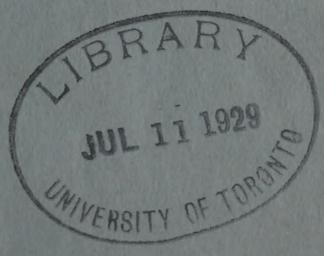
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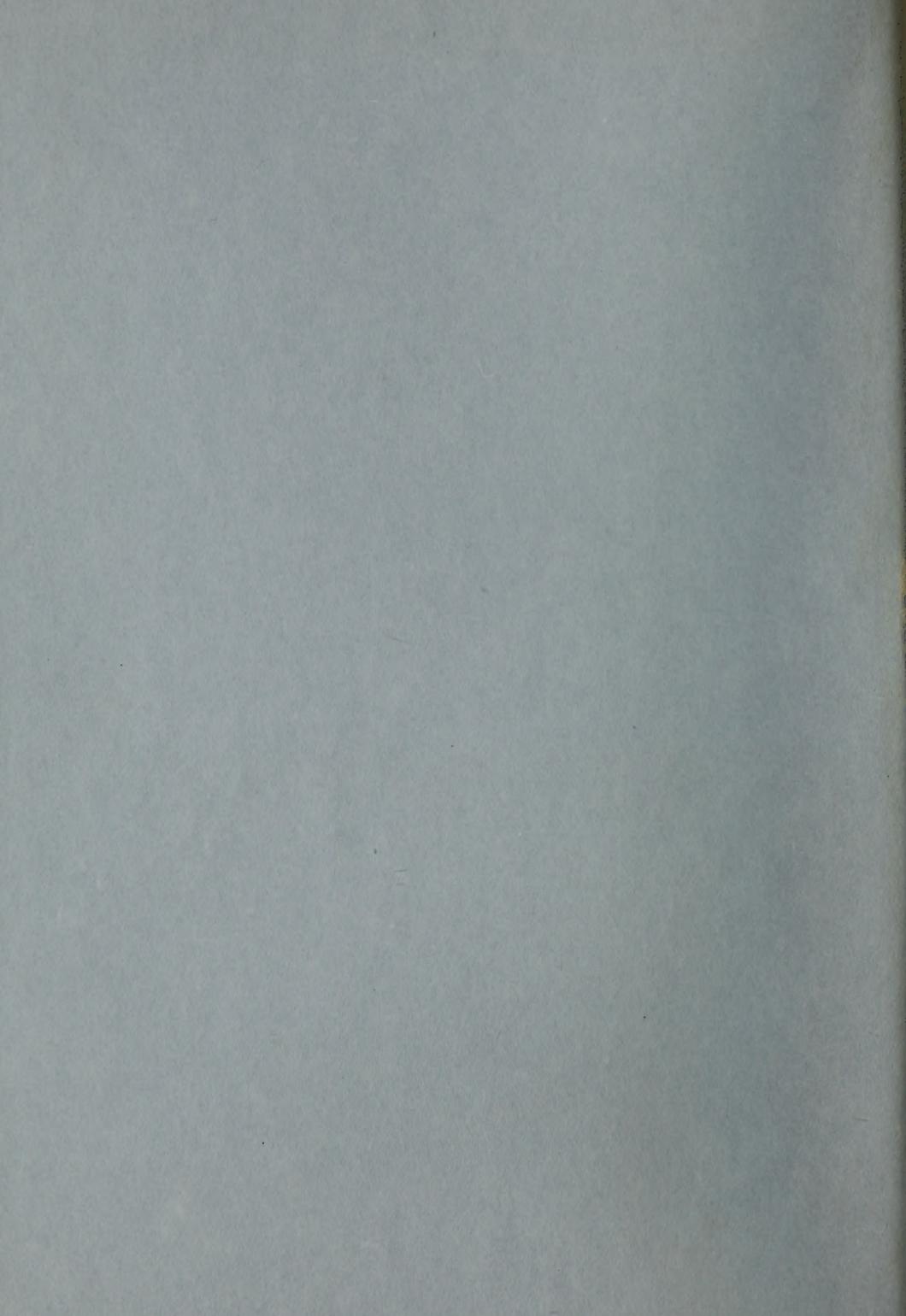
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United States - Politics and government

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by
Erastus Wiman.

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THE CAPTURE OF CANADA.

BY ERASTUS WIMAN.

IT SEEMS now, in the natural order of things in the United States, that Canada should be captured. With armed cruisers in the St. Lawrence watching the fishermen of the United States, who are compelled to take out licenses from a foreign government to authorize them to pursue their peaceful vocation ; with the assembling of a fleet of armed vessels from both countries in Bering Straits to detect or protect Canadian sealers ; with rumors of great military preparations, and increase of defensive armament ; the arrival of torpedo-boats ; the construction of the Bermuda cable, justified only by war purposes ; and other unusual movements in times of peace, it is no wonder that the people of the United States are somewhat startled, and that the question is asked, " Has not the time for the capture of Canada come ? "

No one dreams of war for this purpose. No other two nations have interests so identical, and there are none whose future is so wrapt up in each other's peace and prosperity, as Great Britain and the United States. There never was less inclination apparent among any people than among those of the United States for the acquirement of additional territory by the aid of the sword. There is, however, a great desire—nay, a great necessity—for an expansion of their trade to continental dimensions ; and if Canada can be commercially captured by the peaceful means of policy, it is a clear duty to capture her in that way. If the enormous resources of this " Greater Half of the Continent " can be made tributary to the progress of the United States by legislation, by occupancy through individual purchase, by development, and by the creation of a mutuality of interests, it would seem to be the very best form of statesmanship to achieve that result. The time and the circumstances are extremely favorable to accomplish this purpose, and if the military preparations have the effect of directing atten-

tion to the question of the possibility of a peaceful capture, they will not have been in vain.

But there are other influences than military preparation at work to enforce the conviction that Canada is essential to the United States. The tier of territorial commonwealths along the northern border of the Republic are now admitted to statehood, and the limitation of new territory in the North, as in the South, is quite as marked as that on the Pacific in the West or on the Atlantic on the East. The boundaries of the great Republic are all fixed and determined, and no more area for expansion except from within the United States seems possible. If more breathing space for this vast and growing aggregation of humanity is needed, it must be towards the north, or towards the south; and all the circumstances, all the tendencies and influences, point most unerringly towards the north.

The commercial equipment of the period is on the basis of occupation of new territory. The railroad-builders, the locomotive-makers, the steel-rail mills, the coal-shippers, and men in ten thousand other industries, if they are to be employed, must get into new territory, or else greatly restrict the activity that has hitherto prevailed. New territory is equally needed for occupation for a never-ceasing increase of population, produced both from enormous immigration and from natural increase. The development of natural resources in new regions, which has been so constant up to this period, and which has contributed in so large a degree to the growth and wealth of the country, must still continue. But this activity must find new fields. If the expansion of commerce as shown in the growth of internal trade, which the new census will reveal as the most marvellous phenomenon that the statistical world has ever seen, is to suddenly cease, and the increase hereafter confine itself to the limits of the Union as it already exists, it would seem as if a period of decadence in statistical increase might now commence. The ratio of increase of wealth, in extent of trade, which the last two decades of the nineteenth century will show, cannot be maintained in the first two decades of the twentieth century without wider area and enlarged resources.

It seems incredible that, without more room for expansion, without the occupation of greater territory, and without further development of great natural wealth, the same pace of increase

can be maintained. If, for instance, nearly all the coal mines of the United States are in possession of various railroad companies, what chance is there for the new generation of coal-miners to make a profit, except as delvers in the bowels of the earth in the pay of other people? If all the iron and copper mines are pre-empted, the opportunities of those that come hereafter and want to develop iron and copper mines will be restricted. The Calumet and Hecla Mine and the Anaconda Mine are each difficult to duplicate within the area of the United States, and the children of the present generation who want to dig for iron and copper must go elsewhere, or fail in the attempt, unless the rest of the continent is opened up, in which there are abundant chances for the discovery and development of iron and copper, as, indeed, for every other factor and opportunity that have thus far stimulated and sustained the American people in their rapid race for wealth and greatness.

Especially of timber is this true. A considerable portion of the community have made money by the manufacture and handling of timber and lumber, and this cannot be duplicated in the next generation, unless a supply of these articles is to be had. The exhaustion of the forests of Maine, the disappearance of the forests of the Saginaw valley, and the utter disregard for the future by which the policy of protection has stimulated the policy of destruction, will in a quarter of a century result in denuding vast areas of the United States of the timber supply available within reasonable reach of its great points of demand. All the industries dependent upon timber, if they are to grow in the next twenty years, will need new resources for the supply of the raw material.

Whence can these be obtained except from the portion of the continent outside of the United States? This question needs an answer after much thought, and after the full realization of the fact that there is to-day standing in Germany—a completed country—a larger supply of timber *per capita* than there is in the United States—a country in which the growth and creation of homes are an essential element of progress. When one recalls the vast stretches of treeless prairies within the United States, in which shelter must be provided, the necessities and exhaustion of rainless regions resulting from the destruction of the forests, and the rapid growth of vast cities on the lakes and plains, and also the fact that from the northern part of the continent alone

is a supply of timber certain for all future time, the necessity for the extension of commerce so as to include these areas is apparent.

But it is not alone as a source of supply that an increased area is needed for the United States, in which the energies of the people may be employed, as in mineral or in forest wealth. The exhaustion of wheat lands is a consideration of the most vital import in relation to the future supply of the food of this continent. It is a startling fact, not yet fully realized by the people of this country, that within fifty years, at the present rate of procedure, the United States may be a large importer of breadstuffs. The growth of population is so rapid, the exhaustion of the arable land so constant, that without new and cultivable territory the sources for the supply of food products will soon be below even the local demand. The steady trend of wheat-production to the northern tier of States is one of the most marked features of the time, and the fact that the wheat of the continent is now derived from a narrow belt in its extreme northern half is significant testimony to the necessity of larger wheat areas than are now possessed within the Union. When it is recalled that the best wheat-producing region of the world is found just north of the Minnesota line, and that in the new provinces and territories of the Canadian Northwest there is a possible wheat supply for all time, it will be seen how important has been the provision of nature for the food of mankind.

It is not, however, in minerals, in timber, or in wheat areas alone that the necessity exists for the employment of the rapidly-increasing numbers of the people of this country. Cheap food for New England is the necessity of the hour in that region. If the New England States are to maintain themselves in the great competitive struggle which has set in in the Southern and Western States, and in which is threatened the extinction of one-half of the existing industries in cotton, iron, and other staples, the essential element of success will be a cheap and nearby supply of raw material, and a certainty of food for New England artisans at the lowest possible rate. Competition between various sections of the country is just as severe in its effects on those regions that are placed at a disadvantage as if the competition came from abroad. The employers and laborers in the New England States suffer as much from the disadvantage of location

as they would from the pauper labor of Europe, and provision against pauper labor is not more earnestly called for than provision against adverse location.

If the Southern and Western States are to control the market of the West and East by the fact that coal, iron, and cheap food are side by side, then must New England be cared for in an equal degree, for the geographical and physical advantage which these States possess can be equalled in New England for foreign trade by the opening-up of the adjacent territories included within the Maritime Provinces. Here are abundant supplies of coal and iron within an area in which the charge for freight ranges from seventy-five cents to one dollar per ton. Here also in the Maritime Provinces are abundant sources of food supply. No other country in the world can produce potatoes, apples, oats, hay, poultry, dairy produce, and, still more important, the finest fish food, equal to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island. No region has produced a better class of cheap labor, intelligent, contented, and industrious, than has Quebec. Every element of success which the Eastern States need in order to compete with an outside market like Great Britain and Germany, the Maritime Provinces and Quebec can furnish.

Without these cheapened supplies of raw material, without decreased cost of living, competition even for the markets of the Western States is simply out of the question, while manufacturing for foreign markets is equally impossible. In the unlimited supply of cheap raw material from Canada, in the unrestricted output of fish and food products, and the constant employment of the cheap labor from the North, the new hope of New England may be found. Without these her manufacturing prospects are gloomy indeed.

On the Pacific coast an equally advantageous result would follow in the matter of coal. The supplies of California must be drawn from British Columbia, while midway across the continent the construction of railroads running north to sources of coal supply already indicates the absolute necessity for an interchange of this natural product. Canada is possessed of 97,000 square miles of coal territory, and coal, equally with her timber, her fish, her iron, copper, and silver, affords a field for development and business activity that is nowhere surpassed. The spectacle is presented in the old world of the two nations of Great Britain and Germany

dividing between them the Dark Continent of Africa for the purposes of the creation of trade. On this hemisphere no such contest is needed, for the greater half of North America, so far as trade and commerce are concerned, is immediately available for the enterprise and energy of the people of the United States.

It may be asked how such a result as the commercial capture of Canada can be accomplished in the face of the passage of the McKinley Bill, on the one hand, and the enforcement of an equal prohibitory tariff by the Canadian government, on the other. The barbed-wire fence which has hitherto run athwart the continent is now to be higher than ever; and the typical two brothers on different sides of an imaginary line, who want to trade a bushel of potatoes for a bushel of apples, will encounter greater difficulty than ever before in effecting the exchange. Under the new tariff each will be compelled to pay a paternal government twenty-five cents for the privilege—a sum double the cost of these two products of nature. But the hope of the hour is that the very extreme point which the two tariffs have reached has startled both people and made them realize the folly of this practical prohibition of trade. So far as the people of the United States are concerned, it is apparent that the paltry five millions of dollars which has hitherto been collected on Canadian products has been an utterly unnecessary and unwise exaction. Divided up between the population, it is less than ten cents per head, and yet for this miserable trifle the sources of supply of half a continent have been stopped, and the market within a great and growing nation next door to the United States has been denied.

True, the McKinley Bill may increase the amount so levied, so that each individual in the United States will be "benefited by taxation" to the extent of twenty-five cents per head, instead of ten cents, on Canadian agricultural products. But the "protection" afforded is so meagre, the principle of shutting out the products of the earth and the sea so wrong, and the necessity for cheap food in New England and the Middle States so great, that no one for a moment can justify the continuance of a tariff against the palpable interests of the United States, and equally against those of Canada. Indeed, it is a universal admission that the McKinley Bill has not been specially aimed at Canada. Although its agricultural sections will seriously threaten the solvency of her farmers, its burdens will be shared by the consumers of

New England and the Middle States, where cheap food and free raw material are essential elements of prosperity.

But the enforcement of the McKinley tariff in Canada will have an effect of a most startling character. Already the producers of that country have seen the folly of building up a barrier between them and their brethren across the border—against people of the same lineage, the same language, the same literature, and governed by the same laws. This barrier, even at its former height, has been a difficult one to contend against, but with a prohibition that will follow its elevation to double its present extent, the dissatisfaction and discontent which will ensue in Canada will be serious. Let us see what shape they may assume.

What is known as the "National Policy" has been enforced in Canada by the Tory party for fifteen years. Sir John Macdonald and his government have pursued a course of isolation for Canada, as illustrated in the harsh interpretation of the Fisheries Treaty, the discrimination in the canals, the encouragement of railroad guerrilla warfare, and, above all, the persistence in the highest duties, shutting out American products. Even such articles as were once free are now added to the taxable list, notably such trifles as berries, peaches, and fruit generally, and trees and shrubs, equally with a vast supply of corn and food products from the United States. The result of this policy to the Canadian farmer has not been gratifying, and a great deal of dissatisfaction exists. The Liberal party, on the other hand, with Sir Richard Cartwright as its financial leader, has adopted a policy diametrically opposed to that of the present Canadian government—a policy known as that of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. The exact operation of the application of Sir Richard's policy would be in perfect harmony with that proposed for the South American countries by Mr. Blaine in his recent most important utterances regarding reciprocity. The universal approval on the part of business men and the community generally which Mr. Blaine's proposals have met, so far as South America is concerned, indicates what important results would flow from a similar movement toward reciprocity in the North.

Happily, soon an opportunity will be afforded to test the question whether this is desired or not. A general election in Canada, by the dissolution of Parliament, impends, and on that occasion the people will have it in their power to decide which

policy shall prevail ; whether the policy of isolation, of restriction, and of practical hostility to the United States, as exemplified by the Tory party, on the one hand, or, on the other hand, the policy of unrestricted trade with the United States, as advocated by the Liberal party, resulting in the opening-up of all the resources of the continent to the people of the United States, and of a market for their manufactures the future extent and importance of which no man can tell.

There need be little doubt which side will prevail in this Canadian contest, if only reasonable discernment and common prudence actuate the Congress of the United States at this juncture. The McKinley Bill comes just in time to serve as an object-lesson to the Canadian farmer, and all dependent upon him, of what they will encounter if the Tory government prevails. If he prefers the Tory government, then the prohibition of his exports to the United States under the provisions of that tariff will ensue ; and, having deliberately chosen, he may suffer the consequences.

But side by side with the McKinley Bill there is another measure of equal importance before the Congress of the United States—a measure that, so far as Canada is concerned, will make the issue plain whether the people of that country desire a closer relation with the United States or not. The measure referred to is the Butterworth bill providing for unrestricted reciprocity, which is epitomized in a resolution recommended by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, through its astute chairman, the Hon. R. R. Hitt. The latter is only a resolution of ten lines, but rarely, if ever before in the history of legislation, has there been matter of greater import contained in a space so small. For if this resolution should pass, and go to the people of Canada side by side with the McKinley Bill, and the choice of one or the other be the question to be decided, it is impossible to believe that the policy which most favored the people of the United States would not be overwhelmingly adopted. The resolution is in the following words :

“ Resolved, That whenever it shall be duly certified to the President of the United States that the government of the Dominion of Canada has declared a desire to enter into such commercial arrangements with the United States as will result in the complete removal of all duties upon trade between Canada and the United States, he shall appoint three commissioners, to meet those who may be designated to represent the government of Canada, to consider the best method of extending the trade relations between Canada and the United States, and to ascertain on what terms greater freedom of intercourse between the two countries can best be secured ;

and said commissioners shall report to the President, who shall lay the report before Congress."

The passage of the foregoing resolution by the Congress of the United States would have an important effect, showing that the policy of pressure on Canada was not that which the people of this country desired to enforce. The McKinley Bill alone has that effect; its enforcement, without some mitigating expression, would beget precisely the same consequences that followed the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty in 1866, when, amid a burst of loyalty to Great Britain, a determination was reached to be independent of the United States. The national policy succeeded; the Canadian Pacific Railroad was built; the fisheries trouble followed; and all the strain and loss of hostile tariffs, for both sides of the border, have ever since ensued. But the bill of Mr. Butterworth or the resolution of Mr. Hitt, if passed by Congress, would show the real sentiment of the people of the United States—a sentiment which has its expression in the approval of Mr. Blaine's remarkably sagacious plan, viz., a desire for a trade that shall be continental in extent and continental in profit.

The passage of this resolution along with the McKinley Bill would place upon the Canadians the responsibility of their future policy regarding the United States. Fortunately as to time and circumstances, a constitutional means is at hand in the shape of a general parliamentary election to enable them to pronounce that decision, and the result will be a most important indication, so far as the United States is concerned, as to the future policy to be pursued. A verdict in favor of the Liberal party of Canada would be a decision looking to the most intimate relations with this country; to the opening-up of every resource that Canada possesses for American energy, ingenuity, and capital; to an adjustment of all questions that now vex the two peoples; to the creation of a market for the manufactures and merchandise of the United States; and, generally, to advantages quite as great as the creation of a new series of States and territories, in addition to those already existing in the North and Northwest. So that without the drawing of a sword the shedding of a drop of blood, or the expenditure of a single dollar, the area of the trade of the United States could be doubled.

It will be seen in all this that the question of annexation does not arise; neither does the question of a disturbed relation with Great Britain, either on the part of Canada or the United States,

obtrude itself. The future destiny of Canada may be left to shape itself under circumstances that would favor the most intimate relation with the people of this country. The political connection between the United States and Canada may be a difficult one to achieve at best, and a half-century must elapse before a definite result in that direction could be accomplished. Those who are anxious for an immediate extension of trade and an enlargement of opportunity may well be impatient at the delay which a political union implies, and adopt the sentiment of Horace, that "the short space of life forbids us from laying plans requiring a long time for their accomplishment."

The question as to the loyalty of the Canadian people to the British crown is not at issue in the contest that impends. Were it so, in the present condition of public sentiment, the verdict would most unquestionably be in favor of a maintenance of British connection, even at the risk of tremendous sacrifices; for there is more loyalty in the remotest regions of Canada than there is in the heart of London itself. But while the question of British connection is not involved in the decision as between the national policy of the Tory party in Canada, and the Liberal party's policy of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States, nevertheless a very great strain is likely to be put upon the Canadian people in this—that by deciding in favor of reciprocity they decide in favor of the free admission of American manufactures, while they still continue to levy a tax on English goods.

The spectacle would then be presented of one part of the British empire (comprising 40 per cent. of its whole area) discriminating against the products and manufactures of the parent country, while admitting those of a commercial rival free of charge. What Mr. Blaine wants from Cuba and Porto Rico, as dependencies of Spain (as pointed out by Senator Frye), in the free admission of American manufactures, even as against Spain, as the price paid for the free admission of sugar into the United States, Canada under unrestricted reciprocity would be compelled to grant as to all articles of merchandise. The question is a grave one for the people of Canada to answer; but the answer that will come is that the personal interest of her own people should not be sacrificed for the personal interest of the English manufacturer, who has no more interest in the Canadian consumer than in the Fiji Islander, if he will pay spot-cash for his purchases.

The price for free admission of Canadian products into the markets of the United States is the free admission of American goods into the markets of Canada. There is a good deal of loyalty in Canada to British institutions and to Her Majesty, but the loyalty does not extend to the personal and individual interests of English manufacturers, to the sacrifice of those of the Canadian farmer. So far as a discrimination against English goods is concerned, it is no reflection upon English institutions or lack of loyalty to them that would induce a Canadian farmer to prefer prints from Providence, R. I., duty free, at two-thirds the price, to prints from Manchester, England, against which a duty would be levied, and which would therefore be just so much dearer. The individual interest of the various classes of British subjects is the question at issue—not the question of loyalty or disloyalty.

Nevertheless, the point is a delicate one, and the opportunity which would be afforded for its answer by the passage in Congress of the Hitt resolution would be full of the deepest interest to the people of the United States. It is only by the constitutional means of a general election in which the whole people will participate that a question so momentous can be decided—a question that will shape the relations hereafter to exist between the English-speaking people who occupy this continent. Never before in their history did the time and the circumstances seem more opportune for submitting the question as to what these relations should be. If Congress can be prevailed upon to adopt the Butterworth bill or the recommendations of its Committee on Foreign Affairs, the test can be made, and by this peaceful means alone can Canada be captured.

The consequences that will follow the breaking-down of the commercial barrier that now divides this continent into two parts may well be left for the future to unfold. That the attractiveness of republican institutions will more and more impress itself on the Canadian people, there can be no doubt. That close contact with the people of the United States will more and more draw the nation to the north toward what in the end may be a political embrace, many earnestly believe. Whether this comes or not in the future, the present demands that reciprocity of interests should remove all causes of separation, and that Canada should be bound to this country by the closest commercial ties.

ERASTUS WIMAN.

