ELECTING A PRESIDENT.

PROF. M'MASTER'S RAPID SKETCH OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRESENT AMERICAN METHOD.

Why the Constitutional Machinery of the Electoral Colleges Was Adopted—A Review of Its Practical Workings—Is It Good To-day, or Is It Superfluous?

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No part of the Constitution of the United States has given less satisfaction than the articles and sections which set forth the manner of choosing a President and define his duties and his powers. No other part has been so constantly the subject of discussion and proposed amendment, or has been so greatly changed by the slow growth of the unwritten Constitution of our country. That this should be so was inevitable. The men who met at Philadelphia in 1787 and framed the Constitution were in no sense political theorists. They were as a body hard-headed, practical men of affairs, fully aware of the conditions they were to meet, and in their attempt to meet these conditions they were guided, wherever possible, by experience gained in the past. In most cases such experience was all sufficient, but whenever any question concerning the President or his duties arose, they were left with nothing to guide them, for no such executive as they had in mind had ever existed in any country at any time. The creation of the office of President was, therefore, a hard task; was constantly before the Convention during its entire sitting, and when it was finally accomplished, the result was such as seemed best suited to the needs of the country and the political ideas of the time.

But the needs of our country in 1787 were not those of 1896. The United States was then a very little republic—not much more than three times as large as the present State of Texas. The Mississippi shut us in on the west. We nowhere touched the Gulf of Mexico. Bordering us on the north, on the west, and on the south were the possessions of Great Britain and Spain. The population, white and black, slave and free, was then about half that of the State of New York now. Small as the country was, the lack of every sort of modern means of communication, of the steamboat, of the railroad, of the telegraph, of the telephone, made it immense, and this condition powerfully affected the Convention in its attempt to create an executive.

The vast extent of the country, the difficulties in the way of communication, the diversity of interests in the Eastern, the Middle, and the Southern States, the ignorance of the people in each one of these groups of the wants of the people in the other two, led to a serious effort in the Convention to establish an executive of three men, representing the three sections or groups of States. That a New England man, however well meaning and sincere, could understand and appreciate the needs of the people of the South, or that a man born and bred in Pennsylvania could impartially administer the law to the people of Massachusetts, was declared to be impossible. To this it was answered that the executive was to be the mere instrument for carrying out the will of Congress, and that the energy, despatch, and responsibility necessary for the proper carrying out of that will could not exist in an executive of more than one. Should the administration of the laws be intrusted to three men, each would consider himself the representative of his section, responsible to his section, and would guard its special interests rather than the welfare of all. A single executive, it was answered, is "the fœtus of monarchy," and the temper of the people is opposed to even the semblance of monarchy. They will never repose confidence in an executive consisting of one man. When at last, after many postponements and many debates, the decision was made to have an executive of one, the difficulty was as far from a settlement as ever, for it was transferred to the next question, How shall he be chosen? Every State save one agreed that an election by the people was not to be thought of. The country was too large and the people were too little informed. It was admitted that the country was blessed with a few characters of continental reputation, but the time would come when such men would not exist, and then the people would never agree on any one man for the executive. They would vote for men of their own State or their own section, and nobody would be elected. Very possibly, nay, very probably, the inhabitants of the populous States would combine and carry the elections. Did any one suppose that a native of Georgia or of South Carolina could ever, in times of peace, attain to such public importance as to be heartily supported by the voters of New England in preference to a native of Massachusetts? As one member said, "It was as unnatural to refer the choice of a proper character for Chief Magistrate to the people as it would be to refer a trial of colors to a blind man." This expressed the opinion of every State save Pennsylvania, and was the one view on which there was a general agreement.

For awhile the Convention could not decide who should elect the executive, and plan after plan was suggested. Some were for assigning that duty to electors composed of the Governors and Presidents of the States; some to electors chosen by the State Legislatures, or by the people, or by the State executives, or taken by lot from the National Legislature; others were for leaving the whole matter to the Senate, or, at least, to the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each plan had much to recommend it, but the Convention, utterly unable to determine which was best, selected the last named, and voted that there should be an executive of one, that he should serve for seven years, should be elected by Congress, should not have a second term, and might be removed on impeachment and conviction of malfeasance or neglect of duty. The decision was made in sheer desperation, was not wholly acceptable to any one, and was attacked on all sides. The executive, it was said, must be independent of the Legislature. This was admitted. But how, it was asked, can he be independent of a Legislature to which he owes his election? Is it not certain that he will be its creature, and will he not in all likelihood secure his election by chicane, by intrigue, by cabal? He ought to control the Legislature; he ought to be a check on its tendency to seize power; he ought to be the protector of the great mass of the people, and to stand between them and legislative tyranny. This cannot be if the Legislature elect him or impeach him, or if his service be limited to a single term. The ideal executive is an officer chosen directly by the people for a short term, eligible to any number of reflections, unimpeachable by the Legislature, and endowed with such power as to stop legislation that is not in the interests of the people.

For such an Executive the Convention was not prepared; but the argument unsettled it, and led to a reversal of all that had been done. The Presidential term was cut down from seven to four years; the single term provision was stricken out; the idea of election by the national Legislature was abandoned, and in order that the President might be wholly independent of Congress, and not be subject to coercion on the one hand, and be able to protect the people against unwise laws on the other, he was given the veto power. Nothing could induce the Convention to consent to an election by the people, and as it was now fully determined that the Executive should be independent of Congress, each State was required to appoint, in such manner as its Legislature should prescribe, as many electors as it had Senators and Representatives in Congress; and to these electoral bodies or colleges, each meeting in its own State and acting independently of every other, was given the double task of selecting a fit character to be President of the United States, and then electing him to the office. Except for the restriction that the electors must vote by ballot for two men, one of whom must not be a resident of the same State as themselves, they were free to do as they pleased; and that their action might be as free as possible, two safeguards were provided. One forbade any Senator, Representative, or officeholder under the United States to act as elector. The other required the electors to meet in their own States and vote on the same day, for it was feared that, should they come from all parts of the country and gather in one grand Convention, they would be subject to that "chicane, intrigue, and cabal," the dread of which was the reason for taking the election of President away from Congress.

While the Convention was thus willing to resort to every means to secure the free election of an independent Executive, it was not unmindful of the fact that his powers must be defined and his action restrained, lest he should become too independent, and by means of the veto coerce Congress and dictate legislation. Provision was made, therefore, that his veto might be destroyed by a two-thirds vote of both Houses, and that should he become too hateful to be endured for even one term, he could be impeached, and on conviction removed from office.

As thus defined by the framers of the Constitution, the President of the United States was to be an official chosen and elected by sundry bodies of citizens having no connection with the Government, was to serve as many terms, as the electors saw fit to give him, and was to be the guardian of popular rights against legislative encroachment. He was to come to his high office bound by no pledges representing no section, advocating no policy, belonging to no party, and owing no man anything. He was to be the choice of fellow citizens who were called for the moment to act without collusion as electors, and this duty done, were to sink at once into private life again. But Washington had not been many months president when a change set in, and the evolution of the President as we know him began.

The Constitution requires that the President "shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union." To a generation which had not the easy means of gathering and spreading news which was to succeed it, a generation which knew not the railroad, the telegraph, the steamboat, the associated press; to a generation which paid 25 cents to send a letter 400 miles, would not allow a newspaper to be carried in the mail, and had never seen a public document, this provision had a meaning and a use. It was the only way by which many a member of Congress could become aware of what was going on in all parts of the Union. Washington attached much importance to it, and, with that love of method and system which so distinguished him, gave the information to Congress, not, as the Constitution requires, "from time to time," but regularly at the opening of each session. On such occasions, after the two Houses had organized and were ready for business, he would come, with great ceremony, in his state coach, to the room where the House sat, and, taking the Speaker's chair, would read a speech to the assembled Senators and Representatives. After he had driven away and gone home, the two Houses would separate and appoint committees to frame answers; and when they were ready the Senate on one day, led by the Vice-President, and the House on another day, with the Speaker at its head, would march to the President's house, and stand with solemn faces while their presiding officers read the unmeaning replies. After partaking of cakes and wine, they would return to their chambers and go on with their public duties just as if the speech had never been made. So long as Washington and Adams occupied the Presidential office this custom was never departed from; but when Jefferson began his first term it was abandoned, and the annual written message was introduced instead. The visit of the President to Congress, the speech, the answers of the two Houses, and the parades through the streets of Philadelphia to deliver them—ceremonies borrowed from England—had always seemed to Jefferson to be quite out of place in a republican country, and had long been subjects of ridicule by his party. That he would have discontinued them under any circumstances is therefore quite likely. But in the summer of 1800 the seat of government was removed to Washington, and the thought of the Senate and the House marching down Pennsylvania avenue (then a mere muddy and stumpy road) to deliver answers at the half-finished and not half-furnished White House was too much for him, and since December, 1801, every President has communicated his "information on the state of the Union" by message.

Another appendage to the Presidential office, which we owe to Washington and not to the Constitution, is the Cabinet. No such body of advisers was thought of or intended by the Convention. It was, indeed, proposed to give the President a council similar to those which in many States were then associated with the Governors. But this found no favor, and the Cabinet as we know it is purely the creature of executive action. The Constitution declares that the President "may require the opinion in writing of the principal officer in each of the Executive departments upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices." But that these officers should hold regular meetings, and that the Secretary of War and the Postmaster-General, the Secretary of the Interior and the Attorney-General should advise the President, not in writing, on matters of finance or foreign policy which do not relate to the duties of their respective departments, and that these regular gatherings of the Secretaries should be looked on as one of the political institutions, find no warrant in the Constitution, no countenance or authority in the Constitution. The first Congress had no sooner established the departments of War, State, and the Treasury, departments which had grown up under the Continental Congress, than Washington appointed the Secretaries and began to consult them on matters of state. At first the consultation was informal and their opinions were in writing, but as time went on and the duties of his office increased, the President assembled the Secretaries and the Attorney-General at his house, and the Cabinet as a political institution began. In the example of Washington is commonly ascribed the origin of the unwritten law that no President shall have more than two terms. This is a mistake. He retired from the Presidency at the end of his second term because he was tired of public life; because, as he told his countrymen in the farewell address, the acceptance of the office had been at the sacrifice of his ease, and because, in sacrifice the condition of the country no longer required him to make. He was troubled by no scruples as to rotation in office, by no fear that many terms would "breed a lust of power."

With his refusal to accept a third term came the first contested election, and the first real trial of the working of the system of Presidential election by electoral colleges in the States. At the beginning of the Constitution, each elector was required to write down on his ballot the names of two men, without stating which one he wished to make President. When all the ballots were counted in the presence of Congress, the man who received the highest number, if a majority, was declared President, and the man who had the next highest number, though less than a majority, was proclaimed Vice-President. In 1796 the national organization of the Federalists was so poor that, although every elector wrote the name of Adams on his ballot as first choice, there was no agreement as to who should be second choice, and such scattering followed that Jefferson, the Republican candidate, who received three votes less than Adams, became Vice-President. The lesson was not lost on either party, and when 1800 came the Federalists were so thoroughly organized that all their electors voted for Adams, and all save one, who was duly selected before election day, voted for Pinckney. The action of the Republicans marks an epoch in the history of Presidential elections, for by them, in 1800, was held an informal Congressional caucus for the nomination of President and Vice-President. The intention of the framers of the Constitution was that no elector should be pledged, that each should be free to vote for any man he chose, and that the electoral colleges as a body should be responsible for the selection of a proper man to be President, and then for his election to this office. But on the day in which the Republican Senators and Representatives in Congress met in caucus, and selected Jefferson and Burr to be the party candidates, the Presidential electors were robbed of their most important duty and degraded to mere Boards of Registry; they have never since been anything else. The Constitution, in its intents and purposes, has thus been amended.

The care which the Republicans took in 1800 to secure the concentration of their electoral votes on two men served but to make more prominent than ever a defect first brought to notice in 1796. The election of that year proved that it was possible to elect a President from one party and a Vice-President from another. The election of 1800 showed that, under certain conditions, a party which had a large majority of the electoral votes might not be able to elect even a President. As the party caucus had formally nominated Jefferson and Burr as the only Republican candidates, every Republican elector felt in duty bound to vote for them, and for no one else.

Each, therefore, received the same vote, and, as neither had the highest number, neither was chosen President, and the House of Representatives was forced to elect. That both of these men should be prevented in future, the Twelfth Amendment was added to the Constitution in 1804, and the electors were empowered to cast two ballots, one for President and one for Vice-President. What had been done informally in 1800 was now done formally and regularly. A written summons was sent to every Republican Senator and Representative to attend a party caucus. Jefferson and Clinton were formally nominated, or, as the phrase went, "recommended to the Republican voters of the United States." A Congressional Campaign Committee was appointed, and from 1804 to 1824 no President was ever nominated by any other body than the Congressional caucus.

When Jefferson retired, in 1809, the Presidential office had thus in the course of twenty years been greatly modified. The heads of the executive departments had been transformed into the Cabinet, a council of advisers; the annual message had become an established institution; the electoral ballot for Vice-President had been created; the Congressional caucus nomination of candidates had been introduced; the electors had practically been stripped of all power of choice, and the doctrine that two terms were enough for any President had been formally announced and ratified by the people. The refusal of Washington to accept a third term was based on personal reasons, but when the Legislature of State after State invited Jefferson in 1808 to be the party candidate, he refused for political reasons. It was just as necessary, he said, to retire from the office at a proper time as it was to discharge its duties in a proper manner; rotation, he believed, was nowhere more necessary, and he warned his countrymen to beware of the love of power, of the sense of ownership and the disregard of popular rights, springing from long continuance in office. The advice was sound, was approved by his countrymen, was acted on by Madison and Monroe, and long before Jackson's time had become a part of our unwritten Constitution with all the force of law.

In the interval which separated the Administrations of Jefferson and Jackson, the political condition of the country and the political ideas of the people changed completely. The religious and property qualifications for voters and officeholders were swept away. Manhood suffrage was introduced. For the first time the people entered politics, and with their entrance came all the appliances for the expression of their will, for defeating their will, for catching and holding their votes—the machine, the boss, the State nominating Convention, the spoils system. Though the proscription of political opponents and the distribution of offices among party workers came early into use in some of the States, it was not till 1820 that the spoils idea became fairly the application of the principle to Federal officials. In that year William H. Crawford was Secretary of the Treasury, and well knowing that he would be the Congressional caucus candidate for President in 1824 he secured the passage of the Four-year Limitation law, by which the term of office of thousands of officials in his department was limited to four years. Up to that time the Presidents filled newly created offices, or such as were made vacant by the resignation or removal of the incumbent. Since that time each President has been forced to fill thousands and tens of thousands of places vacated by the operation of Crawford's Four-year Limitation law, which was soon extended to the Post Office and finally to every branch of the public service.

The law went into operation in 1821, and was administered most conscientiously by Monroe and John Quincy Adams. But on the defeat of Jackson in the House of Representatives, and his renomination by the Legislature of Tennessee in 1823, the possibilities of the law in the hands of unscrupulous politicians were finely exhibited. Officeholders were now plainly told that all who were for Jackson would work for him; that all who were not for him were against him, and that when he was inaugurated, in 1829, his friends, not his enemies, should have the spoils. That Jackson would be elected was certain, and every one of the 65,000 officeholders who hoped for reappointment became a Jackson worker.

That Jackson would be elected was certain, because Adams possessed none of the qualifications which, in the opinion of the people, were fitting and necessary for a President, and the people were now the rulers. From the first inauguration of Washington to the day when the House of Representatives elected Adams and rejected Jackson, the intention of the framers of the Constitution with respect to the President had been carried out in the main. The electors, it is true, had been stripped of all power of choice and had been pledged to vote for candidates selected and formally nominated by the Congressional caucus. But the Presidents were well fitted in all respects for the duties of the office. Each of them was a man of national reputation; each had spent his life in the public service; each was a trained and practical statesman, and has left behind him writings which bear evidence of a mastery of the theory of popular government as then understood. But the time came, after our second war with England, when men of this sort found no favor in the sight of the people. The development of the country, the rush of population into the Mississippi Valley, the rise of new States with democratic Constitutions of the modern type, the rapid extension of the franchise, not only created a new constituency, but surrounded the voters in the Atlantic States with political conditions utterly unlike those of the days of Washington. New issues, new questions, new points of view followed, and new leaders, sprung in every case from the honest, hard-working masses, rose to guide the people in their efforts to settle the problems of self-government—Federal, State, and municipal—forced on them by the changed state of society. The quiet and humdrum Administration of Monroe marks the turning point. The people then secured full control of their State and local Governments, and that they should next seek for the control of the Federal Government was quite in order and to be expected. In many of the States the old way of choosing Presidential electors by the Legislature had given way to popular election by general ticket, and toward the end of Monroe's second term the cry that the President must be "a man of the people" was raised for the first time in our history.

This meant the death of the caucus system of nomination, which was now declared to be unconstitutional and oppressive. Senators and Representatives were expressly forbidden by the Constitution to act as electors of the President. But if members of Congress met and nominated the successful candidate, was not that nomination equivalent to an election? And if so, were they not, it was argued, acting as electors and violating the law of the land? The attack on the old system was made accordingly by Tennessee, whose Legislature supplied "a man of the people" when it nominated Andrew Jackson in 1822, and sent forth a set of resolutions to her sister States asking them to instruct their Senators and request their Representatives not to attend a Congressional caucus. Her action and her resolutions were the signal for a general revolt against the caucus, which, attended by a small minority, was held for the last time in 1824.

A period of transition now followed, during which State Legislatures and State Conventions, which had been slowly developing in many of the States, made the nominations. But in 1831 the Anti-Masons held the first National Convention for the nomination of a President, and so introduced a new piece of political machinery. The time was ripe for it. The country was compact and well settled. No state existed north of Indiana and Illinois, and, save Missouri, there was none west of the Mississippi. The means of transportation had so improved that it was possible to go from one end of the United States to the other without a great expenditure of time or money. The meeting of Protectionists at Harrisburg in 1827 and of Anti-Masons at Baltimore in 1831 proved that such conventions could be made a success, and, as the feeling became strong that the people should name the Presidential candidates, the example of the Anti-Masons was declared to be truly Democratic, and in 1832 was followed by both Democrats and National Republicans.

These early Conventions were of the crudest sort. None of the careful and elaborate organization which now begins with the voters in the primaries and, leading up through the State Convention for the selection of delegates, ends with the election of the permanent Chairman of the National Convention, had any existence. They were mere mass meetings to which the party managers in each State sent as many or as few delegates as they pleased. When assembled it became manifest that the greatest inequality existed. Some States had but a single delegate. Others which happened to be near the place of meeting were represented by ten, twenty, fifty men. To remedy this a committee of the first Democratic Convention framed three rules which have since been characteristic of the party. One was the unit rule, which requires that the vote of each State shall be determined by the majority of its delegates, and cast as a unit. The second gives to each State a vote equal to twice the number of its Senators and Representatives in Congress. The third provides that no candidate shall be declared nominated unless he receives two-thirds of the votes polled by the Convention.

From 1832 to 1840 no National Conventions were held. Then each party again resorted to them under the pressure of public opinion, for the President and candidate has since been put before the country in any other way. For a second reason the campaign of 1840 is still memorable. The time was one which in many ways bears a close resemblance to our own. There was the same financial distress, the same deficit in the national revenue, the same increase in the public debt in time of peace, the same wild schemes of banking and finance, the same prevalence of "crazes" and reforms, the same repudiation of the President and his party then in power, and in the abolitionists and anti-slavery people there was an element looked on both North and South with the same horror with which we view Anarch sts and Socialists. But, unlike our day, there was no one great issue on which either party dared to stand. Neither Convention, therefore, ventured to frame a platform. The Democrats were afraid to say a word lest they should drive men from the party. The Whig party was such a collection of petty local factions, opposed to something in particular and nothing in general, that to make a platform satisfactory to everybody was not possible. The appeal, therefore, to the prejudices, emotions, and sentiments of the people, and the campaign became a craze. Then were brought into fashion the ratification meeting, the torchlight procession, the civic parade, the campaign cry, the song, the caricature, the badge—all the paraphernalia still resorted to as a means of arousing the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the emotional voter.

Thus was it that just as the Congressional caucus in 1800 deprived the electoral colleges of the right to select the Presidential candidate; just as the State Legislatures and the State Conventions in 1824 seized the power from the caucus; so, after 1840, the people, through the national party convention, took the nomination into their own hands, and have ever since retained it.

Once in their hands the Conventions became the scene of the "chicane, intrigue, and cabal" the fathers predicted would attend an election by Congress, and all the patronage at the disposal of the President—a patronage increasing rapidly as the country expanded, as the people multiplied, and as new States were admitted to the Union—was used for party purposes. In the eyes of the people the President was the chief distributer of offices. That he should have any personal knowledge of the fitness of 100,000 officeholders was not to be expected. His duty was to allot the Federal patronage of each State to its Senators and Representatives, to become the official organ of their will, to make such removals and appointments as they saw fit to dictate; and as he was always a strong party man, the duty was cheerfully performed.

From this state of affairs has resulted another change in the Presidential office as created by the fathers, another unwritten amendment of the Constitution. By what end Senator, no Representative, no Federal officeholder, can be a Presidential elector: that is, a man responsible in part for the selection and election of a President. But the electors do not select the President. He is picked out by the National Convention of the party, and as this action is equivalent to an election, the Convention is the real electoral college, and the Constitutional electors are mere recording officers. If the plain intent and meaning of the Constitution were obeyed, no Senator, no Representative, no officeholder, could rightfully take part in the proceedings of a Convention for the nomination of a President; yet it is by these men that in the case of the two great parties, at least, Conventions are attended and managed. Not only then are such bodies utterly unknown to the Constitution, utterly foreign to the intention of the framers of it, but a large part of the members of them are men expressly forbidden to take any part in the selection of a President. It is indeed true that legally all these proceedings count for nothing. Legally the President is still chosen by the electors, who are free to accept or reject the candidate of the National Convention. But the rule established in 1820 by the man who first voted for Monroe as elector and then cast his ballot for John Quincy Adams, the electors who in 1824 were chosen by the New York Legislature to support Clay and then voted for Jackson, were acting within legal bounds, and their acts were not and cannot be questioned. Yet the electors are not free to vote as they are pledged, they are morally bound to vote for the candidate of their party, and so certain are they to do it that no man who on election night scans the returns from the States goes home in the slightest doubt as to who will be the next President. Millions of citizens who read the newspapers on the morrow really believe that the election of Cleveland, though nothing has been done which could be taken notice of by the House and Senate when they meet in joint session to witness the counting of the electoral votes. Not till the electoral colleges have voted, and the House and Senate acted, is a President elected; yet the proceedings of none of these bodies ever receive ten lines of notice in any newspaper in the country. Their usefulness is gone. There is now no reason for their existence, and that they will be suffered to exist much longer does not seem likely. The time has come when the election as well as the nomination of a President may safely be intrusted to the people.

With the election in November next, just 100 years will have passed since the Presidency was contested for the first time by two men put forward as candidates by two political parties. Looking back over this century and the changes which have taken place in the popular condition of the Presidential office, we may reasonably ask, Were the fathers right in their belief that the people were not fit to be intrusted with this high duty? Our answer is, They were wrong. The people are fit.

JOHN B. McMASTER.

HERE ARE FACTS, MR. BRYAN.

Figures That Demolish Your Fanciful Guesswork.

The farmers are opposed to the gold standard because they have felt its effects. * * * Taxes have not been perceptibly decreased. * * * Railroad rates have not been reduced to keep pace with falling prices, and besides these items there are many more.—*From Bryan's Speech of the Madison Square Garden.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The Populist candidate for the Presidency has stated that the rates of transportation of the railroads since 1873 have not declined as much as the value of the products they carry. The incorrectness of this assertion will appear from the following statement which shows that since 1873, while the tonnage hauled by the railroads of this country has increased more than fourfold, the rate per ton per mile for that service is only about one-third of what it was in 1873.

Years	Tons of freight moved	Miles of railroad	Miles of freight moved	Earnings from freight	Average rate per ton per mile
1873	76,938,4[illegible]	4,697	5[illegible]	$[illegible]	2.210
1874	72,585,[illegible]	2,117	3[illegible]	180,000,000	2.240
1875	74,096,[illegible]	2,[illegible]	3[illegible]	1[illegible]	1.[illegible]
1876	76,608,[illegible]	2,712	351,137,370	210,000,000	1.552
1877	79,094,[illegible]	2,980	347,704,548	210,000,000	1.574
1878	81,767,[illegible]	2,[illegible]	365,496,061	211,700,000	1.401
1879	93,554,[illegible]	4,877	388,876,108	230,000,000	1.301
1880	93,896,[illegible]	6,712	467,748,928	326,000,000	1.348
1881	103,148,[illegible]	9,437	551,968,477	336,000,000	1.264
1882	114,712,[illegible]	11,569	635,778,841	360,495,357	1.236
1883	111,[illegible],745	8,[illegible]	5[illegible],[illegible]83,[illegible]	3[illegible],[illegible]43,439	1.[illegible]
1884	125,379,[illegible]	3,924	509,869,910	3[illegible],074,749	1.125
1885	128,381,[illegible]	2,987	500,890,992	437,046,099	1.096
1886	136,379,[illegible]	8,[illegible]	559,353,054	4[illegible],845,254	1.042
1887	149,257,[illegible]	8,[illegible]	6[illegible],[illegible]06,923	552,074,752	1.084
1888	156,169,[illegible]	6,912	638,200,793	590,937,353	0.977
1889	161,953,[illegible]	5,154	665,962,831	619,165,639	0.929
1890	187,506,[illegible]	7,[illegible]	734,827,733	691,344,417	0.927
1891	175,779,[illegible]	5,671	7[illegible],815,810	704,3[illegible],600	0.919
1892	175,189,[illegible]	4,419	794,526,500	730,663,011	0.941
1893	177,465,[illegible]	2,277	8[illegible],494,608	757,464,480	0.893
1894	179,858,[illegible]	1,929	7[illegible],472,409	674,714,747	0.866
1895	181,021,[illegible]	1,628	743,784,451	763,799,883	0.839

In the period given the price of wheat has declined about one-half, against a decrease of about two-thirds in rates of transportation. Almost all the commodities which the laboring man purchases have declined in equal ratio to the cost of transportation. The only thing which has remained uniform during this period and which has not declined is the rate of wages.

It will be observed that the agitation of the Silverites and Populists has so far destroyed credit that the construction of new railways is almost entirely suspended, the mileage opened in 1895 having been less than in any year since 1873, being only 1,628 miles, or less than one-third of that under construction to-day in India.

The United States now contain nearly one-half of the mileage of the railways of the entire world. The rates of transportation here are less than a third of the usual rates in other countries, and have declined to such a point that the dividends paid upon the entire $5,182,121,999 capital stock of all the railways in the United States amount to only $81,975,774, a rate of only 1.59-100 per cent. The farmers, it would appear, are the chief beneficiaries of our railway system, rather than the capitalists, as the rate at which products are carried upon the railways has declined more than the price of the products, and is much less than in any other country; while the return to the unfortunate owners of these enterprises has been reduced to a mere nominal rate.

HENRY W. POOR.

NEW YORK, Aug. 20.

MR. HOBART TO DEMOCRATS.

The Vice-Presidential Candidate's Letter—McKinley Not to Take the Stump.

LAKE HOPATCONG, N. J., Aug. 22.—"There are many thousand Democrats," said Garret A. Hobart, Republican Vice-Presidential nominee, "who are hesitating to follow their party leaders and inclining to put patriotism above party. In my letter accepting the Vice-Presidential nomination of the Republican party, which I have here, and which will probably be made public next week, after Major McKinley has decided to give out his letter, I will devote considerable attention to them. For this reason I must decline now to give my views in extenso as to the right sort of argument to be addressed to Democrats this year. But I fully appreciate in that regard the interest and importance of the public situation, and I am convinced that this fall Democrats and Republicans alike will put the best interests of their common country above partisanship.

"I shall continue quietly here at the Breslin, near my home in Paterson and the headquarters in New York, but taking no active part in the campaign so far as speaking goes. I shall make no campaign speeches, and do not expect that Major McKinley will. Were he to do so his opponent would probably follow in his tracks, and would no doubt delight to follow in a cart where Major McKinley had preceded in a palace car, contrasting the two modes of the argument.

"Of course, the policy of the party and its attitude toward the people of the United States, Republicans and Democrats, will find its most fitting expression from the head of the ticket, Major McKinley himself. When it is stated that I stand for the tariff issue, and is identified with the policy of protection, I reply that he stands for the Republican party and is identified with the right side of all the issues now pending in public, and will speak of them in his letter of acceptance. But I feel sure that he will not take the stump, and personally I myself strongly deprecate being pulled up in that way. We won't speak, that's settled; but the letters of acceptance will probably be given out in the regular way through the press associations shortly. Mine I have here in my pocket, but it would of course be unbecoming in me to go into it in detail now, though I can say that a considerable part of it will be addressed to those Democrats who will this fall, by the thousand, we believe, vote to preserve the best interests of their country."

Mrs. Hobart and Garret A. Hobart, Jr., will probably remain here with the head of the family throughout September. It is not unlikely that Major McKinley may join them here for a while. Gov. Griggs of New Jersey, Commodore Albert Tilt, who is an intimate friend of Mr. Hobart; Col. Joseph Congdon of Paterson, who is one of his business partners; Sheriff Toffey of Hudson county, and Judge Hopper of Paterson are here with Mr. Hobart. Judge Hopper, who is past eighty, is the oldest presiding Justice in the State, and has voted the Democratic ticket for sixty years. He is a great friend of Mr. Hobart, and was doubtless in the mind of the Vice-Presidential nominee when the latter spoke of the Democrats he was sure would support him this fall.

ANNEXATION FOR CANADA.

THE STRONG SENTIMENT FOR IT IN THE DOMINION.

The Work of Goldwin Smith in Behalf of the Cause of Continental Union—The French and the British—The Unpleasant Espionage Under the Former Regime.

From the Chicago Record.

TORONTO, Ont., Aug. 5.—As we were passing a quaint old colonial house, surrounded by large grounds and shaded by enormous elms and oaks, in the very centre of this city the other day, the coachman turned on his box and remarked:

"That is the oldest house in Toronto. It stood there when the city was nothing but a small cluster of cabins along the bank of the lake. It was so well built that it has never needed repair, and it is as good to-day as it ever was, and as it will be 100 years from now. The man who lives there is the greatest man in Canada. He has forgot more than all the Ministry ever knew, with the Governor-General on top o' them, and he keeps learning something new every day in his big library that stretches out from the house there, as you see westward."

"What's his name?"

"Goldwin Smith; and he's the best friend the United States has on this side of the border. Some of the Tory snobs call him a traitor to old England, but that's because they want to stand in with the Queen and Lord Salisbury, while he's thinkin' all the while what'll be the best for the people."

That is a fair sample of local public opinion concerning the eminent British statesman and historian who has come over to make his home on this side of the water, and spend his wealth and leisure in aiding to solve the Canadian problem. Prof Smith occupied the chair of English history at the University of Oxford for many years, and during the civil war in the United States was a friend of the North, which fact made him unpopular in that community. He resigned his chair thirty years ago and came to Toronto to write a book on Canada. At the same time he accepted a professorship at Cornell, and lectured there each winter for several years. He presented a magnificent historical library to that institution also. But he finally gave up active work, and has since been living in retirement at his beautiful home here, which, as the driver said, is the oldest residence in Toronto, and perhaps the most attractive. One could scarcely imagine a more charming retreat for a student and a lover of nature and books. It is called "The Grange," and has been in the family of the first husband of Mrs. Smith since the settlement of Canada West.

Prof. Smith was a bachelor when he came to live at Toronto, but he soon surrendered to the charms of Mrs. Boulton, a Boston lady, who had married a rich Canadian lumberman in her younger days, and was living here at "The Grange." He had a large fortune of his own, and their united wealth makes them one of the richest couples in Canada.

Prof. Smith is no doubt the most scholarly man and the most famous writer in the Dominion, and is the recognized head of the movement for annexation, which he has always advocated as the inevitable result of natural laws and the manifest destiny of the colony. His books and magazine articles and his speeches on this subject have given serious offence to the loyalist element on both sides of the Atlantic, and both Mrs. Smith and himself have been compelled to submit to many disagreeable slights from overzealous Tories who are seeking office or knighthood. Some of the ambitious families in the Dominion boycott them entirely, and endeavor to seek favor at Rideau Hall by calling Prof. Smith a traitor. During the recent campaign the feeling was very bitter, and Prof. Smith was constantly assaulted in the columns of the Conservative press and by the Conservative speakers, although he was not a candidate for office, and was taking no part in the election. But his writings furnished text books for most of the Liberal editors and orators, and he is the President of what is known as "the Continental Union Association," which was organized for the purpose of promoting the union of the American people.

Shortly before the election the trustees and faculty of the University of Toronto voted to confer upon Prof. Smith the degree of Doctor of Laws as a recognition of his distinction in the world of learning, whereupon Mr. W. G. Falconbridge, Justice of the High Court of Ontario, resigned his seat in the Senate of the university, because, as he declared, in his opinion an institution that would honor a traitor to the British flag was not the place for loyal subjects of her Britannic Majesty. Nevertheless, the vote of the trustees and faculty was unanimous, and the great mass of the people applauded the action, while they laughed at his Honor, the Justice.

A Police Magistrate of the name of Denison, who thought to get a little notoriety out of the row, wrote a letter to the dean of the university asking that his name be stricken off the list of the alumni, as he did not care to be in any way associated with an institution that would confer such honor upon a man who had been the most persistent, active, and bitter enemy Canada has ever had. To endorse in any way or show honor to such a man," he said, "is but to increase his power and influence. He is constantly encouraging the neighboring country in the belief of the possibility of annexation, and is, therefore, likely to bring armed men against us."

"The Continental Union Association" is a large and influential organization, composed of English-speaking Canadians, for the purpose of carrying on an annexation propaganda. It is confined to the province of Ontario, and has a club house at Toronto, where its literature is printed and mailed. In the eastern provinces similar organizations exist under different names. Among the English-speaking communities they are known as "Independence clubs," and among the French as "Ste. Jean Baptiste societies." You can find them in every city, every village and settlement, and over the line in New England they are in all the factory towns where French Canadians are employed. It is proposed this year to hold a convention of all the organizations in the Dominion that are devoted to the cause of independence, or annexation, which is the same thing, with the intention of forming a Board of Management upon which all shall be represented, to lay out plans and direct the campaign. It is expected that the meeting will be called at Montreal during the month of September, and held under the auspices of the "Independence of Canada Club" of that city.

The anxiety and opposition of the Conservative party to discuss or concerning the annexation movement made it necessary for the leaders to observe great caution and secrecy, and it is freely charged that the officials of the Post Office Department under the late administration opened letters and destroyed quantities of annexation literature that was sent through the mails. It is charged that the orders of the Government were to detain or destroy all such matter, and that they were obeyed so far as possible.

A gentleman was telling me the other day that he recently had occasion to write to the Department of State at Washington, and, being an avowed annexationist, feared that his letter would be intercepted and destroyed, so he borrowed an envelope of a United States Consul, which bore the latter's official card, and took the package to the Post Office to be registered. But notwithstanding these precautions, it never reached its destination, and although the United States Consul was aware of the fate of the letter, he did not make a complaint to the postal officials, he could never obtain any satisfaction. His belief is that the Postmaster, suspecting the writer of being engaged in treasonable correspondence with the authorities at Washington, opened the letter, and when he found that it was concerning an innocent and legitimate business, destroyed the evidences of his own officiousness.

But the annexation people have no such fear under a Liberal Government, and their missionary work will be carried on henceforth without any attempt at secrecy. It is said also that the means to defray the expenses are largely furnished by persons who do not care to be known in that connection, but are earnest annexationists at heart. Toronto is a hotbed of Conservatism, and the most loyal city in Canada, although the American interests are larger here than elsewhere. The newspapers are loyal without exception. Only one paper, called the *Weekly Sun*, which has been the organ of the Patrons of Industry, ever dares to print anything that tends to create more friendly political relations with the United States. Now and then it contains an article in favor of American unity, and objects to having Canada considered a tailpiece for Great Britain.

In Montreal the annexation sentiment has been more outspoken, particularly among the French population, who do not attempt to disguise their disloyalty. *La Patrie*, the leading French newspaper of Canada, which has the largest circulation of any published in the Dominion, talks annexation every day. It does not mince that term, however, for it might be offensive. "Continental Union" is the term. There are 500,000 French Canadians in New England who are constantly pulling on their friends and relatives at home. There are fifteen French newspapers in New England which have a large clientage in Canada and are continually discussing the advantages of annexation. The recent overturn of the Conservative Government was largely due to the influence of the Canadians in New England. Laurier received his largest support and made his largest gains in the French Catholic communities, although the question of Government support for Church schools was one of the prominent issues of the campaign. In Montreal he got a majority of 25; in Quebec, out of a total of sixty-five members of the House of Commons, he got a majority of 33, although Sir Charles Tupper, the Conservative leader, was certain of carrying both provinces through the influence of the priests on the school issue. But "Continental Union," as they call it, had a stronger claim upon the Frenchmen than the Church. When some one said that Laurier's election meant "Continental Union," a French Bishop said:

"Yes, perhaps; but it is much more likely that the American flag will float over the citadel of Quebec than that the Canadian flag will float at the top of Bunker Hill Monument."

French Canada has no cause for attachment to Great Britain, and makes no pretence. It is said that a Frenchman can never be denationalized, and that fact is daily demonstrated in Quebec,