

# Canada and the United States

(A Thought for a Citizenship Program)

*Editor's Note: "The Educational Courier" recently published a reply by Eugene Forsey, to an article by Miss Jean Howarth in the "Globe and Mail," implying that a great many Canadians would like to see Canada annexed to the United States. We quote part of Mr. Forsey's reply, believing that the points he makes are well worth the attention of all Canadians and that they might well be used in a program on Citizenship at a Women's Institute meeting.*

**I**F A LARGE NUMBER of Canadians do in fact feel we should join the United States, and if we are not to be governed by mere feeling (whether majority or minority) then it is high time our leaders started giving the populace some instruction on the differences between the two countries.

"One of the fundamental differences is that the United States is a country of one language and one culture, Canada a country of two languages and two cultures. The Fathers of Confederation deliberately wrote into the British North America Act English constitutional law for both the Dominion and the provinces ('a Constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom'), French civil law for Quebec, and the equal official status of English and French in the Dominion Parliament and courts and the Quebec legislature and courts. They also wrote into the Manitoba Act the equal official status of English and French for the legislature and courts of that province. If we could all get it firmly into our heads that both the British and French traditions are basic in the Canadian tradition, and that to remove either is to destroy ourselves, we might at least have some better notion of what we should lose or gain by annexation.

"A second fundamental difference is in our systems of government. They are both forms of democracy, but otherwise as different as chalk is from cheese. The Americans have a presidential-congressional democracy, modelled on the early 18th century British constitution. It is a proof of their genius that they manage somehow to manoeuvre this political sedan chair through 20th century traffic with astonishing success. We have monarchical-parliamentary-responsible-government democracy, modelled on the late 19th century British constitution, and steadily modernized to meet new

problems. Joining the United States would be, politically, reactionary, in the proper sense of that word. It would be going back, not, indeed, 'to Methuselah,' but to a system of government which the British peoples outgrew nearly two centuries ago. We should have to adjust ourselves to a whole series of quaint practices, fraught with meaning for Americans because rooted deep in American history, but a veritable obstacle race to anyone else. Just look at the way the tax bill and the civil rights bill are stuck now in the U. S. Congress: The Administration ardently wants them passed, but it cannot even get them discussed in the two Houses. Our system of government has its faults; but at least if a Canadian government adopts a policy, it has no difficulty getting it debated in our two Houses; and the measure is either approved pretty promptly or we get a new government.

"If these fundamental differences between Canada and the United States seem highfalutin' and academic, there are others, less fundamental, but important, which are not open to that reproach. We have family allowances; the Americans have not. We have non-contributory old age pensions; the Americans have not. We have hospital insurance; the Americans have not. We have a national system of unemployment insurance; the Americans have not. We have Workmen's Compensation; the Americans have nothing like it. Perhaps some of the people Miss Howarth interviewed might not have been quite so glibly annexationist if they had realized the solid material benefits they would lose by union. My old Scots tutor at Oxford used to say that there are two ways of wanting a thing: really and unreally. If you really want it, you are willing to pay the price; if you are not willing to pay the price, then you only un-really want it. I suspect that a good many Canadians who say they want union with the United States only un-really want it."

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## WHAT DOES THE HEART REMEMBER?

By Esther Baldwin York

What does the heart remember, looking back  
Along the years when one was very young?  
Grandmother's shelf of fragile bric-a-brac;  
Walks after violets; and being swung  
In an old rope swing; long rainy afternoons  
Up in the attic land of Make-Believe;  
Fairy-tale books; and hurdy-gurdy tunes;  
The starry, magic feel of Christmas Eve.

Running through rustling leaves and falling snow;  
The sudden picnics on green slopes of spring;  
A song that Mother sang nights long ago;  
The heart remembers every lovely thing —  
Like seeing sunlight through a window flowing,  
And thinking, "This is what home is," and  
knowing!

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