

only to the latter class. I, myself, feel the superiority of being a Canadian by my own choice. The Dominion of Canada is only one of the members—however important a one—of the vast Colonial Empire of England—an Empire presenting by its mere extent a spectacle never seen in the world before, and possessing probably a power quite immeasurable under conditions of cohesion and co-operation that are conceivable, and that have been indeed already conceived and expressed by some minds that have given the subject attention. It presents, also, certain features of anomaly, and, perhaps, of difficulty and danger, which may require all the sagacity and courage of the men of the present day to encounter and overcome. It presents the spectacle of a number of greater or lesser, but for the most part of self-governing communities, each asserting and practising sovereign rights, not only in its own territory, but as regards each other and as regards the parent state itself; for the power of taxing is of course a sovereign power in the sense I am speaking of, and it is exercised, not only against strangers, but against the other children of the same family and also against the head of the family itself. But it is a power, nevertheless, that appears to be necessary, not only because we must pay the expenses of self-government, but because God and nature have laid upon us the inevitable obligation of making a country for ourselves; and unless we are recreant and supine, instead of patient and brave, we will at last, and by Heaven's blessing, achieve the task. To make a decent start in life, and to create a home, is the natural, the reasonable and the honourable aim of most young men. The duty may be as great with a nation as with an individual; the difficulties may be greater, or at least on a larger scale; but one thing certain in both cases is, that life is made up of what are called difficulties, and character consists in overcoming them with dignity. A voice I shall never hear on earth again once said to me, when I was very young, "Any fool can swim with the current; but it takes a man indeed to swim against it," words which I have never forgotten, and which you may perhaps now take to heart better than I have done. Difficulties indeed! What are our difficulties compared with those of the glorious races in our motherland, in rearing for themselves the political liberties which, through the blood and the tears, and the unflinching courage, and the ardent prayers, and the willing deaths of our fathers, at last took shape in the fabric of the British con-

stitution! That constitution may be said in a general way to be ours, though it is not quite so certain that with the form we also have the substance and reality of it. We may have one as good, and better too perhaps with reference to our different condition. All that I will not stop to debate now; but the English constitution as known to history we have not, any more than we have the English civilization of the present day; for the modern outcome of the mediæval, the feudal, the ecclesiastical, the commercial and the military spirit which make up to-day the constitution and the civilization of England, is a very complex thing indeed, and a very different one from the broad and simple democracy of Canada. I do not, as I said before, venture to stop a moment to discuss which is the better for us—we have no choice; but I only note the difference, and wish to avoid the mistake of confusing in all respects two things that are different in many, different in the stuff they are made of, different because in England there is a distinct and well marked line between classes and ranks, the result of feudal and other causes, while here, for better or for worse, we are all of one class, all of the people. Whether a constitution of historical growth and adaptation in an old country can be successfully transplanted by statute into a new country under very different conditions, is one of the problems of the future. It reminds me sometimes of the plum-puddings of my youth, in the great Northwest, in the days of its complete isolation from the rest of the world. Once a year, at least, in those days, every one must needs have his plum-pudding; but some of the good things puddings are usually made of were sometimes not to be had, but it was plum-pudding all the same; it was *our* plum-pudding; it was the best that was to be had; it was all we could get, and we made the best of it, and very jolly we were, and probably slept all the better for not loading our stomachs with all the precious stuff, which in strictness, I believe, usually enters into the constitution of historical plum-pudding. So let us make the best, say I, of our political constitution here; if it must not be called the English constitution, let us call it something that is, perhaps, better for us; let us call it by its right name, a Canadian constitution; and let us do our best to be happy under it! Yes, we are Canadians, and we are sometimes called, and with an ill concealed sneer, something more dreadful still—we have been called "Colonists," and not merely to express the fact—for that is undeniable—but to impute inferior-