

seem likely to be much more valuable to the Canadian people than gold mines have proved to be in Australia. Their co-operation secured for them an attention from the Central Government which could not be given to isolated bodies. It is a melancholy fact that in our dealings with the Cabinet at Washington the Central Government on more than one occasion during the early part of the century sacrificed the interests of our Canadian colonists to the acquisitiveness of their Republican neighbours. Lack of information may have been one reason, the absence of a proper controlling current of opinion another, but, however we may explain the fact of this careless dealing with Canadian rights, it is pleasant to know that confederated Canada can have no such dangers to apprehend in the future. The great British people north of the St. Lawrence now speak with a volume of voice, and happily with a discriminating judgment which secure attention for their slightest wants. They boast a larger territory than any other political body on the American Continent, and form a link between West and East in one of the greatest empires the world has ever seen. It is true that the comparative isolation of Australia does not supply the incentive to union which the proximity of encroaching neighbours to the south of the St. Lawrence did in the case of Canada; but, on the other hand, Australia, notwithstanding its vast area, is exposed to the vicissitudes of maritime supremacy in an ocean which may not improbably witness the next great naval war. The Pacific is becoming every year more and more crowded with the war-vessels of the great naval powers of Europe, whilst China and Japan are hastening to add their armaments to the great arrays which may within the next generation decide the predominance of nations in the antipodean waters. The picture which Mr. Foster draws of the results of confederation is, therefore, most instructive at a time when Australia is discussing a union of our colonies in the Southern Pacific; but as regards questions more nearly affecting ourselves, Mr. Foster, in the spirit of a statesman and philosopher, left his hearers to consider at their leisure tariff controversies in their various aspects. He is no advocate of abstract principles, but holds that these questions of Free Trade and Protection should be dealt with according to the circumstances of the time.

- What was necessary and best fifty years ago might not be so regarded at the present day. This is a mood much more reasonable than we generally find in speeches on tariff or currency questions. In fact, a little observation must show that there is no abstract rule in these matters. Absolute Protection such as Mr. McKinley conceived, or absolute Free Trade, are both equally absurd. A discriminating examination of the circumstances affecting particular industries and the fiscal wants of each population are the only sure guides to a wise and useful adjustment of these questions.