

would, if entered into, put an effectual end to his pretensions, not only in America, but in Europe, Bonaparte made haste to sell us both, Louisiana and the Mississippi, and thus remove them forever from the realm of hostile contention.

The doctrine laid down by Mr. Jefferson has recently been reannounced by Mr. Edward Dicey, an English writer of distinction, in a paper discussing the tendency of large and powerful nations to absorb smaller or weaker ones, and justifying such absorption when made under the pressure of "permanent and paramount interests." History teaches us by numberless examples that an appeal to this rule is generally followed by war, which since the world began has been the last argument of Republics as well as of Kings. Fortunately we were not required to act under it in the case of the Mississippi and Louisiana territory, and I hope we shall not be required to apply it in the case of the St. Lawrence and the Dominion of Canada!

But no one—certainly no American—denies that Mr. Jefferson was justified in announcing it to the First Consul in terms which could not be misunderstood. At that time our entire population did not exceed 6,000,000 souls. We had but a few scattered settlements and a population of less than 500,000, on the Mississippi and its tributaries and all their commerce, indeed, nearly all their movable possessions could have been carried in a hundred flat-boats, but the principles and arguments were clearly applicable then and they are applicable now, that our population has grown to more than 60,000,000, over 20,000,000 of which live in States and Territories bordering on the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes, and send their commerce to market by the numberless vessels which navigate them, or by the railroads which traverse the country bordering upon them. It is said that the tonnage passing through the canals of the Sault Ste. Marie, and of the St. Clair flats, now exceeds that of the Suez Canal, and no one can doubt that it is a thousand-fold greater than the tonnage of the Mississippi in 1803, and several times