

has been said to show that a line of policy which might suit the conditions of one colony would be entirely inapplicable in the case of another, and this leads to the conclusion that it would be difficult to formulate any scheme of Imperial union which would suit all interests. Such a proposal, if indeed it ever takes practical shape, must address itself to each colony in turn, and this obviously adds enormously to the difficulties of the whole scheme.

It is but just to say that though Canada has the alternative of accepting an alliance with the United States, this has never had any appreciable effect upon the loyalty of the Canadian people. It is likely that there is as much genuine regard for the interests of the Empire in Canada to-day as in Australia, and as warm a desire to promote the common glory. No Canadian public man has had occasion within the memory of the present generation to suggest the alternative as a result of any friction with the Colonial Office. But, in thinking of the future, the Canadian cannot ignore the fact that a political alliance with the rest of the continent is one of the solutions open to him. It has been thought of. It has been written of. It has been openly advocated. It has its avowed advocates in Canada to-day, and a still larger number of secret advocates. It has a great deal that is rational in support of it. During the past two centuries, and particularly during the last one, North America has developed its great progress, enlightenment, and national life. It has grown up free from the feudalism and class interests which mark European civilisation. The sense of liberty and equality is everywhere felt on the continent. Canada has imbibed this spirit, and it is a part of her institutions. North America has a civilisation of her own—a political mission and destiny quite apart from that of Europe. Canada has more direct interest in the development of North America than she can possibly have in the British Islands or the whole of Europe. It would be natural for her to seek alliances with her own great neighbour.

Commercially their interests are interlaced from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It would mean no disregard for England if Canada allied herself to the United States, and chose to mould her destinies according to North American ideas rather than upon European lines. In a word, the only real objections to the federation of North America under one central government, instead of two as at present, are purely sentimental.

But these are enough. In nation-building, sentiment is a more potent factor than self-interest. Go to France and Germany, and demonstrate to the people of those two great countries that the true policy would be to federate—to have one capital, one set of officials, one united army. The logic might be irresistible, but the result would be insignificant. In a somewhat lesser degree it would be preposterous, at present, to endeavour to persuade the Cana-