

notes as a warning? If, it is said, the Canadian Government "fail to take practical steps to carry into effect the terms solemnly accepted by them, we most respectfully inform your Excellency that, in the opinion of a large number of people of this Province, the withdrawal of this Province from the Confederation will be the inevitable result; and in such case compensation from the Dominion would be demanded for the unfulfilled obligations which she undertook. This growing desire for separation is not held out as a threat, but is simply the expression of a feeling which is gaining strength every day. The knowledge that Canada relies on the paucity of our numbers, and her own power to fulfil or repudiate the terms of the Union as she pleases, creates a feeling of irritation which is being continually augmented." The Canadians unluckily, do not scruple to say that these small communities must yield as anti-Unionists of Nova Scotia were forced to yield to the will of the more powerful provinces. They know that secession from the Union would leave the Pacific settlers, as the address describes them, in a perilous and painful situation:—"Bounded as this Province is, on the north and south by United States territories, and without railway connection with the Dominion of Canada, British Columbia will ever be an isolated, unprogressive Province. The railway and other facilities of the American people are sapping our trade and directing commerce and population to their shores." Yet in justice to the loyalty of the British Columbians it must be said they do not even glance at the possibility of annexation, though they call Lord Dufferin's attention to the amazing progress made in the Far West of the Union by the development of the railway system.

Still, although annexation remains a word unspoken, it is not less certainly in men's thoughts, and as a possibility it must enter into the reckonings of Imperial statesmanship. It is impossible to admit the pretention of the Dominion Government that this is merely a Canadian question, and that it must be settled as between the Parliament of Ottawa and a few thousand settlers in British Columbia. The Pacific Province is equal in area to the German Empire; its ports are upon the most direct line between Europe and the Far East, Victoria, the chief town of Vancouver's Island, is no more than twenty-one days' sail from Hong Kong, and it has been calculated that, were the Trans-Continental Railway opened, the communication between Southampton and the Chinese ports might be shortened by fifteen or twenty days. At any rate, the time must come when the trade of these Pacific colonies with Japan and China will become a most important element in the world's commerce; and the childish narrow-minded trickery of the Canadians is unconsciously diverting this future stream of wealth and power from the British Empire to the American Republic. Isolated and hopeless, British Columbia would be likely to look to annexation for a new career, and the Americans who hem in our colony between Oregon and Alaska may be tempted to accept the invitation of those adventurous spirits who recognize no established allegiance, and whose flag is planted for them by commercial interest. If the Canadians can afford to disregard these obvious considerations, Imperial statesmanship cannot; and though, as we have said, the mother country cannot enforce the performance of the contract by constitutional methods, the power of public opinion, expressed with moderation, but also with firmness, by the Colonial Office,