

Commerce has made vast strides ; our wealth as a people has enormously increased ; and the commercial relations which to-day exist between Canada on the one hand and Great Britain and the United States, and more than one foreign nation on the other, are of the most important nature. Year by year, this commercial progress has told its own tale. As the wealth and population have increased, the imports from other countries have assumed corresponding proportions, and the exports have, through the enterprise of our merchants in diverting the Western trade to the St. Lawrence route, and the development which has taken place in Canada's own resources, taken gigantic strides. This progress, in connection with the extensive maritime interests of the Dominion, has excited the attention of nations. The country is now an extensive customer in, as well as contributor to, the markets of the world.

Political changes have been even greater. Provinces with separate governments, interests to a considerable extent distinct, and in one instance with a people largely of a different language, have thrown those interests into one common lot, and now, with united energies and aims, form a Confederation, which, in the extent of the territory comprised under its government, is only exceeded by one power, and though not yet comparatively large in the number of its population, is already, in the broad views of its rulers and the enterprise of its people, giving promise of a future nation.

To the effects of this political union upon us as a people, and to the position in which it places each one of us as citizens, I would wish to draw attention.

There were many in all of the Provinces who were bitterly opposed to Confederation. A strong difference of opinion as to its probable advantages prevailed, and the anti-confederate party, it is well known, was wanting in neither numbers nor influence. Six years have, however, since passed by, and what to-day is the prevailing thought regarding the results of Confederation ? I venture to assert that its greatest opponents have been taken aback at these results. Four Provinces comprised the original partnership, two others have