

upon a more satisfactory footing than ever before, many of the most distinguished practical statesmen of England having fairly set the agitation afloat, and a member of the British Association having presented a scheme from an economic standpoint that appears to remove the most serious difficulties. I trust now that the agitation will never cease until some practical shape shall be given to it.

In the celebrated report of the Earl of Durham on the condition of British North America, in 1840, a passage occurs that seems to foreshadow something of this kind, while indicating that the problem had already impressed itself upon the mind of that great statesman. "I am of opinion," he wrote, "that the full establishment of Responsible Government can only be permanently secured by giving to these colonies an increased importance in the politics of the Empire." Great advances have been made since his day, but the words are still in a great measure true. I for one cannot say that I have any very great fault to find with the present political constitution of our country. But the law of nature is the necessity of growth; and it is easy to discern that some time in the future a further constitutional change must come. As, therefore, it is the part of a prudent man to prepare for the future stages of his life, so it is the duty of a nation to consider what development her institutions are susceptible of, in order that she may shape her course accordingly.

In trying to map out this future there are, I think, two ideas that must have an important bearing upon it. One of these is our people's pride in their connexion with the British Empire. This is a sentiment so uniformly existing in the minds of our fellow countrymen in whatever part of the globe they are to be found, that it is deserving of a large amount of consideration. I do not say that it must be the sole determining influence upon our destiny, but I do say that any scheme of national life that fails to take account of it is an incomplete scheme, and one that cannot be realized without destroying much that is noblest in our lives. To ignore such a sentiment is as futile as to construct a system of religion or philosophy without taking account of the soul.

Co-existent with this, however, there is another sentiment, the germ of which is in every British breast. This is love of liberty, a desire for independence, an aspiration after all the attributes of national manhood. In her internal affairs, Canada already enjoys almost complete autonomy; she has acquired by precedent even the right to negotiate her own commercial treaties. But her national powers are not fully attained; and there is no patriotic Canadian, at all events in the younger generation, who is not convinced that in one form or another this must come.

Now there is only one way in which satisfaction can be given to these two aspirations. It is by a plan under which full national powers shall be acquired and the integrity of the Empire preserved, or,—to speak of it in business language,—by a national partnership, in which the mother country and the other self-governing colonies will join. This is the conviction entertained by those whom I may name the

British school, at whose head I think may be placed Sir A. T. Galt, and Principal Grant, of Kingston, And it is a significant fact that one like Sir A. T. Galt, who has always held strong views on the necessity of full national powers for Canada, should come to the conclusion that these can be best obtained by a consolidation of the Empire. Mr. Blake has also several times spoken in favour of Imperial Federation. This will be the historical successor of the political school of the departed statesmen, Joseph Howe, Robert Baldwin and George Brown. Mr. Baldwin wrote in 1849, "I could look only upon those who are in favour of the continuance of the connexion with the mother country as political friends, those who are against it as political opponents....It is not a question upon which compromise is possible." Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Mowat represent the same principle among the Liberals to-day, while the whole political life of Sir John Macdonald and of Sir Charles Tupper have been faithful to it throughout. In fact, every public man who has ever conquered and retained the confidence of the people of Canada has been imbued with the same idea.

There is, however, another school antagonistic to this, whose chief exponent is Mr. Goldwin Smith, which may be called the American Continental School. The latter may be said to embrace also those who look for Independence in the sense of cutting ourselves adrift from the Empire, because, if such Independence be brought about, it will be with the view of establishing a nation more or less under the ægis of the Republic to our South, in furtherance of the American Continental idea, and in antagonism to what they name the European "system," and to Great Britain as supposed to belong to that system.

Now there is a great deal of nonsense talked about this Continental idea. It is sought to be impressed upon us that because we live on the continent of America, we must snap every chord that unites us in sympathy and intercourse with the rest of the world. In my humble opinion that is a narrow and false notion. I believe that civilization will be retarded, the universal brotherhood of man, the federation of the world, indefinitely postponed, if the people of this continent determine to isolate themselves from the great nations of Europe. The closer the intimacy between the two continents, the greater will be the enlightenment of our people, the quicker the dispelling of barbarous and unworthy ideas about the common interests of humanity. What we want is not to shut ourselves out from intercourse and sympathy with the continent from which our ancestors came, but to maintain close and friendly relations with them, endeavouring, by association, to adopt the best ideas of European civilization. Notwithstanding the enormous rapidity of the development of wealth on this continent, Europe still leads the world in civilization,—in literature, art, science, philosophy and religion. Mr. Mowat the Premier of Ontario, at the recent meeting in London, in furtherance of the idea of Imperial Federation, stated it as his opinion that the connection between the mother country and Canada, has been of unfixed benefit to this country. In this I heartily concur. But I think