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All articles, contributions, and letters on matter pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

CURRENT TOPICS.

The statue of Sir John A. Macdonald, which was unveiled in Queen's Park, in this city, on Saturday last, has a two-fold value, in that it will perpetuate not only the memory of a great man, but also the history of what will, in all probability, remain for all time the most important epoch in the history of Canada. To whatever greatness the Dominion may hereafter attain in point of population, wealth, enterprise, in the councils of nations, it is altogether unlikely that any succeeding fifty years of her progress will rival in importance historically—that is, in their radical influence in shaping the institutions and destiny of the country—the fifty years during which the departed chieftain lived

and moved in the eye of the people, and much of the time in the seat of highest power. The changes brought about during those years, in most of which his powerful influence was felt, when they were not mainly wrought by his shaping hand, have not only made Canada largely what she is to-day, but have to a degree to which we cannot now easily fix a limit, determined what she shall be fifty, or a hundred, or, is it too bold a flight to say, a thousand years hence. As has been repeatedly said, it is yet far too soon to predict the final verdict of history with regard to the true character of the man. Many of the qualities which go to make up what the nations agree to recognize as greatness are conceded to him by all. Some of these were strongly and fittingly dwelt upon in the eloquent eulogies pronounced on Saturday. Loyalty to Canada and to the Empire, unflinching tact, far-seeing sagacity, a political courage that was almost heroic, may be confidently enumerated. In respect to the degree in which he possessed other, and perhaps still higher virtues, Canadian opinion will, for this generation at least, be divided. Party feeling is yet too strong. The events are still too near the eye to be seen in the right focus, or set in just perspective. Meanwhile it is eminently fitting that his statue should be prominently and perpetually before the eyes of young and old to remind them of one who was unquestionably in many respects the foremost Canadian of his time. In harmony with a sentiment which has been expressed by others, we should like to urge upon citizens the desirability of perpetuating in the same manner, even if in less artistic style, the memory of other Canadian statesmen who have deserved well of their country. There are few means so effective in fostering that genuine Canadian patriotism which all are agreed in thinking most desirable, as thus familiarizing the young with the features, and as an almost necessary sequence, with the history of our greatest Canadians.

The London *News* comments approvingly on a new scheme which has, it appears, been formulated for promoting Imperial Federation. It would be both unwise and unfair to offer any opinion in regard to the probabilities of success or failure of the new propaganda, in the absence of definite knowledge of its nature and methods. One of the proposals included in the scheme, the *News* says, is that courses of lectures on the expediency of Imperial Federation be delivered in all the large towns of the United

Kingdom and the colonies. It is designed that these lectures be popular in character, and that the appeal shall thus be made to all classes, working-men's clubs included. This is eminently practical. Nothing is clearer than that in these days it is useless to seek to effect any serious or radical change without the sympathy and approval of the industrial masses. But just here the old difficulty arises. It will be found extremely difficult to interest the mass of the people in any great project which is not somewhat clearly outlined and defined. The lecturer must be able to say with some degree of precision what Imperial Federation is or is to be. The *News* says, it is true, that the "promoters regard certain principles as necessary to the bond of union, primarily the continuance of our maritime supremacy as the mainstay of our commerce." This, which will be read between the lines as meaning taxation of the colonies for the support of the fleet, however reasonable and fair the thing may be in itself within certain limits and under certain conditions, and however well it may be received in England, would prove a rather bad "primary" principle for use on colonial platforms. The expectation that "a detailed plan of federation will be formulated by degrees after full discussion" is hardly justified by the previous history of the movement. That some rough outline should be presented, to be modified and perfected after full discussion, is surely the teaching of experience. Still, the more discussion of any kind which leads home and colonial citizens to think about the matter, the better.

"The colonies hold aloof from Great Britain and are content to look on while the Mother Country pays premiums for their assurance policies. We would not do the colonies the injustice of supposing they would refuse to share the expense of the navy's coaling stations if they were asked; but we are surprised that not a single colony has offered to do so. This being so, Imperial authority must take the initiative. It is clearly the duty of the Government to summon a conference of delegates from Australia, Canada and the Cape to discuss with the War Office and Admiralty some partnership scheme having a sound commercial basis."

The above from the London *Morning Post* of the 11th inst., suggests a word of comment. The *Post* overlooks, it seems to us, an important point in connection with the question. We have always held that it is but fair, if the self-governing colonies