

of the world?"—The old anecdote of the Athenian Generals when struggling for precedence will furnish an answer. Each wrote his own name first, then that of Miltiades. So would the representatives of the nations, in answer to our question, reply: That their own country was the first, and England the second in the world.

"If" says the writer already quoted, "true dominion is to be found in being the common source of appeal in all the injuries and conflicts of rival nations, the common succour against the calamities of nature, the great ally which every power threatened with war labours first to secure or to appease, the centre on which is suspended the peace of nations, the defender of the wronged; and, highest praise of all, the acknowledged origin and example to which every rising nation looks for laws and Constitution, England is now the actual Governor of the Earth. For whose opulence and enjoyment are the ends of the earth labouring at this hour? For whom does the Polish peasant run his plough through the ground? For whom does the American, with half a world between, hunt down his cattle, or plant his cotton? For whom does the Chinese gather in his teas, or the Brazilian his gold and precious stones?—England is before the eyes of all. To whose market does every merchant of the remotest corner of the world look? To whose Cabinet does every power from America to India look with an interest surpassing all others? Whose public feeling does every people struggling to raise itself in the rank of nations supplicate? The answer is suggested at once, England's."

As denizens of that mighty section of the Empire designated as *British America*, it cannot be considered an idle or unprofitable task to speculate briefly on the position which it is our lot to fill, not only in relation to the residue of our fellow-subjects, but to the world at large. The fact of our being about entering on a new political existence, renders it more imperative on us and the country at large rightly to comprehend the peculiarities of our present circumstances, and from a dispassionate survey of what we see around us to endeavour to arrive at a conclusion, either that our best interests and our known duty concur in pointing out one path for us to travel; or that each indicates a different course, and that the time has come when they have ceased to act together. We wish not to enter into minor political details, far less individual allusion, but to throw together a few general reflections on the subject of what we have been, what we are, and what we will, or rather, ought to be. The practical philosophy

of history will teach us the first, our ordinary perceptive faculties the second, and the action of the past on the probabilities of the future will guide us to a tolerably correct knowledge of the third.

There are three positions in which the British North American Provinces can be placed. 1st, in their original condition of Colonies of the French Monarchy. 2nd, as integral portions of the British Empire. 3rd, as abandoned by European authority, and left to themselves.

As French Colonies the Canadas present a not uninteresting field for the research of the historian, or the remarks of the political economist. Their annals were brief, but most eventful; and much that is truly valuable and instructive can be gleaned from their perusal. The theory and practical operation of the principle of Colonization, has been a problem whose solution has been frequently attempted, and the result of each effort has been to leave the inquirers as much in the dark as ever, and compel the world to come to the conclusion, that no fixed or general axioms could possibly apply to it, but that the success or misfortune of every Colonial adventure must depend on fortuitous circumstances, utterly independent of any settled principle. France, Spain, and England, each in her turn, has tried her fortune, and attempted to found new Empires beyond the mighty ocean that swept between each parent State and her dependant realms. Each of the two first-named nations has utterly and signally failed in carrying out her original conceptions. The history of generations yet unborn can alone narrate whether England has been more successful in her efforts. Spain stands deservedly at the head of European nations as the first, most powerful, enterprising and indefatigable in the prosecution of the spirit of Discovery. The extraordinary extension of her gigantic trans-atlantic domain for centuries dazzled the imagination and blinded the judgment of surrounding nations. A mighty change was produced in the whole frame of European society by her unfolding the golden fields of tropical America to the gaze of enterprize and civilization. From the farthest corner of China to the Tagus, from the Pillars of Hercules to Archangel, the effect of her extension of dominion was perceptible.—The untold treasures of the plundered Incas, the dazzling spoils of Mexican and Peruvian magnificence,—were poured forth in a glitter-