

surer and more direct road to the East than that by the Isthmus of Suez, or any other she could possess. But let that weight be thrown into the opposite scale, and the rule of the United States extended over British America, and the balance of power is gone. With North America, England would lose the West Indies, and be stripped of every point on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; her commerce and prestige would be destroyed; her very security (with hostile armaments brought a thousand miles nearer to her coasts) endangered; and the peace of the world made a problem, dependent on the good-will or the caprice of the popular assemblies of the United States.

CONCLUSION.

It has now been convincingly shown that the best and easiest line of communication to the Pacific across the North American Continent is through British territory. In a late debate on the subject in the House of Commons, and in reply to Sir Harry Verney, who had insisted that the honour, interest, and duty of England alike required that she should take immediate action in the matter, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, said:—"He entertained no doubt that ultimately it would become the great thoroughfare of the world to the West;" but (alluding to the opening of the Saskatchewan Territory), "there was not yet sufficient appreciation of its value in the public mind, to cause the pressure, that he believed would yet be exerted, to be put upon the Government to bring about a settlement of the question." In other words, it was the duty of a Constitutional Ministry, though convinced themselves, to await the pressure of public opinion, before bringing forward such an important measure. But if England had a strong Government, instead of so many Heads of departments; with an enlightened statesman at the head, who not only understood the interests of the nation abroad, but had foresight and energy enough to take things in time, instead of waiting for expressions of public opinion till it is too late, we should hear a very different language.

The fault then lies with the nation at large for having no such representative. The fact is, that England, whilst slumbering under the lethargic effects of prosperity, seems not only to have forgotten that it is to our numerous colonies, our possession of the Indies, and the control of the trade between Europe and Asia, that she owes her wealth, and her existence as a great nation, but she seems to think that these must last for ever, without any further effort to retain them. In England every one is so much absorbed in his own affairs, and so habitually ignorant on colonial matters, that if he has, perchance, heard of this Pacific Railroad, he neither thinks about it, nor cares about it; still less has he reflected on its consequences; nor, in the confusion of his ideas, does he believe that the construction of a rival road can be anything more than a colonial question, and, therefore, the