

greatest of them were lost forever by the action of the Mother Country in imposing taxes on the colonists instead of leaving them to tax themselves. They were themselves, year by year, more imbued with the free, self-reliant doctrines of the so-called Manchester school ; and they determined, in following the old course, to apply these new doctrines. They saw that they must incur one of two dangers : either, by giving self-government, they must take the risk of peaceful separation ; or, by refusing it or giving it in a half-hearted way, they must run the risk of a second war of colonial independence. They wisely chose the former alternative ; they cut away questions of taxation and commercial restriction as having been fatal in the past. They allowed the colonies to form habits of practical independence, leaving time to decide whether the good-will born of their policy would counteract the tendency to absolute separation " (1).

If, as is said further on, "the grant of self-government means the grant of virtual independence," is it not pertinent to enquire whether the grant of self-government to Canada was delusive, and whether the old policy of commercial restriction—of holding the colonies "for the benefit of the English producer"—was intended to be again resorted to instead of applying the "free, self-reliant" doctrines above alluded to ? See the interpretation placed by Lucas on the action of the Home Government in passing the Union Act : "The gift of responsible government was, except in matters of foreign policy, full and unfettered, and moving still in the same direction. British statesmen and the British people have welcomed and furthered the Confederation movement, which is the outcome of free institutions and the coping-stone of the system of self-governing colonies " (m). Was it "moving in the same direction" to restrict the right of self-government by clogging its exercise for no other reason than for the "benefit of the English producer?" Was this not imposing a tax on the colony that might lead to "a second war of colonial independence?" Surely there is no merit in the contention that the statesmen who gave vitality to our wishes for confederation were desirous of pursuing a retrograde policy instead of leaving us "free and unfettered."

(1) Lucas, pp. xxxi. and xxxii.

(m) P. xxxiv. See, also, Bryan Edward's *History of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, vol. ii, pp. 520, 430, 435, 436 ; and Haliburton's *Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, vol. ii., p. 346.