

confederacy on the American continent extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, speaking one tongue, having one sentiment, and owing allegiance to but one flag. But Time, the Avenger, has reversed the verdict of the British people, and to-day Great Britain recognises it, and the Colonies are conscious of it, that they can do without the Mother Country better than she can do without her colonies. Shorn of her colonies and surrounded as she is on every hand by the tariffs of hostile nations, her position would indeed be one that every son of Britain under no matter what sky, would, nursed in the traditions of her greatness, shrink from anticipating.

Similarly, the feeling among certain statesmen of a period almost contemporaneous in our own history, regarded British Columbia as an incubus on the Dominion. They acted, if they did not speak it, as if the terms of Confederation by which this Province was admitted, were a mistake, a bad bargain, and gave the people of British Columbia the impression that they would, if they could, repudiate the arrangement and they proceeded to fulfil the contract only as a matter of constitutional necessity, and in a manner that, to the people of the Pacific Coast, illustrated the truth of the proverb that "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Poor honest Alexander Mackenzie said the building of the C. P. R. would bankrupt the resources of the Dominion, and yet he was willing to make the sacrifice to preserve the public faith that had been pledged. Hon. E. Blake, now of Longford, Ireland, who had misgivings about even the axle-grease being paid for, summed up our worth in the memorable phrase which he was not original enough to coin—"a sea of mountains." Hon. David Mills was willing to allow British Columbia to secede and annex herself to the United States, if the building of a transcontinental railway could be avoided, and, no doubt, considered that such a swap-off would be profitable. These men were honest in their views, and we cannot, must not, censure them for not being wise before the fact, any more than nearly five millions of us deserve

credit for being wise after the fact. British Columbia politically, as everybody knows, has not been lacking in her support of those statesmen who by their works demonstrated their faith and their foresight, and who staked their own political future and the credit of their country on the enterprise.

History has again repeated itself, and the Avenger, Time, has rendered the latter verdict that Canada could less afford to do without British Columbia, and the Provinces west of Lake Superior than the latter without Canada. Without British Columbia and the Prairie Provinces Canada could fulfil no destiny as a nation or part of a great nation. Without the "sea of mountains" and the C. P. R., the possibilities which have been opened up of a trade, a trade route, and an internal development the greatest within the next half century, and the most remarkable the world will have ever known, could never have existed.

With fast Atlantic lines, fast Pacific lines to the Orient and to Australia, and Pacific cables, and a mighty producing population tributary to the line of the speediest and most direct all-British and all-world route, is British Columbia's portion to be deemed a secondary one? or will it be said that Canada or the Empire could have afforded to lose her? Was it not worth while milking some of the older Provincial cows that such a progeny might be reared? Does not and will not the political sequel illustrate the great fact, that the stone which the builders were about to reject, has become the chief of the corner in the structure of Confederation.

It is true, regarding it purely as a bargain and sale transaction, that British Columbia in entering Confederation made a good bargain, her representatives cyclopean-like, having but one eye and that to their own interests. It is only common honesty to say the people of British Columbia at that time cared nothing whatsoever for Eastern Canada—as some of them care very little yet—they had no sentiment about building up and unifying the Canadian Provinces, and the fathers of Confederation might have presented the sentimental aspect of the proposition to them until the crack o' doom,