

Could the mother country, in justice to her national honour, aside altogether from the question of interests, leave this appealing minority to be crushed in a case such as I have supposed by a disloyal majority? If a certain tendency towards independence has been caused, as I have pointed out, by Great Britain's past policy, it is well to recollect that times have changed since the days when Bright and the disciples of the Manchester school urged the "emancipation of the colonies." Now, indeed, it seems to be the universal desire of Imperial statesmen of every party to maintain and perpetuate the unity of the empire by cordially responding, in the words of Mr. Disraeli eighteen years ago, "to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land."

No British statesman now neglects an opportunity of preaching, in season and out, the greatness of the Empire and the advantages of maintaining its unity, and no audience fails to respond by the most hearty applause to the expression of such sentiments.

Let us suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that Great Britain had consented to our separation from the Empire, and that an ordinance to that effect had unanimously passed our Legislatures, what, under the most favourable circumstances, would be the results?

The establishment of a republic somewhat after the American plan, and the adoption of all the inconveniences, expenses, and centralizing powers of such a system; the formation of a central government and a constitution upon one of two lines—either a federation of the loosest kind, as regards the power of the federal executive, or a strong central authority such as that possessed by the United States. If the former, it would be impossible for the national government, apart from the all-powerful protection and prestige of Great Britain, which now assists so greatly in maintaining our constitution from constant change, and our country, perhaps, from internal discord, to hold the various and distant provinces in continual union. Any fancied act of federal aggression; any provincial interest which might for the moment conflict with those of the central government, would immediately lead to threats of secession or of American interference.

If, on the other hand, it were proposed to adopt a firm and centralized system, the objections from the provincial authorities would be so great as to probably over-ride the advocacy of an otherwise first principle. To add to the lack of internal stability would cause the probably increased activity of American emissaries and ambitious politicians; and then, if we ever desired to enforce the maintenance of our national union against some disaffected province, it could be most justly pointed out that if it were right and legitimate for the Dominion to secede from the Empire, why should it not be equally the privilege of a province to secede from the confederation.

Thus, we would eventually find ourselves face to face with the bitter problem of "State Rights" in an even more acute form than that which the American Union had to encounter, and accentuated by the fact that we should be at the mercy of the men and money that might pour in from the other side of the line to assist one combatant or the other.

But, granted that we founded a stable system of government and overcame these obvious difficulties, we should still have an enormously increased expenditure to face. Some sort of an army would have to be established, if only a very small one: a certain number of war-ships would have to be built to protect our trade and fisheries, because we would not have the immense reserve of power, wealth and population which has enabled the United States to do without such an armament in the past; we should have to send consuls and ambassadors to the chief cities and countries of the world, and assume all the other numerous expenses which are absolutely necessary to a full national establishment.

This great increase in our expenditure would result in increased borrowing at a higher rate of interest, because the present low rate is largely due

to the national safety ensured by British connection, and a general addition to our national and individual taxation. To cap the climax would come a keen appreciation of the fact that instead of independence we had only, after all our troubles and exertions, obtained a position of practical dependence upon the will and pleasure of the United States.

To say nothing of our Atlantic and Pacific fisheries, which could be seized by them at any time in spite of our puny army and navy; the difficulties arising from possible disputes on our Alaskan frontier, or from the occasional abrogation of treaties, might bring us face to face with war—or surrender—and the difference in population and power, to say nothing of the \$349,000,000 which it has been recently proposed to expend on an American navy, would seem to indicate submission as the most probable alternative.

The result would inevitably be annexation, as our pride, mistaken though it might be, would probably revolt from a proposal to seek our place once more within the bounds of the British Empire. If, again, Mr. Erastus Wiman's suggestion were adopted, and we should seek and obtain independence in order the better to get commercial union with the States, the result would be identical: the adoption of the same tariff against outside nations and the pooling of our revenues, with the probable assimilation of our excise and internal revenue taxes; the creation of a council to adjust matters at difference between the two countries, upon which we should be represented in a ratio of one to ten. The fact that we should be *unable* to change our tariff without the consent of Congress, and be *obliged* to change it whenever they saw fit to make an alteration—taxation without representation—would, when combined with the loss of revenue accruing from the removal of custom houses along the American frontier and the consequent encouragement to trade with the States instead of England and the further loss thus insured by decrease of British imports, result in a demand for the advantages as well as disadvantages of annexation, and political union would inevitably follow this attempt to obtain certain supposed benefits without the corresponding responsibilities.

Advocates of Canadian independence seem to base their arguments chiefly upon the advantages which would accrue to our people were we relieved from the dangers of European entanglements which are now said to menace us. It has, I think, been shown that our responsibilities under independence would be very great, and it only remains to say that in our present position we are, of course, liable to be involved in any great war that England may have to face, but that upon the whole the balance of advantage is decidedly on our side. We receive the all-powerful protection which the Empire affords and the prestige which its greatness adds to the crown of our young nationality, while we give nothing in return but our allegiance and hopes of a future when we shall be strong enough and great enough to be of some material service to that Motherland which has done so much to develop our growing wealth, mould our constitutional system and encourage our national aspirations. Let me say, in conclusion, and I find it necessary to postpone the consideration of the great question of Imperial Federation as it may effect Canada to a future article, that I believe a weak independence is not the true destiny of our country, and that the future of this great Dominion cannot be better described than by these eloquent and prophetic words of Lord Dufferin when he said: "In a world apart, secluded from all extraneous influences, nestling at the feet of her mother, Canada dreams her dream, and forbodes her destiny—a dream of ever-broadening harvests, multiplying towns and villages and expanding pastures; of constitutional self-government and a confederated Empire; of page after page of honourable history added as her contribution to the annals of the Mother Country and to the glories of the British race; of a perpetuation for all time upon this continent of that temperate and well-balanced system of government which combines in one mighty whole, as the eternal possession of all Englishmen, the brilliant history and traditions of

the past, with the freest and most untrammelled liberty of action in the future."

Our watchword, as a people, should be these beautiful and expressive lines of Tennyson:

"Love thou thy land, with love far brought
From out the storied past, and used
Within the present, but transfused
Through future time by power of thought."

TORONTO.

J. CASTELL HOPKINS.

THE WALKER OF THE SNOW.

Speed on, speed on, good master;
The camp lies far away;
We must cross the haunted valley
Before the close of day.

How the snow-blight came upon me
I will tell you as we go,—
The blight of the shadow hunter
Who walks the midnight snow.

Save the wailing of the moss-bird
With a plaintive note and low;
And the skating of the red leaf
Upon the frozen snow.

And said I: Though dark is falling,
And far the camp must be,
Yet my heart it would be lightsome
If I had but company.

And then I sang and shouted,
Keeping measure as I sped,
To the harp-twang of the snowshoe
As it sprang beneath my tread.

Nor far into the valley
Had I dipped upon my way,
When a dusky figure joined me
In a capuchon of grey.

Bending upon the snowshoes
With a long and limber stride;
And I hailed the dusky stranger,
As we travelled side by side.

But no token of communion
Gave he by word or look,
And the fear-chill fell upon me
At the crossing of the brook.

For I saw by the sickly moonlight,
As I followed, bending low,
That the walking of the stranger
Left no foot-marks on the snow.

Then the fear-chill gathered o'er me,
Like a shroud around me cast,
As I sank upon the snow-drift
Where the shadow hunter passed.

And the otter-trappers found me,
Before the break of day,
With my dark hair blanched and whitened
As the snow in which I lay.

But they spoke not as they raised me;
For they knew that in the night
I had seen the shadow hunter
And had withered in his sight.

Sancta Maria speed us!
The sun is fallen low:
Before us lies the valley
Of the Walker of the Snow!

C. D. SHANLEY.

CURIOUS LOSS IN THE MAIL.

At Christmas time some person in another city enclosed a gold ring in a letter as a gift to a friend in this city. When the letter was delivered, the ring was found to be missing, and a clean cut circular hole through the envelope showed how it had escaped. A search was instituted, and it was found that the letter containing the ring had been placed in the packet beside a packet containing quite a large sum of money in greenbacks. The weight of mail matter upon the bag containing these letters had forced the ring through the envelope in which it was contained, and nearly through the package of greenbacks, in which it was found imbedded. When the money packet was opened, the ring dropped out, together with a large number of circular fragments of greenbacks of the exact size of the ring, which had been cut out as neatly as with a die.—*Boston Advertiser.*

MAGNETIC PLANT.

A genuine electric vegetable has been discovered in India, in the depths of the forest. If a leaf is broken off, the hand breaking it receives a strong electric shock. No bird or insect ever alights upon this strange plant. It shows all the properties of an electrical machine, deflecting the magnetic needle when it is brought near to it. In a rain storm the electrical properties disappear. The magnetic energy is most powerful at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Strange to say, none of the magnetic minerals are ever found near where this plant grows.