

GOLDWIN SMITH ON THE DESTINY OF CANADA.

THE *New York Nation* recently published this letter from Mr. Goldwin Smith:

"Sir,—In your number of August 5, speaking of the relations between Canada and the United States, you say: "Separation has become our settled policy, and the commercial union with England which we have forced on Canada will grow closer and stronger as years go on. You seem inclined to think that the situation created by the Dingley tariff, combined with the Jubilee fever, will be lasting, and will decide the destinies of this continent. How often has the action of the great forces, sure in the end to prevail, been suspended, and long suspended, by that of the secondary forces or by adverse accident! How often did the unification of Italy and that of Germany miscarry, though certainly destined at last to arrive! Protectionism will run its course. The Jubilee fever will abate. The time will come when American statesmen, now so indifferent to this question, will see that if it was worth while to spend all that blood and money in averting the establishment of an antagonistic power to your south, it is not less worth while to bestow political effort in averting the establishment of an antagonistic power to your north, and that the British Canadian is at least as desirable a citizen as the southern white or negro. British statesmen, on the other hand, will learn the hopelessness of their attempt to keep five millions of North Americans out of North America and attach them to Europe. The day will come, though men of my age are not likely to behold it. Already, in spite of all the wrangling among the politicians, the two sections of our race on this continent are rapidly fusing. Hardly anything now divides them but the political and fiscal line.

"Yours respectfully,

"GOLDWIN SMITH.

"Toronto, Aug. 14, 1897."

There are a few points in this letter that call for comment. Mr. Smith may be able to read the lessons of "the great forces, sure in the end to prevail," possibly better than most other men; but it is clear that we live in an age when the majority of mankind do not feel so cock-sure of the ability of one on-looker to correctly interpret events in face of the adverse opinions of practical statesmen and the well-defined demands of extensive business interests. In politics, dealing with diverse interests of varied classes, success alone can be held to be a criterion of right. To be out of time is as bad as to be incorrect or unjust in principle; and the only justification for assuming a dictatorial tone in a political question, is the undoubted correctness and evident benefit of the proposed policy. In the present case, the unification of Italy and Germany are cited, as showing how the great forces, after various suspensions, have asserted their dominance. This seems to be a most provincial and limited view of the case. In the first place, the unification of Germany is not yet by any means completed, nor is it at all certain (1) that it can be maintained, as far as it has been accomplished, against