

they may choose to do so ; in that case, let it at least be our care, that they leave us only with good wishes on both sides, and not with high words and bad blood. But whether for the purpose of retaining the political connection, and strengthening it, or at least of avoiding an other than friendly separation, it is equally important that the people of this country should seek to understand the question in order that they may act with judgment and forethought rather than from ignorance and impatience, and to that end it were much to be wished that more time was given in every school in Great Britain to teaching the history, geography, and social conditions of our great self-governing colonies.

Now, at the present time, the European population of Canada is over four and a half millions, of Australia and New Zealand about three and a half millions, and of Cape Colony and Natal under half million—in all, say eight and a half millions of European descent. These are not all, of course, of our own race.

In Canada, there is a large French population, and at the Cape there are more Europeans of Dutch than of British parentage, but the proportion of these British subjects of foreign descent diminishes every year, as compared with those of British origin, and for the moment we need not stop to consider this point.

The main fact is that there are to day in the self-governing communities beyond the seas eight and a half millions of British European subjects, mostly Anglo-Saxons of the same ancestry and speaking the same language as ourselves. Such a population, already nearly a fourth of our own, welded with ourselves in an offensive and defensive alliance against external enemies would bring to the whole no mean accession of strength, and would, as it in fact already does to a great extent, add largely to the importance and stability of the Empire.

But all these Colonies are capable of maintaining a much larger population than they now do. Were Canada or Australia peopled in proportion to inhabitable areas, as our own islands are, they would each of them number their inhabitants by tens of millions ; no doubt such an ultimate expansion is far off yet, but in the meantime a vast increase is merely a question of years.

Professor SEELEY has calculated that in less than half a century the Englishmen beyond the seas will equal in number the Englishmen at home, and that the total will not fall short of one hundred millions ; that is, supposing that our own population continues to