

unknown in British America. Some trifling impost, paltry in its extent, and utterly unoppressive on either capital or industry, is levied on the farmer for local purposes, keeping his roads and bridges in order, and maintaining the indispensable municipal arrangements of his district. Where his neighbour in the United States pays *dollars* into the public treasury, the Canadian pays *shillings*. Where his fellow subject at home actually groans beneath a weight of burdensome imposts, the sturdy Backwoodsman laughs at them; sees the tax-gatherer enter his dwelling with indifference, and only wonders what induced that functionary to travel so far to receive so little. No country in the civilized world, we advisedly assert, feels so lightly the pressure of that taxation which every kingdom must more or less endure. No country obtains so much, both in the way of protection and commercial advances, at so trifling a cost to herself as Canada. The fleets of England hover on her shores, or ride in her havens; the armies of England garrison her fortresses; and the least show of necessity calls forth a display of force from the watchful Lion, that tells how ready and willing he is at all times to exert his great strength for the protection of his distant realms. Not one farthing, directly or indirectly, does the Canadian pay for this mighty privilege of reposing in perfect security beneath the broad shadow of the British flag, in the calm and happy consciousness of certain safety.

But tear down the "Meteor flag" from the rocky crest of Cape Diamond; strike it by the waters of St. Clair, the rapids of the Niagara, and the pine forests of Toronto; let the last voice of a British trumpet ring through the cliffs of the St. Lawrence, as the last of her recalled soldiery floats down that lordly river;—and in what condition is Canada left? She has two courses—one, to endeavour to maintain a stand as a free nation; the second, to add another star and stripe to the motley banner of the neighbouring Republic. Should the first be her choice, necessity would immediately order the equipment of a sufficient land and naval establishment to protect the young state—to save the infant empire from being strangled in the cradle. A tenth of the force now gratuitously employed by England, for the defence of her North American sovereignty, could not be maintained by independent Canada for twelve months, without increasing tenfold the taxation

of every individual in her bounds. *Now*, she enjoys ample protection *for nothing*; *then*, she would have it, unstable and doubtful at all times, at a cost fearful and overwhelming to a country of her slender population and undeveloped resources. The rending of her ancient allegiance might be gilded by the flash and transient glitter of a new order of things; her independent existence might float awhile on the restless waves of a hasty popular enthusiasm; it might spring up in the air with the fierce bound of the fire-work, "*rising like the rocket, but falling like the staff*;" but when the temporary fever subsided, and men came to reflect on what *they had abandoned and what they had gained*, it needs but little gift of prophecy to foresee the fearful responsibility which the country would have taken from her parent and placed on her own young shoulders, or to tell that the fatal and increasing burden of a public debt, necessarily incurred, and incurred *abroad*, must weigh down her energies, and draw heavily on the slender means of the struggling husbandman, to ensure to him that protection without which his life would be embittered by perpetual anxieties, his property the prey of the bandit or the pirate, and he himself like the wretched peasant of the dark ages, constantly called on to spring to arms at some sudden alarm of insurrection or invasion—his hand alternately on the broadsword and the plough, and defensive weapons his inseparable companions at his ordinary rural avocations.

That sagacious, practical philosopher, the Clockmaker, the laughter-loving Democritus of the western hemisphere, in the following comment on the possibility of an independent Canadian nation, has voiced some profound political truths beneath the playful garb of sarcastic admonition:—

"You need not flatter yourselves, Doctor, you can't be a distinct nation; it aint possible in the nature of things. You may join us if you like, and there would be some sense in that move, that's a fact; but you never can stand alone here, no more than a lame man can without crutches, or a child of six days' old; no, not if all the Colonies were to unite you couldn't do it. Why, just see here, doctor, you could not show your noses on the fishing-ground for one minute; you can hardly do it now, even though the British have you under their wing. Our folks would drive you off the banks, seize your fish, tear your nets, and lick you like a sack, and then go home and swear you attacked them first; and our Government would seize