

and if a centenary celebration is ever allowable we should have one soon. The full significance of this Act of 1791 is pointed out in the following passage:—

"The rights of self-government guaranteed to the inhabitants of Upper and Lower Canada did not originate by the capricious grace of a Royal Charter, but by a full, irrevocable cession of powers from the whole Parliament of the united kingdom. This is what chiefly distinguished the Canadian Constitutional Act from the charter of the older Province of Nova Scotia, and from the charters of all former colonies. It was not a charter, but a constitution. It was a recognition of one of the contentions that had ended in the American Revolution; that charters of self-government were vested rights of the people, not transitory creations of the Royal will. Along with the clauses establishing the Local Legislatures, there was a clause declaring that there should be *in Canada a council for the affairs of Canada*. It is this council, commencing in the eighteenth century, as an engine of the prerogative, which, by successive enactment and by steady practice, has developed into complete Constitutional Government. . . . Thus the Canada Act of 1791 contained within itself the prolific germ of all that constitutional progress which has since been effected throughout the modern colonial system. The foundation of Upper Canada was the beginning of the New Empire" (pp. 352-4).

This extract indicates the point of view from which Mr. Howland regards Great Britain and her self-governing colonies, and why he gives to them the name of "the New Empire." Britain, under the Georges, was developing in the direction of government by prerogative, as France had developed in the same downward direction after the assassination of Henry IV. In the case of France the development appeared as progress and national glory while Louis XIV. dictated to Europe; but when it came to a miserable end in the Revolution it was seen in its true light. What the Revolution did for the old regime in France, the war of American Independence did for it in Britain. From the great shock of that war, the old Empire, with its theory of personal government and kingly prerogative, with its spirit of militarism and its love of monopoly, never completely recovered. A new era dawned in 1783, when the settlement was made which recognized the independence of the United States, and handed over to them the great West, which was to be the future home of the majority of the British race. The seven years' war between the Mother Country and the thirteen colonies, dreadful though it must have been at the time, and disastrous too, in many respects, was thus a necessary evil, just as the war between North and South in our own day was a necessary step in the onward march of freedom. Wars are often not simply collisions of brute forces, but collisions between ideas or different forms of civilization, and, when that is so, if the superior triumphs, the defeated has as much reason to be thankful as the victor; and sometimes more reason, because it not only shares in the mutual benefit, but escapes the danger of becoming arrogant and boastful in consequence of success. Mr. Howland, in his first chapter, traces with true insight the actual forces at work in America and in Britain that caused the fall of the Old Empire:—

"The Revolution was not inevitable on the ground so commonly taught, especially to American school-boys, but also held by a certain class of modern Englishmen, that the separation of colonies is the necessary consequence of their growth. But to me there seem to be reasons for viewing that particular disruption as a necessary as well as an inevitable event. It is probable that nothing less than the great fact of the War of Separation would have broken down principles of government and habits of thought, which, while they continued in force, made a great world-wide union impossible" (pp. 36, 37).

In other words, the views of George III., "the patriot King," as he was fondly styled, were the views of the majority of the British people at the time. Not only so, but in many of the thirteen colonies the majority of the people held the same views. Lecky thinks it probably below the truth that more than one-half of reasonable and respected Americans were either openly or secretly hostile to the Revolution. This explains why the contest, even in America itself, had the terrible features of "a civil war," and when Congress advanced from their Declaration of Rights as Imperial citizens in 1774 and took the decided step of pronouncing the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July, 1776, the larger half of the American people asserted itself unmistakably. Dr. Ryerson, in his "Loyalists of America," gives contemporaneous testimony to show "that the American levies in the King's service were, at one time after the Declaration of Independence, estimated to be more in number than the whole number regularly enlisted in the service of the Congress." But Congress was contending for a principle inherent in the very constitution of the British race, the principle that self-government is a vested right of the people, taken with them wherever they go. That sacred principle triumphed against all odds, in virtue of the genuine bull-dog quality—also inherent in the race—in virtue of which it does not know when it is beaten. Absolutism, in the eighteenth century in Britain, held that the colonies should be subject to the Royal prerogative or to the Home Parliament, and, fortunately for the British race and the world, it met in the American colonies a resistance that shattered it to pieces. But it was so strongly entrenched that it is difficult to see how it could have been vanquished at a less cost than

war, just as the same price was needed in the seventeenth century to assert popular rights in Britain, and needed in our own day to assert human rights in America. Reverently we recognize the truth of Wordsworth's lines:—

God's most perfect instrument
For working out a pure intent
Is man arrayed in mutual slaughter—
Yes, carnage is His daughter.

Must it always be so, it may be asked? The prophets of Israel and the apostles of the Lord answer boldly in the negative. Wars shall cease. Humanity is gradually evolving to a higher plane. There is a good time coming when men shall submit to the decisions of International Courts or Congresses, instead of appealing to the arbitrament of war; and in the case of our own race we ought to be well nigh prepared for this method of settling our differences. If we are, the Millennium is dawning, and we hope that nothing may delay the rising of the sun. But alas! things are said and done, probably on both sides, though we are most conscious of the offences on the other side, that make thoughtful men hesitate before speaking positively concerning what is likely to be in their own century. The following description of what seems the habitual public attitude of our neighbours does not overstate the case, and Christian America should consider its responsibility, in the light both of the Golden Rule and of that awful truth which its own recent history illustrates, that the nation, even more surely in time than the individual, shall reap as it sows:—

"As if some spark from the perfervid patriotism of Revolutionary France had leaped across the Atlantic and found an early lodgment in the American mind, national wrongdoing, it seems to be believed, may be defended without guilt and condoned without retribution. The conscience of individuals is soothed by a delusive distinction between the moralities of public and private life. Liberal and enlightened Americans seem capable of believing that the nation may be a gainer even by an aggrandizement or advantage that hinders the progress of the principles of civilization and humanity.

"Statesmen of the English empire and of the kindred Republic are equally convinced that another war between these two halves of the common people would be a calamity of unprecedented horror and of uncertain result. Both knowing that it is not to be invited except in the gravest and most inevitable extremity, the younger and the less civilized of the two Governments (must we not so distinguish?) seems continually to bargain upon this knowledge, to impose to the last moment upon the superior forbearance of the other."

Mr. Howland refuses to charge this degradation of public life, which has injured the cause of free government everywhere, wholly to the influence of the Irish vote. He traces it in part to the treatment, in the beginnings of the Republic, of the class and the ideas of the class to which the U. E. Loyalists belonged, to the expulsion of these Loyalists from the country, and to the contempt for their ideals of reverence and honour, which it became the fashion of public speakers and writers to cultivate. But, while condemning the rancour of the triumphant colonists, and showing how much they themselves thereby suffered in character, he justly makes the Mother Country share the responsibility for the cruelties that were inflicted at the close of the war, not only by mobs but by legislative authority, on the unfortunate "Tories." When a quarrel takes place, it is but fair to ask, "Who began it?" and to charge on those who originated it their full share of responsibility for all its bitter fruits.

In 1782 the old Empire fell. "At last," wrote poor George III., "the fatal day has come." Lord North resigned, and it was useless to dissolve Parliament, for the country had become more hostile to the fallen ministry than the Legislature was. The Whigs came into power and their avowed task was to terminate the war that England had so long waged single-handed against France, Spain, Holland and America, and to do so by—in the first place—recognizing the independence of the thirteen colonies. But the Whigs had no intention of going further; they certainly had no intention of abandoning the boundary of Canada, settled by the Quebec Act of 1774, by which the magnificent country from the Ohio to the Mississippi, as well as the great North-West, was included in Canada. Neither had France nor Spain any intention that the United States should extend beyond the Alleghenies or cover any ground that they did not actually hold. Spain had joined the alliance on the understanding that both Gibraltar and Jamaica were to be taken and restored to her, and as every attempt to take either had failed, she must get some compensation by the full acknowledgment of her claims in America. That was the policy of France as well, not only because she owed something to Spain, but because she wished to see a balance of power established on this continent as well as in Europe. Congress had indeed in 1779 claimed the Mississippi for their western boundary, but on the French envoy pointing out that an abandonment of the claim was indispensable if Spain was to be induced to co-operate in the war, it was dropped, and the acknowledgment of the independence of the States made the sole condition of peace. In 1781, again, Congress placed the whole control of the negotiations for peace in the hands of the French king, and instructed their commissioners to govern themselves by the advice and opinion of his minister. The American commissioners soon discovered how little they could expect from him. "John Adams," says Lecky, "had long disliked and distrusted Vergennes, and Jay, who had at one time been an ardent advocate of the French

alliance, changed into the most violent hostility. 'He thinks,' wrote Franklin, 'the French minister one of the greatest enemies of our country, that he would have straitened our boundaries to prevent the growth of our people, contracted our fishery to obstruct the increase of our seamen and retained the royalists among us to keep us divided.'" Franklin himself never forgot the gratitude that was due to France, but he could not help seeing how black the outlook was. In these straits, help came, not from any of their allies, but from their old mother with whom they had fought so long, but whose noblest sons never forgot that blood was thicker than water. Willing, however, as the Whigs were to carry out the policy which they had fought for in opposition of conceding unreservedly the independence of the colonies, it is doubtful if there was among their leaders a single man, with the exception of Lord Shelburne, who was prepared to go further, and he at first could not form a ministry. Lord Rockingham was sent for, and on his death the party selected for their leader the Duke of Portland; but on proposing him to the King they were told that he had selected Shelburne. Fox immediately resigned and the Rockingham party was broken up, but Shelburne remained Premier long enough to make a settlement with the American Commissioners, in which he "endowed" the States with the great West at the expense of Canada and conceded to them with regard to the fisheries and the loyalists all that they asked, and thereafter to conclude peace with France and Spain. Bitterly did Vergennes complain that he could not learn from the American negotiators what they were doing, and when he found that they had signed preliminary articles without his knowledge, and without even informing themselves of the state of the negotiations between France and England, it was no wonder that he accused them of a gross breach of faith and of gross ingratitude. Franklin had hard work to apologize for his colleagues. He admitted that they "had been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienséance*," but he was perfectly well aware that they had acted rightly and no man knew better than he the vast importance of the points at issue.

What, it may well be asked, tempted Shelburne to make such extravagant gifts to the United States, at a time when they were utterly exhausted and when their allies were anxious to unite with Britain in restricting them to that which they had declared to be the only indispensable condition of peace? Mr. Howland has clearly explained the motives which determined his action. Shelburne was a statesman concerning whom the most contradictory judgments have been pronounced, and his peculiarities—especially the faculty of inspiring his colleagues with dislike and distrust of his sincerity—were such as to make his tenure of office very brief; but he understood free trade principles better than any other cotemporary politician, and the American negotiators assured him that Congress was in favour of a Commercial Union with England that would not only be in the interest of both countries, but would make the States contribute to the trade and manufactures of England more largely as an independent country than they had done as colonies. Along that line he saw not only peace but mutual reconciliation and prosperity, and with that goal in view he had no idea of playing the game of France and Spain. Only in the thirteen colonies were the English-speaking people of America found, and he was determined that no bar should be placed on their expansion to the West, and also that they should have the fullest freedom of the fisheries on the North-East. "Franklin, when the first English draft of the Treaty was presented to him, observed that it contained a concession in regard to catching fish limited to the banks of Newfoundland. 'Why not,' he wrote to Lord Shelburne, 'all other places, and among others the Gulf of St. Lawrence? You know that we shall bring the greatest part of the fish to Great Britain to pay for your manufactures?'" The full enlargement asked by Dr. Franklin followed. It is little wonder, when Franklin found such a spirit of faith and liberality—almost unprecedented in statesmen—in the Premier of England, that he suggested that Canada too might just as well be thrown in. It looked little more at the time than "letting the rope go with the bucket." But Shelburne knew where to draw the line. He would give to the States everything that was needed for their full and unfettered development; but to throw overboard the French Canadians or the American Loyalists would have been disgraceful, and that was argument sufficient, even if he did not foresee the future expansion of Canada and its importance as the key-stone of the new Empire.

When we come to enquire how the United States have redeemed the promises of their Commissioners and reciprocated the trust of the British ministry, history gives a melancholy answer. There is scarcely a single American politician of standing who has ever acknowledged the debt that is due to Britain, or who has attempted to point out to his fellow-citizens that the two countries have a common interest, and that they should remember that they have a common great mission to fulfil. History has been distorted, and even geography has been made to lie. No credit has ever been given to Britain, and no blame has ever been attached to allies like France and Spain who sought to betray. Canada has been invaded, and whenever there has been a chance to cripple or to hamper, to bribe or to starve her, the chance has been taken. "England is the natural enemy of America," is a favourite expression, though England is the great market for the products of the States, and admits her manufactures as freely as if she belonged to the Union itself. And the