

common ties of race, religion, language, institutions, and inherited traditions, all of them possess or will possess responsible government, and are to all intents and purposes independent. Lastly, all of them possess a remarkably good opinion of themselves, and I must confess, seem to me a little too fond at times of the amusement called, in America, "Twisting the Lion's tail;" that is, trying how much they can get out of us by trading on the well known weakness of the Colonial Office to lead a peaceable life.

Most of them possess great areas of unoccupied land, and all are capable of sustaining an enormously larger population than that which now inhabits them; and lastly, all are likely in the future, with the help of local federation, to develop into great commonwealths.

It must, therefore, be obvious at once that such colonies as these stand on a very different footing in relation to the question of a united or federated British Empire or Realm than do the Crown Colonies.

From whatever point of view we regard them, whether as sources of wealth by the trade they do with us, as sources of military strength by the assistance they can and seem willing to bring to us, if called upon, or as territories whither our own ever increasing population may emigrate without ceasing to be our fellow subjects; even now in their infancy, it would be difficult to over estimate the importance to us of retaining the connection; it is impossible to do so, if we regard also the future—fifty years hence say—when either Australia or Canada may number a population half as large as our own.

As regards the Cape, there is no doubt, much to be urged on the other side, and an intimate political union with Canada might have its drawbacks, but in the case of Australia or New Zealand, I can see absolutely no objections. They profit from the connection now as much or more than we do, but with their vast capabilities of expansion, a United Australia, or a United Canada, must ultimately by sheer weight of numbers surpass in material power this small land of ours, even as the United States are doing; and bearing this in mind, it behoves us if we wish well for the future greatness of our country, that we should leave no stone unturned to make with them an honourable and lasting union.

They can, it is true, leave us when they choose, and as they grow more and more confident in their own power and resources,