

to stimulate intercolonial trade, build national works, and promote measures of national defence. The union of 1840 had shown the Canadians the advantages of home government, and made them naturally ambitious of again enlarging their sphere of political action. Political jealousies had arisen between the English and French sections on account of the Western province demanding increased representation. These jealousies were aggravated by the politicians, until at last a union of all British North America was believed to be the best solution of existing difficulties. The idea of a federation had been foreshadowed by Lord Durham, but it took twenty-five years to waken Canadian politicians to its advantages. The British Government readily co-operated with the public men of the Provinces in bringing about the union. Fifty years before the officials of Downing Street had been constantly interfering, with injurious consequences, in the domestic affairs of Canada; but now it was their policy to allow the Colonies to manage their own business. Imperial interference was no longer considered expedient except in cases where Imperial interests were clearly involved. The policy inaugurated in 1840 had its logical sequence in the federal union of 1867, which gave a still larger measure of self-government to Canada.

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Seventeen years have passed away since the Canadian Provinces entered on this new era of political development, and whatever may be the defects of the federal system, it must be admitted that it has on the whole come up to the expectations of its founders. Already the Confederation, originally confined to four provinces, embraces all the territory between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Within a few years a new province has grown up in the vast North-West, whose natural capabilities for the cultivation of cereals are now generally recognised; whence, in the course of a few decades of years, a considerable proportion of the world's supply of wheat must come. One great railway, which had been long vainly desired by the people of British North America, was soon built after the consolidation of the provinces, and the Western country connected with the provinces by the sea. A greater work, clearly of Imperial as well as Colonial interest, absolutely essential to the settlement of the