

in all probability the several groups of Colonies which enjoy representative institutions will be strongly consolidated into a series of powerful federal States, and become, in fact, so many semi-independent nations. Then, in the nature of things, it will be absolutely necessary to settle their future position among the communities of the world. Some great political convulsion may precipitate matters, but in the ordinary course of events years must pass before the problem is likely to demand a solution.

In the preceding pages we have not attempted to discuss the subject of Independence, knowing as we do that there are very few thoughtful men who believe that it would be prudent or wise for Canada to imperil her present position of ease and security, for one which would immediately entail so many heavy responsibilities at a juncture when she is already fully burdened with obligations, which it will require all her energies to meet for many years to come. No Canadian will of course deny that the time may arrive when a state of higher political existence may become the natural object of the aspirations of every man who is proud of his country and its successes; but it is certain that many years must elapse before any question of this kind can possibly arise. It is questionable if Englishmen generally even yet fully appreciate the sincerity of the loyalty which has kept Canada a dependency of the Empire through good and evil report. The inducements to join her fortunes with those of the United States have been undoubtedly very powerful at times. It is certain that she could to-morrow enter the ranks of the American States on terms compatible with her self-respect, and largely to her commercial advantage. But Canadians, as we have already shown, have never listened to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so sweetly. They have always believed that their true interests lie in the direction of establishing a federation which will be a friendly competitor with its great neighbour in the important work which both, as agents of civilization, have to perform on the American continent. When, as in the nature of things it must be the case, Canada has far outgrown the position of a mere dependency of England, and the inequalities that now exist between her and the mother-country become more obvious to her people, and no practical steps have been taken to remove them, she is not likely to make an effort to dis sever the ties that bind her to the Empire in a spirit of impatience and ingratitude. If the difficulties that now appear to impede the successful accomplishment of a large scheme of federation continue as impracticable as they seem at present,