

and Quebec would have all the business they could wish for, and our young men would no longer need to cross the line to get employment in manufacturing establishments and in stores. The acquisition, moreover, of ports on the Pacific coast would eventually vastly increase the commerce of the Dominion.

No one who has not actually witnessed it, can estimate the enormous increase of the commerce of the Pacific within the last few years. San Francisco, which little more than thirty years ago, consisted of a few wooden shanties, is now rapidly becoming one of the finest cities of the United States; has its lines of magnificent steamers to China, Australia, Panama, and numerous places on the coast, and in its harbour lie fleets of merchant vessels. For centuries the commerce of the civilised world was confined to the Mediterranean Sea; from the discovery of America to the present time, the Atlantic has been the highway of nations; but now we see the Pacific Ocean rapidly becoming its rival, with even the possibility of surpassing it at some future time in commercial importance.

When Baron Hübner, the historian of the expedition sent out by the Austrian government in the frigate *Novara*, had visited the different countries of the Pacific, he made the pregnant remark, "The Pacific Ocean is the gigantic page on which is written the future history of the race." A glance at the map will show the countries with which Canada is brought into communication on the Pacific shore, extending from China to New Zealand; and had she but railway communication between the Atlantic and Pacific, she would hold the finest position for trade which it is possible for a nation to hold, with ports on the two great highways of the world. She already has attained a high position as a maritime power; and at some future time, when her trade on the Pacific has developed there a fleet as large as that which she now possesses on the Atlantic, she will probably rank in regard to her marine as the second in the world.

It may be too strong an assertion to say that without British Columbia the Dominion of Canada would eventually become part of the United States, but it is undoubtedly the case that the addition has reduced this possibility to a minimum. This was certainly

the view held by our neighbours, for one of the arguments used in favour of the purchase of Alaska was, that the acquisition of this territory would place British Columbia between two portions of the United States, and probably lead to its annexation, in which case the whole of Canada would eventually follow. But it may be said that it was unnecessary to extend Confederation so soon to British Columbia, and that it would have been wise to have waited until the North-West territory had been settled up, and communication gradually extended to the Rocky Mountains. We believe, however, it was a wise and statesmanlike policy to strike while the iron was hot, and to weld the whole of the British North American Colonies at once. Without British Columbia as part of the Dominion, the North-West would never get settled up, for nothing will ever bring a large population there but a transcontinental railway, which would never be built unless the Dominion extended to the Pacific. A false impression prevails in Canada that British Columbia was very anxious for Confederation, and would have accepted almost any terms to bring it about. Under this impression Mr. Mackenzie, in a recent speech, referred to British Columbia as "suing for Confederation." This is a mistake; British Columbia never sued for Confederation. For a long time, the only persons in the colony who advocated Confederation were a few prominent politicians, who wished for a wider field for their ambition, and some Canadians who naturally wished for a closer connection with their native country. The general feeling was opposed to it, as was clearly shown at the elections, particularly in Victoria, in 1868, when the two Confederation candidates were defeated. At that time, the only practicable way of travelling from British Columbia to Canada was, by steamer to San Francisco, thence by steamer to Panama, crossing the Isthmus, where another steamer had to be taken to New York. The route overland was too long and dangerous to be thought of, as was shown by Lord Milton's narrow escapes, and by the terrible journey of a party of Canadians who, on their way to Cariboo, experienced sufferings which were said to have culminated in cannibalism. The general feeling was that Canada was too far off, and that British Columbia, for all practical pur-