

1129; our Academy of Music accommodates 1,200 persons, and one of the theatres in Paris seats 3,600. A house of forty could obstruct, a house of a thousand could expedite, business, if so disposed. There were 788 full members, 985 associate and their members, 1773 in all, at the British Association meeting in Montreal, a out 800 of them from the mother country. The principle I have suggested for the representation of Canada in the British Parliament is already recognized in the constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in this Dominion; one fourth of the ministers of each presbytery are members of the Assembly for the year.

Nor would the colonial members run great risk of being overborne by the compact vote of the 658 English members, because, apart from the spirit of fair play that eminently characterises our nation, the English members are not only divided among the three Kingdoms as above, but are split up into parties. The present house consist of 332 liberals, 242 conservatives and 62 Home Rulers, so that even now the colonial members would easily hold the balance of power, and their proportion would go on increasing with the greater increase of the colonial population.

The objection that such a Parliament would necessitate the absence from home of a large number of our leading men during a considerable portion of the year, seems to be fully met by the provision that they should have perfect telegraphic facilities. Under such circumstances it would make little difference whether they were a hundred or 3000 or 10,000 miles from home. And the only loss of time would be that actually consumed in the sea voyage of ten days each way for Canadian members, which Sir John A. Macdonald seems to think about the best thing for a public man, after a season of hard work at the seaside, and 30 or 35 days for Australians. And I am sure that a far greater number than 81 from Canada and 54 from Australia go to England every year on business. And surely the management of the affairs of a world wide empire is a business of sufficient magnitude to demand such a sacrifice.

And outside of their parliamentary duties our members would be able to render the country most valuable services. They would be 81 of the very best immigration agents, with a perfect knowledge of the resources of the country. My friend, Mr. Sidney Fisher, M.P. for Brome, in his remarks at the meetings of the British Association in Montreal, on many questions relating to the agricultural and other industries of this country, convinced me of how much valuable work could be done in this way. And in this respect one of the greatest advantages would arise from the membership of French Canadians from this province. London is but a day's journey from Paris. By easy transit these members could cross the channel, mix with the French people, and there pick up and introduce among our people the best ideas of French civilization. And while the French here are tenacious of the preservation of their language, I know of no better way in which this can be done, and made useful to themselves and to their fellow citizens in this country, than by constant and repeated visits of our ablest public men to old France, where the purest French language and ideas

prevail. A deputation from the Imperial Parliament consisting largely of French members would be able to negotiate reciprocal trade advantages in a way that is altogether impossible now, for they would have the whole of the markets of the British Empire to offer in exchange for the markets of France. The presence of these members in the British House would form a link that would bind in friendship and alliance the French and English nations, so that fear of a collision would be reduced to a minimum. And we should be able again to sing with its original meaning, now somewhat obscured, the old Crimean war song,

"May France from England never sever,  
Three cheers for the Red, White and Blue."

And the absurd prejudice that has prevented the construction of the Channel Tunnel, (which is shared in by Professor Goldwin Smith), would very quickly disappear if we had a French Canadian as Imperial Minister of Public Works. Again, whatever advantage we may pretend to have over our French fellow citizens in commercial life, it must be admitted that they rank high as jurists; and I believe that the presence of men like our present Chief Justice on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the only International Tribunal in the world, would be a source of pride and satisfaction to our people. Indeed, the many advantages arising from such intercourse are very hard to estimate, but they would all tend to raise our nation to the highest position among the nations of the world. And I think without vanity I may claim the right to an opinion on this subject of friendly intercourse, having for the last five years been associated with a French Canadian partner to whom I cannot refer but in terms expressive of esteem and affection.

We may turn now to the economic aspect of the problem. And the first question that naturally presents itself is what would be the cost of such a scheme. I know that those who deprecate any consideration of the subject, raise a great hue and cry about the enormous cost of the army and navy, and take the pusillanimous ground that Canada is not going to pay for these when she can get them as a present for nothing. This is so unworthy sentiment, from a nation seeking national powers, that it seems sufficient to state it broadly to make it contemptible in the eyes of honorable men. I may quote some words from Mr. Gladstone, ferreted out by an opponent of my views from a report of the Colonial Committee in 1859. "No community which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own maintenance and defence, is really or can be a free community. The privileges of freedom and the burdens of freedom are absolutely associated together. To bear the burden is as necessary as to enjoy the privilege, in order to form that character which is the great security of freedom itself."

I assert then that Canada in claiming a share in the highest national powers is prepared on receiving them to assume national responsibilities. Let us see then what these expenses are, bearing in mind, however, that they must be incurred no matter what form our national independence may assume. And I am sure I shall be able to show you that these burdens are small in comparison with the benefits we should derive from the scheme I shall unfold to you in a moment. The