

which led me, and my English playfellows, to shoulder each other off the sidewalk, which incited them to hail us as *Johnny Batistes* and us to call them *sacré Irlandais*, whenever we met in any "official" capacity; that hostility which arises from the distinctive character of two races that differ in religion, language, habits, customs, sympathies, aspirations and even in physical externals; that involuntary hostility which springs more from sensation than interest, that comes neither from the heart nor from the head, and which outleaps the boundaries of reason, because it dwells not in individuals but in the masses; that hostility, in short, which is born from the juxtaposition of two different nationalities on the same sod—like two lovers before the same woman—one of whom some day must win: a natural, fatal, inevitable and almost legitimate hostility, because it is the consequence of that universal law of nature, the struggle for life.

One may ask, Why should we fear Independence on account of these drawbacks, which after all are drawbacks we face from day to day under the existing conditions? The reply is that, slight as it may seem, the influence of England is really enormous in Canada. And, as England has a vital interest to keep peace within her colonies, this influence has so far been to us an element of safety which might be sorely missed and regretted once the tie that binds us to her has been undone or broken. It must be added that the French Canadians are neither blind nor indifferent to considerations of general importance which may affect the present and future welfare of the country as a whole, in such an event as its political freedom under a separate flag. We, as well as others, see our illimitable frontiers, as impossible to defend against the smuggler as against the invader; we see our commerce and industry more or less at the mercy of an all-powerful neighbor who, at any moment, might bring us to starvation by merely closing her doors; we understand that, owing to the existing difference of climate, the European emigration will ever more willingly flock towards the United States than towards us, and consequently that, whatever may be our efforts or achievements in material progress, we cannot but be enormously and perpetually distanced by the prodigious increase of the American Republic. And from all this, we conclude that to be neighbors under such conditions is for us to be forever condemned to a discouraging inferiority, with no alternative but that of bending the back and of throwing ourselves upon the generosity of our rivals, whenever any misunderstanding or conflict of interest may arise.