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No 26] SAINT ANDREWS, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 1851. [Vol. 18

SPEECH  
of the  
HON. JOSEPH HOWE,  
on the importance and value to Great Britain of her  
North American Colonies;  
Delivered at Southampton England.

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,—You may imagine the various and conflicting feelings by which I am embarrassed, in rising to address this intelligent and prosperous community, and through them the twenty-eight millions of people who inhabit these British Islands—the centre of modern civilization—the honored home of my fathers. (Be assured that I deeply feel the responsibility which your kindness, and my public position, have tempted me to assume. The memory of those great orators, with whose highest flights of eloquence, from childhood, you have been familiar—whose voices, like distant thunder, still linger in the ears of the present generation, weighs upon us, less than the immediate presence of those polished and skillful speakers that you are daily accustomed to hear. Would, for your sakes, that I could as easily invoke the spirit of the dead, as I do, in all sincerity and humility, crave the indulgence of the living. The magnitude of the interests which I desire to present to your notice, involving, as I believe they do, to some extent, the relief of these islands from the burden of poverty and crime, the integrity of this empire, and the permanence of the connexion between the North American Provinces and England, oppresses the mind even more than the intellectual character of my audience. I wish those interests were less imposing—that the danger of neglecting them was less imminent, or that my ability to deal with them was proportioned to the magnitude of the theme.

When I last visited Southampton, I little thought that I should ever return to it again, and certainly never dreamed that I should have the honor and the privilege to address, within its ancient walls, and with the evidences of its modern enterprise all around me, such an audience as is assembled here. I was then a wandering colonist, surveying, eleven years ago, Europe for a first time. Attracted to Southampton by the beauty of its scenery, and by its old associations, when I entered your spacious estuary, and saw, on the one side, the fine old ruin of Netley Abbey, and on the other the New Forest, famed in ancient story, I felt I was approaching a place abounding in interest, and honored by its associations. And when I put my foot on the spot, trodden, in days of yore, by the warriors who embarked for the glorious fields of Agincourt and Crecy, and on which Canute sat when he reproved his fawning courtiers, I felt my British blood warming in my veins, and knew that I was indeed standing on classic ground.

But Sir, on that occasion I did not see those evidences of commercial prosperity which I was anxious to observe. In visiting to-day your splendid docks, your warehouses, ocean steamers, your railways, and rising manufactories which have been created by untiring energy and honorable enterprise within a few years, my pride in your historical associations was quickened and enlivened by the proofs of modern enterprise which distinguish this great seaport. (Applause.)

The object of my visit to England is to draw closer the ties between the North American Provinces and the Mother Country. To reproduce England on the other side of the Atlantic—to make the children, in institutions, feelings, and civilization, as much like the parent as possible, has been the labour of my past life; and now I wish to encourage the parent to promote her own interests by caring for the welfare and strengthening the hands of her children—to show to the people of England that, across the Atlantic, they possess provinces of inestimable value. (Applause.) The interest which Southampton has in a clear appreciation of their importance no man can deny. Already her advantages are obvious and potent; but they may be largely extended by North American connections. You have the British Channel flowing by you like a mighty river, with the great continental markets on its opposite shore, the trade of the Baltic on your left, and of the Mediterranean on your right. You have your East and West India steam lines; the Isle of Wight is your natural breakwater; a lovely country surrounds you; and the royal city of Winchester, and the imperial city of London, are at your very doors. Add to these advantages, the permanent and profitable connections with the vast territory and rapidly expanding communities of British America, and the prosperity and importance of Southampton will be greatly enhanced. (Hear, hear.)

I found existing in this Country when I was here before, and I still observe it on every hand, I will not say a criminal, but certainly a very lamentable ignorance of the state of the British Provinces on the continent of America. An erroneous opinion prevails, that at the American Revolution all that was valuable on that continent was severed from British dominion; that but a few insignifi-

cant and almost worthless provinces remain. This is a great, and, if not corrected in time, may ultimately prove a fatal mistake. Glance at the map above you, Sir, and you will perceive that one-half of the whole American continent still owns allegiance to Great Britain—is still subject to the sceptre of Queen Victoria. (Hear, hear.) The vast extent of country, is however, but little known in England. Intelligent men ask me, every day, where it is—of what it consists?—what are its boundaries? Gentlemen perfectly familiar with Canada, know comparatively little of the maritime provinces, which here (though as distinct as Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland are from Russia) are yet confounded with Canada. Merchants who trade with Newfoundland know as little of Canada; Nova Scotia is a sort of terra incognita, of which one rarely hears, and many Canadians know nothing of the boundless and beautiful tract of country which lies between their province and the Pacific.

Although the United States have extended their boundaries by the conquest of the Mexican Provinces, Great Britain still owns one-half the continent of North America. This territory, with its adjacent islands, is 4,000,000 of square miles in extent. All Europe, including the British Islands, measures but 3,708,000; so that, throwing away 292,000 square miles for rivers and lakes of larger extent than are found in this hemisphere, you have in North America, for the inexhaustible sustenance of British subjects, a country as large as Europe. (Hear, hear.) This country resembles Europe in all its principal features; it is full of the same natural advantages, and as capable of improvement as Europe was in her early days. Taking the round number of square miles, and reducing to acres, and we have above 90 acres for every man, woman, and child in the British Islands. Now suppose that they throw off two millions of their population, and I shall show you presently that there are that number to spare, we shall have a square mile of land for every inhabitant; or 4,480 acres for every head of a family that British America would then contain. Is not this a country to which, in the present condition of England, the attention of her statesmen and of her people should be turned? But it is often said the climate of North America is rigorous and severe. Do me the favour to glance at the Eastern Hemisphere, including Europe, Asia, and Africa, and separating the northern countries from the south, the vigorous parallels from the warm and enervating, will men which reside at this moment, the seats of commerce, the centres of intelligence, the arts of peace, discipline of war, the political power and dominion? Assuredly in the northern half. And yet it was not always so. The southern and eastern portions, blessed with fertility, and containing the cradle of our race, filled up first, and ruled for a time the territories at the north. But as civilization and population advanced northwards, the bracing climate did its work as it will ever do; and in physical endurance, and intellectual energy, the north asserted the superiority, which, to this hour, it maintains.

Glance again at the map, and you will perceive that England still owns half the continent of North America; and taking the example of Europe to guide us, I believe, the best half. Not the best for slavery, for thank God, we have not a Slave nor a fugitive Slave Law in our northern provinces. (Loud cheers.) Not the best for raising cotton or tobacco; but the best for raising men and women; the most congenial to the constitution of the Northern European; the most provocative of steady industry; and all things else being equal, the most impregnable and secure.

The climate of North America, though colder than that of England, is dryer when it is cold. I rarely wear an overcoat, except when it rains: an old Chief Justice died recently in Nova Scotia at 103 years of age, who never wore one in his life. Sick regiments, invalided to our garrison, recover their health and vigour immediately; and yellow fever patients coming home from the West Indies walk about in a few days. Look at the countenances and robust appearance of the inhabitants, and you will see the vigour and energy that the climate of North America imparts.

I have said that, all things being equal, the two divisions of the continent would be similarly improved; but, Sir, they are not, and never have been, equal. The first British emigration all went to the southern half—Whither went the "Mayflower," that sailed with the Pilgrims from this port? To the heart of the New England states. Whither went Penn's and Baltimore's emigration? To Pennsylvania and Maryland. The northern portion, for 150 years, being occupied by French hunters, traders, and Indians. The British did not begin to settle in Nova Scotia till 1749, nor in Canada till 1763. Prior to the former period Massachusetts numbered 160,000 inhabitants; Connecticut, 100,000; Philadelphia had her 18,000 inhabitants before an Englishman had built a house in Halifax; and Maine had her 2,486 enrolled militiamen, long before a Briton had settled in

the province of New Brunswick. All the other states were proportionally advanced before Englishmen turned their attention to the northern provinces at all. The permanent occupation of Halifax, and the loyalist emigration from the older states, gave them the first impulse. But, you will perceive, that in the race of improvement, the old thirteen states had a long start; they had three millions of Britons and their descendants, a flourishing commerce, and much wealth, to begin with at the Revolution. But a few hundred occupied the provinces to which I wish to call your attention at the commencement of the war, but a few thousands at its close.

Now, Mr. Chairman, you will perceive, that had both these portions of the American continent enjoyed the same advantages down to the present hour, the southern half must have improved, and increased its numbers, much faster than the northern. But the advantages were not equal. The excitement and the necessities of the war of independence inspired the people at the south with enterprise and self-confidence, and non-intercourse with Great Britain stimulated domestic manufactures. Besides, they had free trade with each other, and so far as they chose to have, or could obtain it by their own diplomacy, with all the world. The northern provinces had separate governments—half-palatial despotisms, which represented instead of stimulating enterprise. They had often hostile tariffs, and, down to the advent of Mr. Huskisson, and even to the period when the Navigation Laws were repealed, were cramped in their commercial operations by the restrictive policy of England.

In other respects the south had the advantage. From the moment that their independence was recognised the confederated states enjoyed the absolute control over their internal affairs. Fancy what this did for them, for more than half a century that the northern provinces were governed by politicians voted in and out of office by the fluctuations of opinion in England, or by officers sent out, and by the permanent irresponsible cliques that these almost invariably gathered round them. Down to the year 1839, when Lord John Russell's celebrated despatch was promulgated in the colonies, and the struggle was scarcely over till 1849, when that despatch was acted on and enforced by the present government, the colonies were carrying on perpetual contests with Governors and Secretaries of State, to win that which Englishmen have enjoyed since the Revolution of 1688—the privilege of managing their own affairs. (Hear.) To that contest I devoted twenty years of my life, and I thank God, it is now over. England has given us that self-government which she has herself enjoyed for a century and a half, and I trust we shall make a good use of it. (Hear, hear.)

But I have not enumerated all the sources of disparity. The National Government of the United States early saw the value and importance of emigration. It bought up Indian lands, enlarged acknowledged boundaries by peremptory and successful diplomacy, surveyed its territory, and prepared for colonization. The States, or public companies or speculators within them, borrowed millions from England (a good many of which they have forgotten to pay); (laughter and cheers.) opened roads; laid off and advertised lots in every part of Europe, and invited emigration. Congress framed constitutions suited to the new settlements, invested them with modified self-government from the moment that the most simple materials for organization were accumulated; and formed them into new states, with representation in the national councils, whenever they numbered 40,000 inhabitants. Ohio, for instance, which is one of the colonies thus planted, did not exist in 1793. It now contains a million and a half of people, and has its 19 members in Congress. British America contains two millions, and has not a single representative in your National Council.

But pass that over. While all this was going on what did England do to people and to promote the prosperity of her northern provinces? Almost nothing. She was too much occupied with foreign wars and diplomacy—often descending from her high estate to subsidize foreign princes, whose petty dominions, if flung into a Canadian lake, would scarcely raise the tide. (Laughter and cheers.) What did we do in the northern provinces to fill up this territory? We did the best we could. We married as early, and increased the population, as fast as we could. But, jesting apart, what could we do? Down to 1815 we were engrossed by the wars of England, our commerce being cramped by the insecurity of our coasts and harbours. Down to 1849 we were engaged in wars with successive Governors and Secretaries of State, for the right to manage our internal affairs. These are now over, and we, on our side of the water, have got command, to some extent at least, of our own resources and of our time. We have now the means and the leisure to devote to the great questions of colonization, emigration, and internal improvement—to examine our external relations with the rest of the empire and with the world at large—to consult with you on the imperfect state of those relations, and upon the best appro-

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proportion that can be made of your surplus labour and of our surplus land, for our mutual advantage, that the poor may be fed, the waste places filled up, and this great empire strengthened and preserved.

Having shown you why the contrast is so striking between the United States and the North American Provinces, let me now show you what the latter have accomplished, even under all the disadvantages which they have had to encounter.

The five that occupy that portion of territory which has been politically organized, are: Canada, which lies the furthest back, and is the most extensive and populous of the whole; New Brunswick, which joins to Canada; Nova Scotia, next to that; Prince Edward's Island, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; with all their disadvantages, let me now show the audience what these colonies have done and what they are worth. The five provinces number about two millions of inhabitants. Their average imports and exports, from 1842 to 1846, have been as follows:—

	Imports.	Exports.
Canada,	\$2,174,332	\$1,819,693
Nova Scotia,	984,225	767,666
New Brunswick,	794,785	651,608
Newfoundland,	783,697	685,251
Pr. Edward's Island	110,783	63,867
Showing a total,	\$4,847,095	\$4,188,077

Now, a total amount of imports of near five millions, and over four millions of exports, does not show a bad industrial condition in such a short time, and under such disadvantages. (Hear, hear.)

I have noticed the common mistake which people make in Europe who confound the Maritime Provinces and Canada together, as though there was no distinction. Canada is a noble colony, full of resources, but its harbours are closed with frost in winter, while those of Nova Scotia and of most of the maritime provinces are open all the year round. For general commerce you will perceive, then, that our advantages are very superior; that our people are destined much more extensively than their brethren in the rest, to "go down to the sea in ships," to be the carriers and factors of those who occupy the extensive regions further west. These maritime colonies, in point of territory, include 86,000 square miles, an area half as large again as the Kingdoms of England and Scotland, and nearly as large as Holland, Greece, Belgium, Prussia, and Switzerland, all put together. They are rich in mines, and surrounded by the best fisheries in the world. Taking all the provinces, and summing up the number of registered vessels now possess, not including vessels merely built for the English market, I find that Canada owned, in 1846, 604; New Brunswick, 730; Newfoundland, 937; and Prince Edward's Island and 265; being a total of 2,536 vessels, measuring 252,292 tons. Nova Scotia, my own province, the peculiar character and resources of which are but little understood in England, possessed in 1846, 2,533 vessels; or, 47 more than all the other four provinces, put together, and measuring 141,093 tons. Nova Scotia, in many respects, greatly resembles England. It is nearly an island, being joined to the province of New Brunswick by a narrow isthmus. Of coal, it has endless fields; it has iron in rich abundance; inexhaustible fisheries surround its shores; and its noble harbours are open all the year round. Its population is made up of English, Irish, and Scotchmen; or, rather of a mixture, combining the blood and the characteristics of the three kingdoms, with a few Germans and French, who make agreeable varieties.

With this brief description, I trust, Sir, that you will perceive that we have wrestled manfully with the disadvantages I have described; are not unworthy of our lineage, nor have been heedless of the resources of the countries we occupy. Five thousand vessels floating on the ocean, under your flag, is our contribution in a single century to the mercantile marine of the empire! This does not include boats engaged in the shore fisheries. Of this fleet, little Nova Scotia owns one-half, or more vessels in number than all Ireland, though the tonnage is not quite so great. To enable you more nearly to appreciate the value and resources of these northern provinces, let me furnish a very striking contrast: I take the eastern colonies, or Mauritius and Ceylon; the African colonies, including the Cape; the Australian colonies, including New Zealand; and the West India colonies, including the Bahamas and Guiana; and putting all their tonnage together, they have but 2,135 vessels, measuring 98,183 tons. You see, therefore, that the five North American provinces own more than double the number of vessels which belong to all the other colonies of England. Nova Scotia alone having nearly twice the amount of their aggregate tonnage.

But some may ask, What interest have the people of England in these statistics? Why should they trouble themselves about the extent or the resources of the countries you describe? Let me now show you, Mr. Chairman, how deep and all-pervading an interest the people of these islands have in this enquiry. The late Charles Buller (whose loss