

Canada can serve in the world. If we assume, as the basis of our political thought, the nation, with its proud exclusiveness, its inevitable antagonisms and animosities, then truly such a purpose is difficult to find. Five millions against sixty-five, with the so-called traitors in the camp and the frontier of three thousand miles to defend, would not be a nation very long. But if we go behind the idea of the nation, whether thinking of Canada or the United States, if we place the nation in its proper place as but one phase in the progress of the world, if we take our stand upon more enduring ground, upon the principles, for instance, of that constitution which declares that all men are born free and equal, free to emigrate whither they will, equal potentially if not actually, after they get there, or, if you please, upon the simple teachings of the Man of Nazareth, then, as for the United States, her true destiny is not so deeply obscured. The Colossus by our side loses both its terror and its charm. The Republic no longer seems in danger of denying the splendid promise of her youth, or of becoming a mere strutting aristocrat among the nations, and saying "Stand off, I am better than thou." She continues to be more and more the hospitable host, the guide, uplifter and friend of those peoples whose lot has been cast in less propitious times and places. She loses the desire and the need to absorb, destroy or ostracize. If this be not so, then America has been discovered in vain. As for Canada, if we give up the idea of independent nationality and turn to the future, not to the past, for our ideals, then surely our own pathway becomes also a little clearer. Then Canada no longer seems like

"An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

We can then discern some reason for her political existence. Our anachronous efforts to be a nation,

fruitless though they be as far as our own purpose is concerned, serve yet an end which is infinitely better, the maintenance of political connection between Europe and America. Is not that a far higher destiny? Is it not the application to national ethics of the essential principle of Christian life, to live not for self, for our own glory or power, but for those around us, to repress our own individuality for the general good, in order that those long estranged may be allied and reconciled once more? In what other way, indeed, can any possible meaning be attached to the facts of Canadian history, to a century of constitutional growth and development? They are otherwise absolutely meaningless, fantastic and absurd. But assume, as we may, as indeed we are bound to assume, the approach, sooner or later, of closer political relations between Europe and America, and then there is some meaning in our past. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Halifax to Vancouver, from the peninsulas that stretch out towards Europe to the island in the west that looks towards Australia and India, a railway which is commanding the sympathy and support of the commercial forces of New England and the North-Western States, seems then to be neither an accident nor a mistake. It becomes one of the most decisive events in the history of North America and the world. Ever since the discovery of America the St. Lawrence Valley has been a centre of political power. Geography declared that it should be so, and the present tendencies of commerce and of political feeling indicate that it shall continue to be so. And yet it is a political power in necessary alliance with Europe, nay, with a portion of mediæval Europe at its very doors. This of course has often been made a subject of reproach, and philo-Americans have sneered at Canada for being "part of Europe." But he who sneers at Europe can have no conception of