

Portugal. Crossing the straits to the main lands, the hospitable shores of Nova Scotia, stretched out to the dimensions of the Kingdom of Greece, New Brunswick was equal in extent to Denmark and Switzerland combined. Lower Canada was a Country as large as France, and Upper Canada, twenty thousand miles larger than Great Britain and Ireland put together. Across the continent to the shores of the Pacific was British Columbia, the land of Golden promise, and comparable in extent to the Austrian Empire; and then the Indian territories which lie between, were greater in extent than the whole soil of Russia. There were, be said, in Europe forty-eight Sovereign States and only eleven with a population greater than ours. In 1871, we were to stand equal in population to the ninth Sovereign State of Europe. The Honourable Gentleman further told the House, that in 1793, the Commerce of the Sovereign and Independent United States, their exports and imports did not amount to one third of what ours did at that moment, and there were few States in Europe and those with vastly greater population than our own, that could boast of anything like the foreign commerce passing through our hands. And France, though the third maritime power of the world, owned only 60,000 tons more of shipping than British America. Then, the Dominion, whether for industry or defence, would muster a force of 70,000 seamen, and in round numbers 700,000 men capable of bearing arms. These are not the qualities of a country unfit for self-government and whose future need bear the taint of inferiority and dependence. I have said that Independence is the natural sequence of the theories which promoted Confederation. Lord Monck alluded to it as involving a "New Nationality," when he first referred to it in a speech from the Throne. British Statesmen have invariably discussed it as a step in the transition our institutions were undergoing. The events of the American War, and the attendant possibilities of a rupture with that Country, forced upon the attention of the British Government the question of the defence of their possessions on this Continent. They promoted the scheme from an Imperial point of view; and with reference to immediate relief from the embarrassments of their responsibilities here. I cannot better express my view of the attitude they assumed than by quoting from the "True Witness" of March, 1867, one of the best written Journals on this Continent, and understood to be an organ of the Lower Canada Catholic Clergy. The writer says:—"We understand that the Bill for the Union of the B. N. A. Provinces has been rapidly carried through the three readings in the House of Lords. In all probability it will meet the same fate in the House of Commons; for in England public sentiment is

very strong in favour of a measure which is looked upon as preliminary to the severance of a political connection, not profitable, and often very dangerous to the people of Great Britain. Some changes have been made in the Quebec scheme, apparently at the request of the delegates themselves, since we may well believe that in the Imperial Legislature the feeling towards these Provinces is a desire to get rid of them altogether as honourably and as speedily as possible. They profit Great Britain neither materially nor morally. . . .

All that remains for Great Britain is to get rid of her North American Provinces as speedily and with as little loss of moral prestige as possible. The so-called Confederation of these Provinces presents the means for accomplishing this, and it is therefore eagerly grasped at by men of all parties." There is no doubt that more or less directly, such views were urged upon our delegates, while the negotiations were proceeding in England. Indeed so determined were all parties there to hurry through the arrangement, that the most solemn remonstrances of its colonial opponents were treated with almost universal and contumacious neglect. And the views of the statesmen as might be expected are quietly reflected among the people of England. All the organs of opinion, the popular *Times*, the *Radical Star* and the *Tory Standard*, the stately *Saturday Review* and the snobbish *Pall Mall Gazette*, with their satellites all over the Kingdom adopt the same tone; either that Canada is an encumbrance to England or they are ready to promote her independence to-morrow; and every colonist with whom you speak and who has had the entree to British Society will tell you that the same feeling pervades the British mind. Adam Smith wrote that no dominant country could ever voluntarily relinquish its power over a dependency. But he regarded the abandonment in the light of a sacrifice, and in our case England has already abandoned all the patronage which, in his view, was a temptation to retain dominant power. But Mr. Cornwall Lewis who wrote later and after modern Colonial views began to permeate England, regarded as probable, that a parent state, deriving no advantage from a dependency and believing that the dependency was able and willing to form an independent state, might abandon its authority for the want of a sufficient inducement to retain it. There might even be positive reasons for its withdrawal,—as if the dependency contributes nothing to the commercial facilities of the dominant country, is a source of expense to the Supreme Government—and may involve the dominant country in war; and he further says, that if the parent state understands its true relation to the dependency it will voluntarily recognize independence when there is fitness to maintain it; will prepare those for Independence who are