

the colonies all desire to maintain the connection ; that is their present feeling beyond doubt. They are loyal beyond all question, and whenever an occasion arises where they can show their devotion to the interests of the country at large, they are always ready to do it. The self-government which has been granted to them has increased their attachment. We know, as a matter of history, that when they were governed as Crown colonies, directed from Downing Street, there were constant differences arising, constant questions that tended to embitter their relations. But since they have had self-government the colonies have been marked by increased attachment to the institutions of the British Empire. These institutions have stimulated their progress and their wealth. They are now absorbed in the development of their vast local resources. Railways and steamboats, telegraphs and manufactures, and all the various varieties of human industry, are now occupying the minds of the colonies almost to the exclusion of everything else. All local ambitions slumber. The public men of the country seek their future now entirely in the development of their resources. That is what gives them the confidence of the people, and it is that to which their attention is most constantly directed. But I admit that a change in that respect is probably not very far off. We see in the case of Canada that it is semi-national now ; its claims in that respect are largely recognised by the Imperial Government. There is never any interference ; the bond of union is one of mutual attachment, and it is one which I think we certainly ought to strengthen, and will try to strengthen as much as possible ; but at the same time I rather doubt whether a mere bond of sentimental attachment is strong enough. I think we want to have an alliance of material interests. I think we want to have some subjects in which we are true partners, in which we will share the losses and share the gains. There is one reason why a country like Canada should not desire separation. What is the future it would give us ? We would become an insignificant independent country. At present we belong to the greatest empire in the world. It is our pride and boast that we do so ; but if we once separate we drift off, and