

verted into a channel which will bring wealth and power to the Parent State, instead of carrying off the elements of national prosperity to enrich foreign powers, or build up new nations who will be her rivals in the future. At the present time, the statesmen of Canada are opening up to civilization a vast wilderness in the north-west, capable of giving bread to many millions, and are using their best efforts to connect that vast region with the railway system of the continent. A project like this cannot be considered as purely colonial in its conception and results. On the contrary, the construction of a Canadian Pacific Railway must have a remarkable effect on the destiny of the Empire in America; for it will carry along with it the elements of wealth, open up a road to China and Japan through British territory, and give continuity and stability to a new nationality stretching from ocean to ocean, whose future career can only be controlled by some generous and far-sighted Imperial policy in the present, which will bring the Parent State and the dependency immediately together in the closest possible union, not merely of sentiment, but of self interest.

The isolation of one section of the Empire from the other is the inevitable sequence of the present condition of things. The colonies may unite with one another for their own political and commercial purposes; but whilst such consolidation may be most advantageous to them, it can only tend to the disintegration of the Empire in the future, by making colonial interests more and more distinct from those of the Empire at large. These premises being granted—and it is impossible to see how they can be denied—the question will naturally arise as to the best means of bringing Colonial and Imperial interests into the closest harmony. How is it possible to bring together into an Imperial Federation so many diverse interests as are represented by the colonial

dependencies of Great Britain? One Parliament for the Empire, composed of representatives from all sections, would be, in the opinion of most persons, more or less a political Babel. But it might not be impossible to devise a system which would enable those dependencies now enjoying parliamentary institutions to be represented in a general council of the nation. If the Federal principle could be applied to all those sections of the Empire, where such a system would be susceptible of practical application, and a Federal Parliament could be organized to deal with all great questions of peace and war, of commerce and trade, and such other matters as might affect the Empire as a whole, whilst the internal affairs of the British Isles and of each dependency would be arranged in local legislatures; then there would be a British Empire in reality as well as in name.* Or, if so grand an idea is never to be realized—and no doubt the difficulties in the way are very great—is it not possible for the genius and wisdom of the statesmen of the Empire to devise a means of giving, at least, Imperial unity in matters of commerce, defence, and emigration.

Already is the idea of a change in the relations between the different parts of the Empire gaining ground both in the colonies and England, and before many years pass away we may see the commencement of a movement in the direction of so grand a scheme. The statesmen of the mother country will be probably the first to move in this matter. The people of the Canadian Dominion are now busily engaged in carrying on the great work of internal consolidation and development of which Confederation was the beginning; and the question of Federation of the Empire in Canada as in Great Britain has not assumed a practical shape, but is still the theme of

* Since the above was written, a writer in the *Westminster Review* advocates, at some length, the application of the Federal principle to the Empire.