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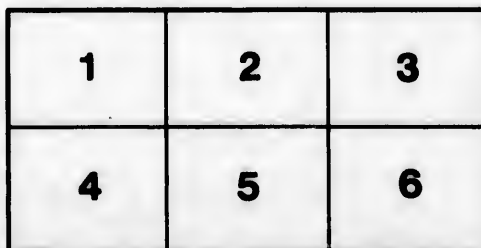
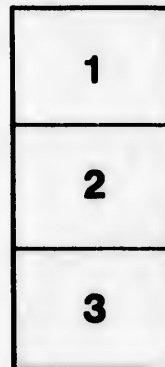
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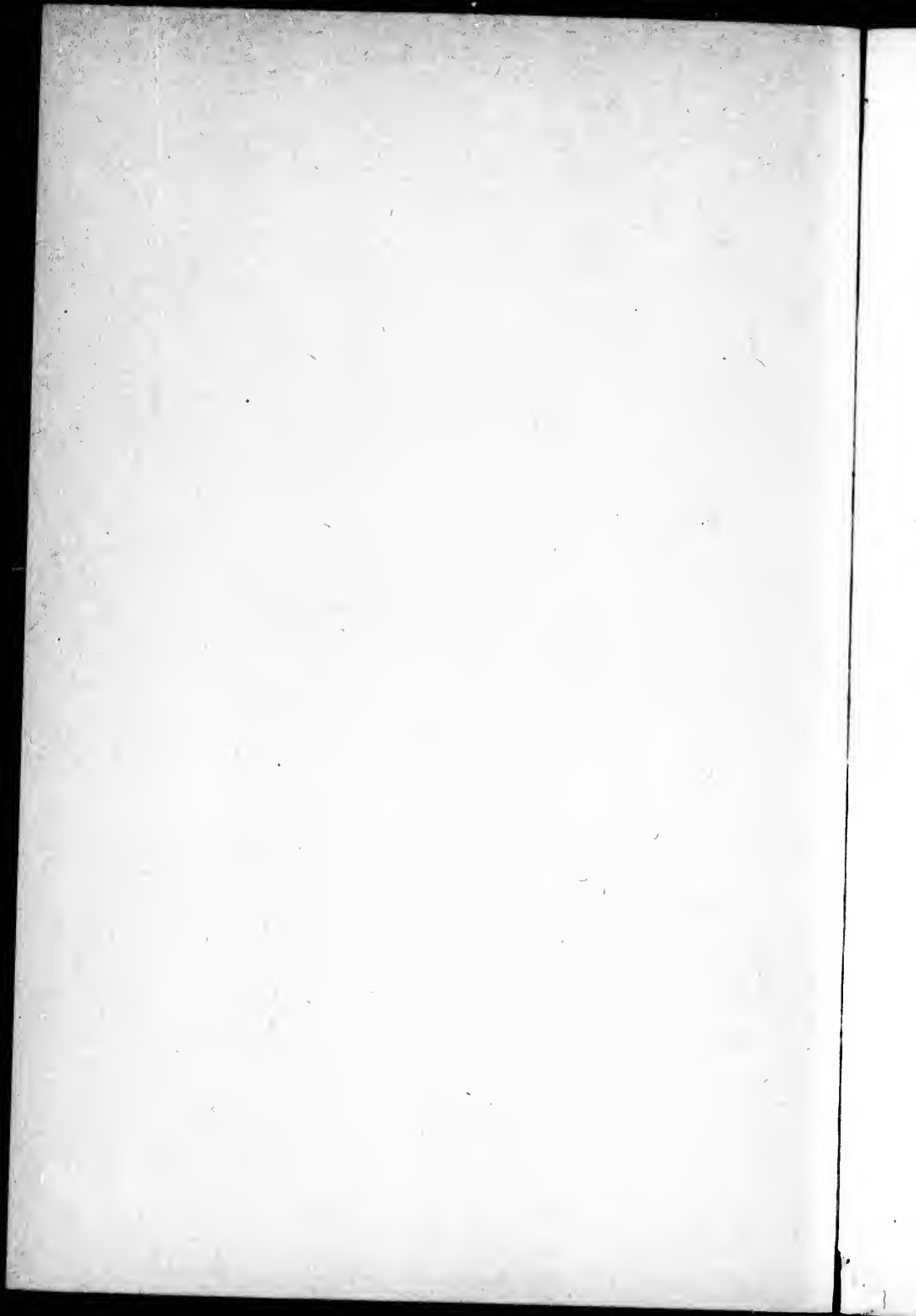
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A LOOK  
TOWARDS  
THE FUTURE  
OF THE  
BRITISH COLONIES.

TWO LETTERS ADDRESSED TO  
THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF CLARENDON, K.G.  
ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.

BY  
C. D. ARCHIBALD, F.R.S., F.S.A.

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LONDON:  
EDWARD STANFORD, 6, CHARING CROSS,  
1854.

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## LETTER I.

Conservative Club, 17th June, 1851.

MY LORD,

I AM most unwilling to intrude upon your Lordship, whose cares and duties are so much enhanced by the present circumstances of the times: but the recent startling expressions of a Noble Lord of Parliament,<sup>x</sup> who has hitherto rather been distinguished as a drag upon advancing opinions, induce me to offer some observations which, if they should not be found deserving the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, will, I trust, at least be excused as coming from one having a large personal interest in the welfare of the Colonies.

The *future* of the vast and valuable possessions of the Crown in North America is a question of the deepest interest and importance; and it is one with which British statesmen must soon prepare to deal. The extraordinary growth and progress of the United States furnish strong arguments to those who advocate a *separation*; and if the interests of the Colonies were alone concerned, such a consummation might be contemplated by any subject of Her Majesty without dereliction of patriotism or allegiance; but as I believe this question involves, not only the integrity, but the stability and well being of our widely extended empire, I desire to see the *connection* more close and intimate, and hope to be able to suggest a means of grappling those possessions to the parent state by *indissoluble* ties.

I am quite ready to admit that the time has nearly ar-

*Ellebroup. son. 2. he thought <sup>B</sup> the time had  
passed when the North Am. Colonies might  
separate from the British Country with  
out any loss to the Mother Country.*

rived when countries so far advanced in civilisation and the science of Government as the North American Provinces, can no longer be retained in the relation of *Colonies*; but, at the same time, I do not think that they are yet prepared to be inscribed in the category of *Sovereign States*. To speak therefore of their independence of the British Crown, is, in other words, virtually to resign them to the neighbouring great republic. I know that some distinguished public men of that country wish to believe that they do not desire such an acquisition: they say that their territory is already too extensive—that it would disturb the static balance of the Union, and interfere with certain conventional compromises—but I believe it would be much more easy to reconcile all domestic conflicts of opinion than to arrest the spirit of territorial aggrandisement which possesses the people of the United States: and that capacious stomach which has assimilated so many heterogeneous elements will hardly revolt at dainties of the old Anglo-Saxon *ménage*. Assuming, at all events for the purposes of the argument, that the ultimate condition of the Colonies *may* be such as to give to the United States the *control*, if not the *sovereignty*, of the whole continent of North America, the perturbations that would ensue, would, I apprehend, be likely to shake our whole system—and, more than anything I can imagine, tend to the decline of our national prosperity and power. The enormous proportions and immense resources of that great country need not the addition of a territory which embraces all the elements of an empire, to make us apprehensive on the score of our commercial and maritime superiority. Already we meet, not only the natural, but the industrial products of America in every market of the world; and what advantages does that country not possess, which, in addition to a people as ingenious and as enterprising as our



own, produces within her own borders all the *materiel* for her skill and industry which we are obliged to seek in distant climes !

Of all the various circumstances that have combined, in modern times, to promote our national wealth and grandeur, nothing has contributed so much as our possession of the Indies, and the control of the trade between Europe and Asia ; and no true patriot can fail to deprecate any change that may tend to damage those important relations, or weaken our influence in the East. Columbus thought to attain those much coveted countries by sailing to the west ; but he found the continent of America an insuperable barrier. Let us see if there may not be some ground for apprehension, should we relinquish our hold upon it, that it may stand in the way of that free intercourse between the two great European and Asiatic families which has, in times past, tended so much to our advantage. The recent discovery of the North-west passage has only served to verify a conclusion long foregone, that it never could become the highway of nations ; and I look upon the *route* by the Isthmus as equally delusive. If practicable as a work of engineering art, it would be found useless or impracticable for the purposes of intercommunication and traffic between the Eastern and Western hemispheres. It is not upon the great equatorial circles of the globe that a convenient line of transit can be found : the enormous increase of distances, the currents of the atmosphere and the ocean, combine to forbid it ; and, if these should not suffice, the destruction of property by *climatic* influences, would settle the question. The immense losses and depreciation which annually take place from these causes in the traffic on the Mississippi river, are a very inadequate measure of the wholesale havoc that would ensue, if the products of the temperate and the torrid

zones, in their interchange, should be subjected to delays and transshipment under the equinoctial.

What, then, is to be the *future route* of this Eastern traffic? I cannot better answer this question than by referring your Lordship to the accompanying extract of a letter which I had the honour of addressing to the Earl of Elgin, Governor-General of North America, in June 1851.\* I was at that time negotiating preliminaries with reference to those great lines of railway now in progress of construction in Canada, and the principal argument I employed was, that they would form a *link* in the great *chain of communication* between Europe and Asia, which I believe will one day be completed across the continent of North America.

“ In undertaking works of such vast magnitude and importance, it will be wise to look beyond the present, or even the immediate future. Already an enormous traffic awaits these lines, but who can form a notion of the proportions to which it may expand within the next ten or twenty years! Already the knell of protection is sounding along the fertile vallies and the boundless prairies of the Far West, and those barriers to free trade which we should vainly assail from without, will soon be prostrated by the pressure from within. The productions of that vast region, consisting for the most part of the bulky articles of human subsistence, will in spite of all restraints, flow through the most natural and facile channels, to be exchanged for the products of other countries. But I cannot bound my view by these remote territories, or even the more distant region stretching to the Pacific, or by the ocean itself. A great arc of the globe passing through Halifax and Toronto, if projected on the one hand into Asia, and on the other into Europe, will bisect the richest, most populous, and most civilized countries under the sun. On the one side are the countless millions of the Indian Archipelago, China, and Hindostan; on the other, the over-crowded, busy marts of Europe. The interchange of the commodities of Europe and Asia has in all ages constituted the most lucrative commerce of the world. Since the days of

\* printed with the Parliamentary papers 1852.

Solomon, if not before, it has been the desire of nations to possess or control this trade, with which the highest state of prosperity and great power have ever been associated. The track of this commerce has built up cities of palaces in the desert;—its diversion has marked the decline of empires;—once lost, it has never been regained, and although the great nation we most affect now controls the trade of the far East, it is deserving of serious consideration whether the *route* is not yet capable of one further change. We have the authority of the spirited and intelligent originator of the great Atlantic and Pacific railroad, who more than any other man has studied the intercommunications of the globe, for the fact that there is a practicable line across the continent of North America that shall shorten the distance between England and the East Indies by more than five thousand miles, in comparison with the *route* by the Isthmus of Panama! The British possessions in North America lie midway between these great countries, occupying that zone of the earth upon which, on the other Continents, three-fourths or more of the whole human family are congregated. Within our borders there is a vast unoccupied food-producing territory, capable of absorbing a population equal to that of the half of Europe. In addition I believe that we hold the keys and the track of the future communication between the two grand divisions of the human race, and who shall say that a large share of that enriching traffic, which has gilded every former path, shall not ere many years glide along those very channels which it is our present business to open up. The day is not far distant when this great highway of nations will traverse our neglected territory as surely as a straight line is the shortest distance between two given points."

I beg to observe that these opinions have not been hastily or recently formed. At the time the Oregon question was under discussion, as the records of the Foreign Office will shew, I ventured to raise my humble voice against any settlement that should fix the boundary beyond the 45th parallel of latitude, on the express ground that I looked to *the valley of the Columbia* as the *future track* of our communication with the East. Unfortu-

nately this desirable region has not fallen to our lot, but I believe we still possess the most favourable, as it will certainly be the shortest, line between the two great oceans.

The Western slope of North America naturally belongs to the Eastern hemisphere, and the establishment of the United States along such a vast extent of its shores cannot fail to give them great advantages and facilities for extending their trade in the Pacific and Indian Oceans; but what I wish to impress is that, if they control the whole Continent, and complete their system of railways now in progress, they will to a very great extent, *divert the whole course of Eastern commerce.* The trade which must in the nature of things spring up in those seas, between the North Western Continent of America, Japan, China, the East Indies, the islands of the Indian Ocean and Australia, will reduce to insignificance all existing traffic. In any event the Americans must largely participate in this trade, but with the control of our possessions in North America they would virtually have a monopoly: in short they would become, to a great extent, the *exclusive carriers*, both *by land and sea*, between Europe and Asia; and those splendid fleets now engaged in our Australian and Asiatic commerce, by the circuitous routes of the Capes, would dwindle for lack of employment. At present our geographical positions on the Continent of Europe, Asia, Africa and America give us a commanding influence in all terrestrial affairs; and I have not thought it necessary to make these observations through any apprehension that Her Majesty's Government contemplate the relinquishment of any of the advantages we possess; but rather to lend weight to those suggestions which I shall presume to offer for ameliorating the condition of the Colonies and perpetuating their connection with the Parent State.

Without entering into any disquisition upon the subject

of Colonial Administration I will merely say that the most fruitful source of evil has been the uncertain and provisional character of Colonial constitutions. It would be a trite observation to say that no people can exhibit firmness of purpose or other essential traits of national character who possess no fixed or well defined institutions; and yet until within a very recent period the whole legislation of even the most advanced Colonies was subject to the control of parties, often in subordinate and irresponsible situations who had no real knowledge of their condition or requirements; and to this day the rule in regard to the tenure of office by the Queen's representative gives an evanescent character to that most important functionary. It has been my lot, in the course of a long Colonial experience, to have lived under the sway of many representatives of Her Majesty, and some of them were certainly not hedged about by that supreme attribute of the Sovereign, "the impossibility of doing wrong." In such cases the Colonist has the consolation that a few years at most, will end the brief authority; but, on the other hand, when a high minded able man is found, he scarcely becomes acquainted with the condition of his Government and the feelings and wishes of the people before the prescribed term of service expires and he gives place to a stranger, who in his turn yields to an unknown successor. These constant changes in the head of the Government in the Colonies, and the equally frequent changes in the office of Secretary of State for the Colonial Department have, to my mind, militated more than anything else against their advancement. To obviate this evil and at the same time to give them assurance of a worthy representative of the Sovereign, I propose that *the whole of the British possessions in North America be erected into a VICE-ROYALTY, hereditary in one of the younger branches of the ROYAL FAMILY.*

What a joyful day for the Colonies that shall herald Her Most Gracious Majesty's announcement of this high resolve! Then indeed the Colonists might feel that they were British subjects in something more than name, and might hope for the *realities* of the British Constitution of which they have hitherto had but the *shadow*. The democratic element already exists in full force and seems to require no expansion. With a representative of the Sovereign, linked to her by the dearest ties and of an enduring character, we should have another stable component; and if the other estate should not be already sufficiently developed in the Colonies it would soon be recruited from the ranks of the higher orders in the mother country who would not be slow to follow a Royal Emigrant into such an inviting field.

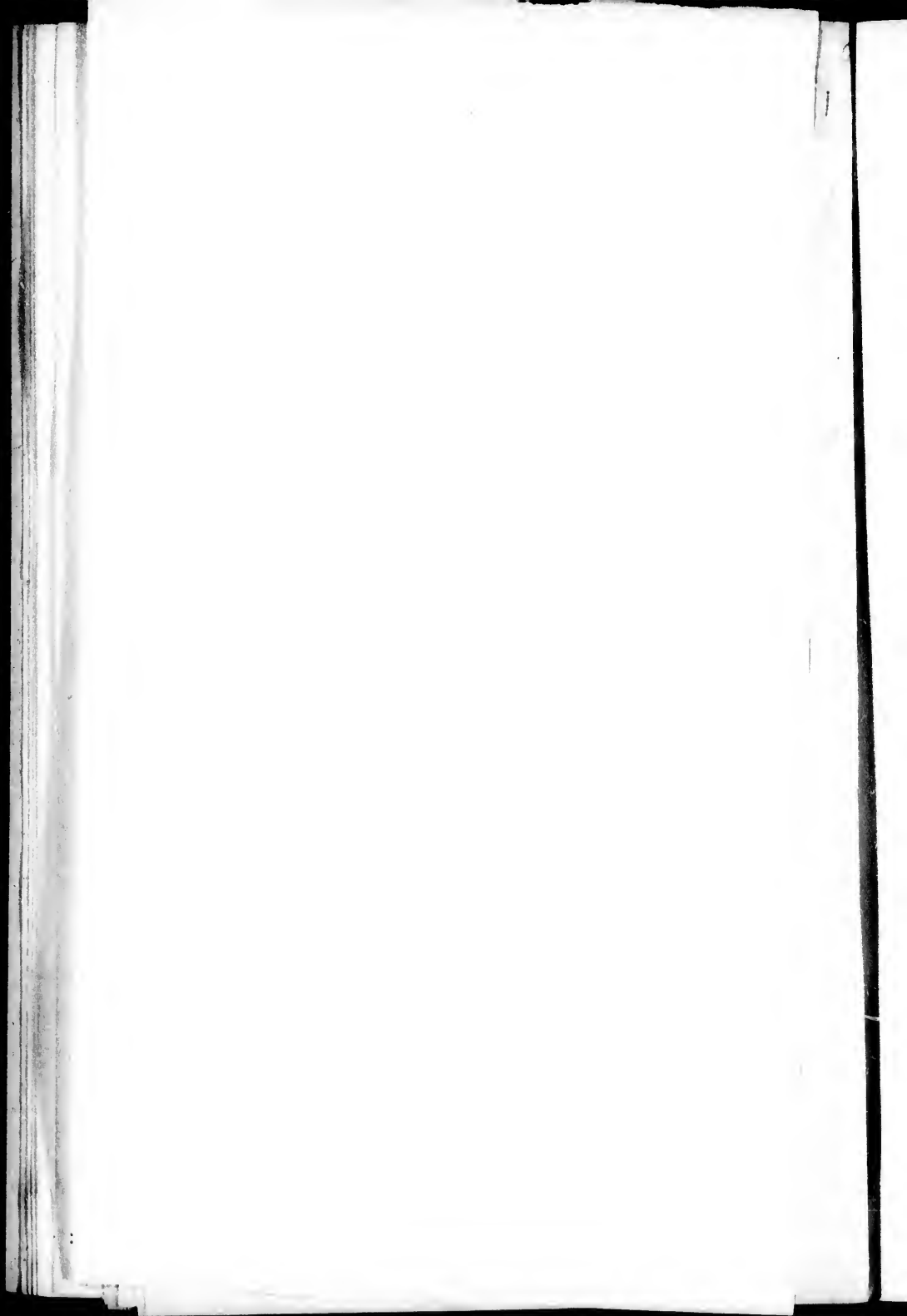
The many and great advantages which would naturally flow from such a course of policy as I have ventured to recommend are so obvious that I will not occupy your Lordship's time by attempting to enumerate them. I have already trespassed beyond my own sense of propriety, and will only presume further to express my belief, that our colossal empire, scattered over the whole globe, can be best consolidated and administered by the employment of that lofty element of power and authority which a bounteous Providence has liberally dispensed to us. Of this I feel convinced, that *the identification of the Royal line* with the North American Provinces will be the surest means of preserving those valuable dependencies in connection with the British Crown: and a Royal Viceroy of the Indies would seem to be the best guarantee of the *solidarity* of those incoherent masses and the perpetuation of British supremacy. The presence of a scion of the Royal line, amidst the convulsions of the South American States, alone saved the empire of the Brazils to the House of Braganza;

\* royal British, one of frequent occurrence  
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and what worthier aim and destiny for the *cadets* of our illustrious family than to represent their august Parent amidst millions of loyal and devoted subjects far removed beyond the sphere of her personal attractions. At no distant period the Royal Viceroys of the Indies, of North America, and Australia, though subjects and vassals of the British Crown, may take rank with the proudest monarchs of the world: and if the day should ever come that a sacrilegious aggressor shall dare to raise a hostile hand against the Majesty of England, these great *fiefs* of the Empire will hasten to the rescue, and with such a combination injustice and barbarism cannot triumph.

It only remains for me to apologize for having trespassed on your Lordship with these crude ideas, to which I have now for the first time given this hasty expression, and,

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

C. D. ARCHIBALD.

To the Right Hon. the Earl of Clarendon, K.G.  
etc. etc. etc.

## LETTER II.

---

Conservative Club, 24th June, 1854.

MY LORD,

REFERRING to the communication which I had the honour to address to your Lordship, under the date of the 17th instant, I now beg leave to submit some further observations in explanation of the views I entertain with reference to the *prospective relations* between the Mother Country and her widely extended Colonial possessions. I quite admit that the present is by no means the most favourable time for discussing such grave and important questions; and the wisdom which applied the proverb, *silent leges inter arma*, would equally proclaim a truce to legislation in a like conjuncture.

The ancient homestead of the British family in Europe, is so insignificant in point of territorial extent and resources, in comparison with other states, that to deprive Great Britain of her Colonies and possessions on the other continents would be the most certain means of reducing her power and terminating her national existence. With the exception of a class of politicians, by no means numerous, I assume that the popular voice is in favour of the *retention* of the Colonies; and I believe the time has come when British and Colonial statesmen must co-operate, not in patching and repairing partial defects in existing constitutions, but in devising the best means of *consolidating* the scattered members of the empire *into one system*; and

adapting forms of government suited to its various parts.

There is nothing of which, as a nation, we are more justly proud, than our admirable free constitution, which has stood the test of so many ages ; and, although there are parts of our empire to which it may not now be applicable, there can be no good reason for withholding it from those Colonies whose people are for the most part of the old Anglo-Saxon stock, and whose advancement in civilization and political science fit them for the freest institutions. There can be little question, at all events, that our North American Colonies are in this happy condition, and, rather than speculate upon the chances and consequences of *separation*, which they by no means desire, let us contemplate their *incorporation* into the empire, with all possible privileges and advantages of the British constitution.

Of the three estates necessary for the composition of our mixed constitutional form of government, the genius and intelligence of the North Americans have already abundantly prepared the democratic element ; and, as the best and speediest means of supplying the other two components, I have suggested "the erection of the whole of our possessions into a Vice-royalty, hereditary in one of the younger branches of the royal family." The retainers and followers of a Prince of the Blood Royal, would soon swell the ranks of that class, already developing itself in the Provinces, which would furnish forth the second estate of the Vice-realm ; and thus would be established as perfect a model of the British constitution as circumstances will admit ; and it will hardly be contended that a Government so constituted would not be entirely capable of managing all its internal affairs.

In order that the following observations may be the

better understood, I beg leave to say, that the briefest expression of the policy I recommend is, "to grant to certain great divisions of the Colonial possessions, as they become prepared, the nearest practicable approach to the British constitution, and to incorporate them as integral parts of the empire." It would be out of place and premature, to enter into any details of the measures that may become requisite for carrying this policy into effect, but, of necessity, there must be a supreme over-ruling power in the Imperial Government; and this leads me to offer some considerations as to the best means of representing these several Vice-royalties in the Councils of the Parent State.

It is a favourite idea with some able men in the Colonies that great advantages would result from their being represented in the Imperial Parliament; but in this opinion I do not concur. If it were practicable to pile the Ossa of forty dependencies on the Olympus of Imperial Legislation, it would not be possible to admit, even if the Colonies were prepared to send, a sufficient number of representatives to influence the decisions of the House of Commons. Besides, to make the scheme complete, the Colonies ought also to be represented in the House of Peers; and, *e converso*, the Mother Country might equally claim to be represented in the Colonial estates. It is not, therefore, by representation in the Legislative, but in the EXECUTIVE COUNCILS of the EMPIRE that I would provide for the *gradual incorporation* of our gigantic dependencies into the great body politic. I will not presume to offer any suggestions at present as to the constitution of a great IMPERIAL COUNCIL that *might* be formed to direct the affairs of the whole empire, but will rather endeavour to recommend a course that will involve no radical change and no derangement in the existing machinery of Govern-

ment. A Secretary of State for the Colonies, or a Colonial Board, will probably be required in all future time to administer those detached outlying possessions which cannot be conveniently aggregated : but so soon as a great dependency or group of Colonies shall be advanced to the dignity of a *Vice-royalty*, it should be taken out of the departmental category and allowed to *appoint* and *accredit* its own SECRETARY OF STATE or GRAND PENSIONARY, who should, *ex officio*, during his incumbency, be a CABINET MINISTER and a MEMBER of the PRIVY COUNCIL. Thus, whilst the three estates of the Vice-realm at home exercise the exclusive management of all domestic affairs, their voice would be heard and have due weight in the great Councils of the Empire, with whom reside the issues of peace and war—the treaty-making power and the control of all foreign and international relations.

I have not heard and do not know what are the alterations proposed to be made in the Constitution of the Legislative Council in Canada ; but I apprehend it would be of dangerous example and disastrous consequence if any act of the Imperial or Provincial Parliament should imply that we have not, in the most advanced of all our Colonies, the means and elements for forming a Second Chamber, agreeably to long established constitutional usage. It might be a wise instruction to the Queen's representative, or a salutary enactment, that no one should be eligible to be nominated to a seat in the Legislative Council who had not previously been duly elected by some constituency and served for a certain period in the Lower House of Parliament. From the social condition of the community, the aristocratic or conservative element, howsoever eliminated, must in its nature be essentially democratic ; and to make both Houses of Parliament entirely elective by the people, would seem to remove the *poise* of the Constitution to

far from the Crown. The accession of a hereditary Viceroy would naturally lead to the gradual exaltation of the second estate; but, it by no means follows that an hereditary Chamber will be possible or desirable in any of the Colonies, at least for many years to come. It would be quite proper that the Vice-regal Government should have the power, within certain limits, of rewarding meritorious services by conferring those marks of distinction which are legitimate objects of desire; but the Queen, as *Sovereign Paramount*, to whom all owe allegiance, should be the *only source of hereditary honours*. The fountain of honour is already too frequently tapped, and I can imagine nothing more calculated to weaken the *prestige* of our time-honoured institutions than the sudden and indiscriminate diffusion throughout the empire of heritable patents of nobility. At the same time, I must be allowed to say that the Colonists have had great reason to complain, in times past, of their virtual exclusion from all participation in those honours and distinctions which are, in all countries, the most gratifying rewards of public services. Henceforth, these and all other prizes and objects of ambition must be as free and open to the Colonist as to the native Briton; and the ranks of the army and navy, diplomacy, and every other branch of the public service will not want worthy recruits from the extreme borders of the empire.

It is not easy to say into how many grand divisions it may be desirable or practicable to classify our vast Colonial possessions; but, next after North America, I can see Australia, itself a Continent, in the pride of wealth and conscious of the elements of greatness, thundering at the gates for admission into the empire. The growth and advancement of this colossal dependency will probably be promoted beyond all precedent by causes now in active

operation. It is an instructive and interesting fact that within a few months many thousand Chinese have emigrated to San Francisco, cut off their pigtailed and become converts to Californian Christianity:—*quales ab antiquo tales* no longer. That mighty empire, rent by internal convulsions, must dissolve, and myriads of its people, ingenious, docile and industrious will flow out to fill up our Australian territories and the interjacent islands of the Eastern Archipelago, now thinly tenanted by barbarous races. Then will spring up that gigantic traffic and intercourse, the foreshadowings of which are stimulating the enterprise and the energies of our American kinsfolk; and whilst one great idea—the balance of power in Europe—fills the public mind to the exclusion of almost every other consideration, let us take care that the scale of our Eastern ascendancy does not kick the beam. Magnanimity as a national virtue is of slow growth, and though largely developed in our own liberal policy, it is yet a sickly plant in the great republican nursery. Laggard alone in reciprocating our policy, the Americans are running with us the race of civilisation and commercial enterprise, but with immense odds in their favour. Themselves the greatest producers in the world, they exclude us from all participation in their domestic trade; and compete with us on more than equal terms on all our great lines of transit. Their geographical position and natural advantages give them such facilities for maritime commerce that, under the existing system, they must necessarily gain the control of eastern traffic. When our Australian and Asiatic possessions have time to develop their great resources, and become rich and populous, it is not with England, wider than the poles removed, that they will trade from preference as they are now compelled by necessity. Their relations will naturally be with their own hemisphere,

where they will find all they want, including a ready market for every thing they may have to exchange. Already our trade by Cape Horn is fast passing into the hands of the Americans, and although it is beyond my province to complain of a policy which in the main I greatly admire, yet I am free to say, that, *unreciprocated*, its inevitable tendency must be to transfer our maritime superiority to our great commercial rivals.

The balance of power in Europe has ever been, and will probably continue to be, to us, a very costly question; and nothing but our *preponderance* in the East has enabled us to maintain our high position among the nations. If, more than ever, it has become necessary to preserve this ascendancy, more than ever it is important to retain our hold upon the North American Continent. Situate midway between Europe and Asia, our possessions in that part of the world, with extensive coasts upon the two great oceans, may be regarded as the *keystone* of our gigantic empire. Once lost or abandoned, the whole Continent of America, stretching from pole to pole, lies between England and the great sources of her power and wealth. When, therefore, this mighty conflict which now agitates the world shall be happily terminated, let us, in the full tide of prosperity, and with the *prestige* of unwonted high alliances, set our house in order, marshal our assets, and adjust our balances.

To return to North America. What I advocate is neither a union or confederation of the different Provinces in their existing condition, nor their erection into an independent sovereignty in any other shape, but a *con-fusion* of the whole, in order to *recast a STATE* that shall bear the impress of the mother country, in the same noble metal, with slight modifications of form alone. A state so constituted, subject to, and in perpetual amity and alliance with



England, ought not to alarm prejudice or excite jealousy in any quarter; and if haply this first great experiment should succeed, we shall have solved a problem which concerns, not the colonial dependencies alone, but the interests and well-being of the whole empire.

I have the honour to remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

C. D. ARCHIBALD.

To the Right Hon. the Earl of Clarendon, K.G.  
&c. &c. &c.

