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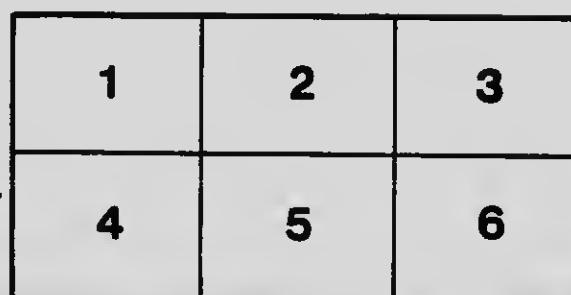
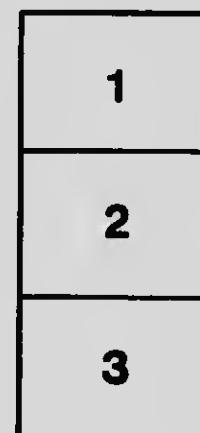
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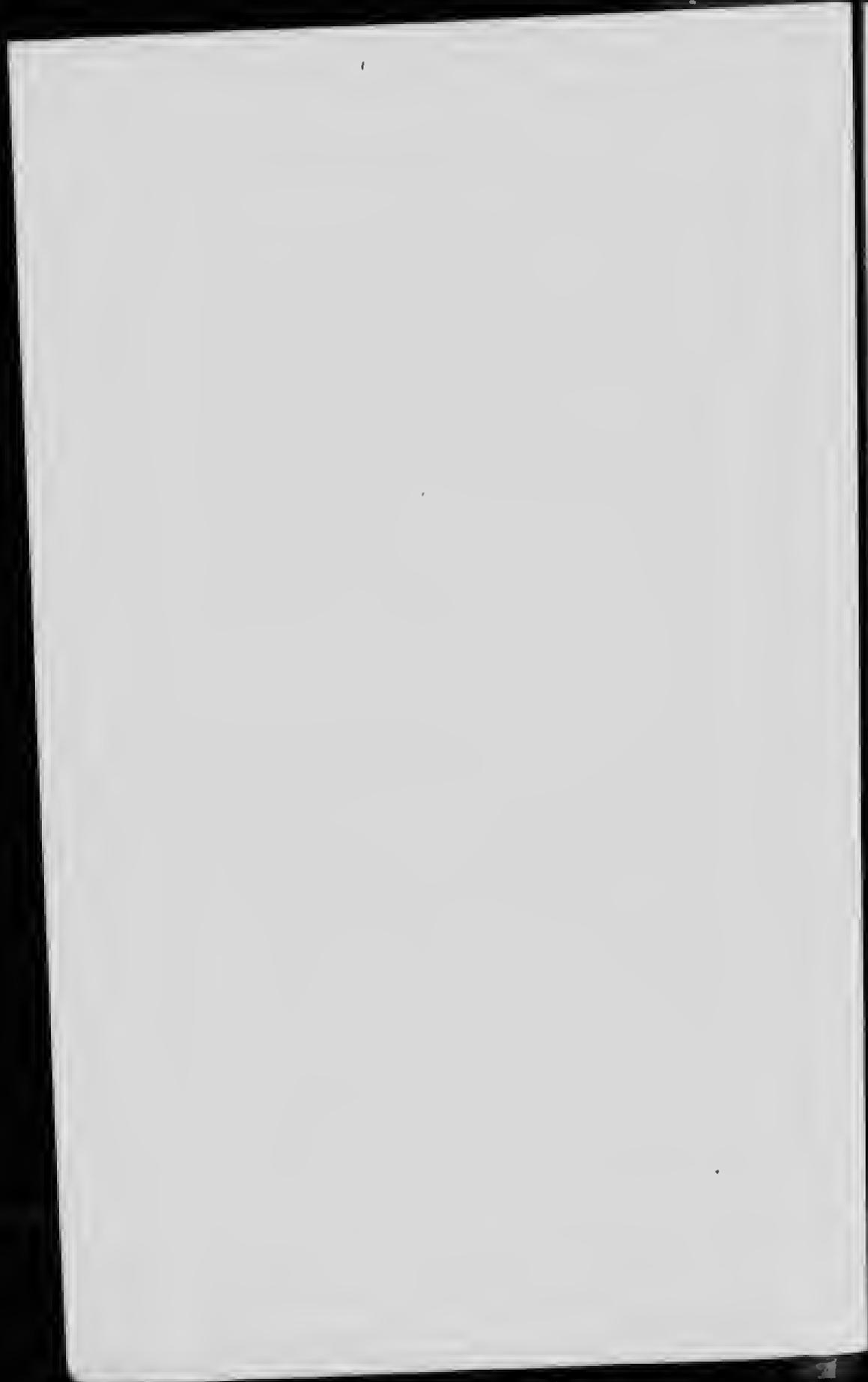
—OF—

Hon. David Mills, K.C.

(Minister of Justice of Canada).

AT HIGHGATE, ONTARIO, CANADA,

Wednesday, August 28th, 1901



Mr. Mills' Address.

From the London (Canada) Advertiser.

The Hon. David Mills, K.C., Minister of Justice of the Dominion of Canada, delivered the following address at Highgate, Ontario, Canada, August 28th, 1901. Mr. Mills was in good form and held the close attention of his intelligent audience, which included many ladies. On being introduced by the chairman, the Minister of Justice was enthusiastically received. He said :

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Several years have gone by since I had the honor of addressing a meeting in this place. One of the last occasions upon which I spoke to you was when the country was agitated because the Government of Canada had failed to disallow an act passed by the Legislature of Quebec, known as the Jesuit's Estate Act. On that occasion I felt it my duty to defend the course taken by the administration, although I was not a supporter of the government. It was impossible to successfully attack what was then made the subject of censure, without assuming that the principals of parliamentary government were not to have full play in the provinces, in matters of purely provincial concern. The views which I then expressed were such as I believed were called for, both by the letter and spirit of our constitution. I felt assured that the agitation which was then awakened was without any foundation, moral or constitutional, upon which it could permanently rest. My convictions have been verified, and long since this question has ceased to be a disturbing factor in public affairs.

Since then great changes have taken place in the personnel of the House of Commons, and in the political complexion of the Senate. For a long time after I became a member of the House of Commons this township continued to be a part of the electoral division of Bothwell, and during the whole of that period, the Reformers, who constituted more than two-thirds of the electors, intrusted me with their confidence. I need not say to you that I valued that confidence most highly, and it was my aim then, as it has been since, to endeavor to

merit your good opinion, by close attention to my public duties and by an unvarying adherence to what I thought best in the public interest. In 1872 the support which had been given by all parties to the principle of forming every constituency within the limit of some city or county was adhered to. It was regarded by the leaders of the government and of the opposition alike as a course demanded in the public interests, as it would prevent the improper union of parts of different counties in one constituency, and so prevent all attempts to legislate an unpopular party into power. But after the

CENSUS OF 1881

had been taken, the leaders of the Conservative party threw aside the understanding had in 1872, upon which both parties then relied, as much so as if it had been an integral part of our federal constitution. The government, at that time, in revising the representation so as to give each province the number of members to which it was entitled, in a large measure treated the Province of Ontario as a unit in which county boundaries were disregarded, and in respect to which they were free, so far as they could be, to give the Reform constituencies, and in this way secure to the supporters of the administration a majority in the Commons. I need only refer to the County of Middlesex by way of illustration, in which, in the election of 1891, the Reform candidates polled in the aggregate a majority of 1,100, but in which their opponents elected three of its four representatives. This proceeding was not abandoned during the eighteen years that the Conservative party had control of the government; but in each successive revision the wrong was further intensified by making further changes to improve the advantages already acquired. Upon our success in the general election of 1896 we resolved to correct, if possible, this gross wrong without unnecessary delay. We accordingly endeavored at two successive sessions to remedy the mischief, but without success. Indeed, we proposed to transfer the work of

CONSTITUTING THE CONSTITUENCIES

to judges of eminence, not because we questioned the competency of parliament, but because we hoped to disabuse the minds of our opponents of the notion that we desired, by any improper division, to secure a party advantage. We hoped thereby to obtain the support of the Senate to a measure relating to the proper constitution of the House of Commons

by depriving ourselves of any political advantage in the matter. We were unable even with this concession to secure the support of any opponent of the government in the senate. We knew that party feeling was there very intense. We knew that the Senate proclaimed themselves a non-partisan body. They may have persuaded themselves, that, as there was a redistribution of seats only once in ten years, there could only once in ten years be a readjustment of the boundaries of constituencies; and so if parliament had used its authority, and committed an injustice, no matter how great, it must continue until another census was taken and another readjustment was called for under the express provisions of our constitution. I need not say to you that this view was preposterous, and was without the shadow of authority to support it. By the census we ascertain the number of representatives to which each province, for the succeeding ten years, is entitled; but this does not prevent parliament, if it were so inclined, from readjusting the boundaries of the constituencies whenever it may think the public interest calls for any amendment in the representation. The census enables us to fix the number of representatives to which each province is entitled in the House of Commons; it does nothing more. Our census will soon be completed. The population of each province will, I trust, be accurately shown. Our representation in accordance with the law and the facts will be readjusted. I confidently hope that the measure of redistribution will be a

PERFECTLY FAIR MEASURE,

based upon the inviolability of county boundaries, and subject to this, upon the principle of representation by population. I trust there will be no compromises with these accepted principles in the interest of some supposed strong candidate. The Reform party are strong so long as they stand up for what is just and proper, but if there is to be a departure from accepted doctrines, it had better be left to our political opponents who did the wrong before. There may be some who think it wise to imitate them, and to follow their example. I am not of that opinion. There is great strength in standing up for the right. It is an immense source of strength to a public man when the people believe that he is unswervingly devoted to what is fair and just, and when they believe he will not deviate from the course so marked out merely because some candidate on his own side is persuaded himself,

or has endeavored to persuade others, that if you will depart from a sound rule for his sake, your chances of success will be improved. Let me say, that if that success could be made absolutely certain, it would be altogether too dearly purchased by such a course, because it is purchased by causing the public to distrust your honesty ; and secondly, because in doing so, you weaken the confidence of men with whom moral considerations are paramount, and who would otherwise, on this ground alone, have supported you. I trust, therefore, when we are called upon to deal with this subject we shall do so thoroughly, and by parliament alone, without any extrinsic aid, and without deviating a hair's breadth from the principle to which we are committed, and to which, and not to any caricature of it, the public sanction has been given. This is practical politics in the best sense, because it is the honest course to take. I trust that the representation will be made perfectly fair and perfectly just, and that it shall not be given to any others than those to whom it rightfully belongs.

It is little short of monstrous to adopt any other rule, and it will be the duty of the electorate of the country to see that those principles for which the Liberal party have long contended, which the country has in two successive elections sanctioned, are carried into effect according to their true intent and meaning. I have said now, gentlemen, all I propose saying on this subject of redistribution at the present time. I have only called your attention to the abuse, and to the remedy which Reformers have long advocated, and it is for you to see that the redress given is fair and honest, and that for which we have long contended, and not something altogether different—a caricature or that which the country had a right to expect.

Territorially Canada is one of the most extensive countries in Christendom, and it is our business to make it, so far as we can, in wealth and in population, commensurate with its territorial dimensions. The problem is one of great importance, and it ought to receive the most serious consideration at the hands of the people and their representatives. We have in Canada great resources which require development. We have to consider how this development can best be promoted, how our mines can be made most productive, and our fertile lands to yield the largest amount of food for those who occupy them, and for the markets of the United Kingdom.

CENSUS RETURNS DISAPPOINTING.

There is no denying the fact that the census returns for the past decade have proved disappointing to our people; but this disappointment is in a large measure, due to expectations that were founded upon mere conjecture. Our people were certainly emigrating from the country in large numbers during the first half of this decennial period. Our commerce was very nearly stationary, and this, it is reasonable to assume, was due to the fact that a large percentage of our population was drawn away from their place of nativity to the neighboring republic. For the previous twelve years there was but little variation in the volume of our exports and imports. The census shows that the population of Canada was in April last 5,338,883, and the increase, including both the natural increase of population and its increase by immigration is but 505,644. Now the natural increase of our population ought to have made the population of Canada, without any addition from abroad, 5,438,000; and if we count on an immigration of 25,000 a year, there would have added during the decade 250,000 more; so that our census, according to a very moderate calculation, might be expected to have shown a population in Canada of 5,688,000. Well we are disappointed. We have 350,000 short of this number, and it is our duty to carefully consider the facts out of which this disappointment has arisen. Since 1896 Canada has enjoyed an unusual degree of prosperity. Since then but few have left the country. Our people readily go to the United States because their language and their institutions are similar to our own. But there have been no causes operating to induce our people to go abroad. We have lost indeed but very few of our population. This, however, was not the case during the five years between the summers of 1891 and 1896, when there must have gone from the country a number equal to all we received from abroad, and, I think, not less than 50,000 a year beside. This was a tremendous drain to overcome. In fact, it was too great to be at once obliterated, and it is due to the prosperity which has attended the country during the past five years that so great an exodus has left so few traces of evil behind it.

ENGLAND AND GERMANY.

The natural increase in England, after the emigration is deducted, is shown to be 12 per cent. for the decade. In Germany it is 14 per cent. Both the percentage of England

and of Germany would be increased were there no emigration. It is not too much to say that the emigration reduces the increase of the population, in each country, by at least one per cent. It may be by even more. The natural increase of the German population is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. a year, and in England it is slightly less. Making due allowance then for the migratory character of our population, which no doubt postpones the time of marriage here to a period a little later than in Germany, or in England, we may affirm that the natural increase of our population will, from this cause alone, be less than it is in England or in Germany, yet it ought here to be not less than $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. yearly amongst our English-speaking people, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. among the French population in the rural districts of Quebec. So that it was quite natural that we should look for a more favorable showing than the one that the census returns present.

POPULATION OF ONTARIO.

The population for the Province of Ontario, by the census taken in April last, is 2,167,978, which is but 53,657 more than it was ten years ago, instead of being, as might have been anticipated, 2,385,317, without counting any immigration at all. It is too soon yet to ascertain how the population of Canada, west of the Province of Ontario, is made up, or to determine the sources of its growth; but if we were to credit Ontario with having added 40,000 to Manitoba, 40,000 to the Territories, and 30,000 to British Columbia, 163,000 of her natural increase would be accounted for, leaving still 100,000 that must, at some time during the decade, have found their way across the border. Of course, this estimate is the merest conjecture on my part. The number of Ontario people who have gone to the west may be in excess of this estimate. It may be that the estimate is too large; but however this may be, there is but little room to doubt that from 1891 until 1896 a large number of our people left the country. The natural increase ought to be about 271,000, of whom it would seem 218,000 have left the province. It is to be hoped that the census, when carefully examined, will show that many of these are still in the country. We shall know at an early day the number that have gone from each of the eastern provinces to the Territories, to Manitoba and to British Columbia, and we shall then be better able to consider the full meaning and force of the lessons which may be learned from the census.

There are several matters to which it has become very important that we should give careful attention. There can be no doubt that there have gone from the provinces a sufficient number of our people to Anglicise a much larger foreign population than we have yet received. We are quite safe in continuing to direct our attention to the continent of Europe as well as to the parent country for large additions to our population. It is said that in many parts of England, at the present time, the agricultural population remaining is none too large for the proper cultivation of the soil; that the great growth of the towns and cities has furnished opportunities for the employment, almost at the doors of the rural population, for their children and young people, and the result has been that boys and girls, young men and women, instead of continuing in rural pursuits, have been drawn into the manufacturing towns and cities, until the rural population at the present time is scarcely adequate to meet the requirements of the agricultural districts. In fact, the value of farm labor has, in consequence, increased, and large districts that were formerly cultivated are now devoted to pasture.

There has been during the last ten years a marked

GROWTH IN FAVOR OF IMPERIAL UNITY.

Whether the pendulum may not oscillate in the opposite direction will depend to some extent, on what we may do here, and a good deal on what may be done in the United Kingdom. I have no doubt that those who have predicted the disintegration of the empire will regard the dissappointments which many will feel at the result of the census as a favorable opportunity to decry the growth of this sentiment, and to repeat to us the fate of the frog that endeavored to become as big as the ox. I am disappointed that our increase of population was not greater, I am not discouraged in consequence. I am sure that we possess those elements of growth which are necessary to political greatness and strength. I know that if we retain a strong moral fiber in the character of our people, if our government is conducted with prudence and honesty, if our people are imbued with a proper public spirit, that neither envy abroad nor detraction at home can, in the end, prevent the realization of our hope.

IMMENSE AGRICULTURAL AREA.

We have to-day, many times over, a larger area of excel-

lent agricultural land still unoccupied than in all the rest of North America. We have to-day the opportunities and the attractive forces that were possessed by our neighbors between 1835 and 1865. We trust ours will be as useful in contributing to the rapid growth of settlement in Canada as theirs were to the rapid growth of settlements in the valley of Mississippi. I would indeed be sorry to put any restraints upon the restlessness and enterprize which carries the people of the United Kingdom into all the waste places of the earth. They go forth to better their own fortunes, to engage in trade and commerce, to convert predatory tribes of men in Africa, and in Asia, into legitimate traders, and to impress upon them the advantages to be derived from the security of life and property from depredation by wandering marauders, and by changing these into a fixed and law-abiding population. They have trained multitudes into more industrious habits, and have taught them to put more confidence in the value of upright dealing than they had before known. As long as the world was being reduced by their labor from chaos to order, and from a state of violence to one of peace, a useful work was being done, but it is now necessary to turn the attention of Englishmen in another direction. We have at present a great territorial empire, with but little prospect of future growth by further expansion. It means a great deal to them that the existing possessions should become populous and wealthy. What is to be done with the empire? How are its wealth and population to be increased? How is greater security to be given to the life and property within its borders in order that its commerce may continue to grow? In our case I am sure that numbers of well-informed and public-spirited people will afford to us the best security for our advancement. At the present time there are in the world about 120,000,000 of people speaking the English language. Nearly one-half of this number is in the British Empire; the others are in the United States. The United States have now within their borders about 63,000,000 of white men speaking the English language. The growth of the republic is now largely the growth of a city population. Their progress by immigration, in the nature of things, cannot be so rapid in the future as in the past. There are parts of the British Empire which present far more inviting fields for the settlement of an agricultural population. There is no reason why those in the British Empire of the white race, speaking the English tongue, should not overtake the white population of the

United States at an early period. The North-west Territories of Canada alone are capable of furnishing abundant room for a population as large as that of Russia in Europe. These are the prospects presented; what shall we do with them?

ENGLISHMEN SHOULD FAVOR CANADA.

I submit that the time has come when the moral influence of the public men of England should be given to support British emmigration to the British possessions, and not to swell the population of a country that is really more hostile to the United Kingdom than it is to any other country in Christendom. I am sorry that it is so. It is a great misfortune to both countries; but the fact remains. The Englishman who leaves his country and takes up his abode elsewhere, no doubt does so with reluctance, but this reluctance is overcome by the hope that he will improve the condition of his family. It forms no part of his calculation that his descendants, along with this improved condition, are to be trained to look more unfavorably upon the country of their birth than upon any other occupied by white men. He discovers that the political atmosphere which he breathes is filled with prejudice against the country which he has left behind him with fond regret; that in every foreign dispute which may arise, the rulers of his native land are represented as being in the wrong, as greedy, grasping, tyrannical, and cowardly; cringing to the strong, oppressing the weak, and ever incapable of doing what is right. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the public adventurer with great ambition, with little scruple, and anxious to push his political fortune, often finds that he can do this most successfully by attacking the United Kingdom, by adversely criticising its public policy. He feels that he is best promoting his own personal fortunes, if he can find some question of difference where none exists, or can greatly magnify some question of difference, where one does exist. He assumes towards the government of the United Kingdom an arrogant tone, because he believes it is so anxious for peace, so slow to wrath, that he can pursue his own personal fortunes without any risk of the peace being broken. He attributes to British statesmen the worst motive for every act done, and for every course of public policy put forward. In taking this course he can easily persuade himself that he is right, that his suspicions are well founded, for the political atmosphere by which he is surrounded has favored the growth

of these suspicions; so that I fear there is little prospect of friendly co-operation between the two sections of the great Anglo-Saxon family, until some overpowering necessity presses it upon our neighbors. I greatly regret that this is so; the world would certainly be better off if more generous sentiments prevailed, and more friendly relations were established; but the disregard for public law, under the name of the Monroe doctrine, is a declared menace to our sovereign rights. So we must consider the facts as they are, and not simply as we would like to have them: and we must not forget that it is not in our power to uphold our rights, and to maintain our self-respect, and at the same time do much to improve these relations. It is for this reason true, that British statesmen practically take side against their own country who do not endeavor to turn the emigration from the United Kingdom towards other British possessions, otherwise the British emigrant goes abroad to increase the wealth and population of the country whose convictions are hostile, and who will turn the descendants of these men into currents that will be unfriendly to British interests hereafter. British statesmen should remember that there is as much required from the United Kingdom as from other parts of the Empire, to promote imperial unity.

I have

NO SYMPATHY

with those who are calling upon the Imperial parliament to burden the people of the United Kingdom for our benefit; to put impediments in the way of their commercial growth to help us, but they should consider how much the empire will be strengthened by the increase of wealth and population of the colonies; how the development of their mineral resources, and the increase of their numbers would do vastly more to give to it prosperity, peace and security than could be accomplished by directing their population and wealth into regions whose people believe that nothing good ever emanates from the United Kingdom.

Experience has shown that the inferences in respect to commercial affairs, out of which the indifference of British statesmen has arisen, are altogether erroneous. I do not say that England has not prospered under her policy of free trade. I do not say that the principles of free trade are not economically sound. I think they are; but it is not true that other nations are likely soon to accept them, and to act upon them.

It is true that all great states to-day are much more ready to consider the mischief that may be done to other communities by restriction, than to consider the benefits which they themselves may reap from the absence of all commercial restraint. And so we find this feeling has long been a barrier in the way of the extension of the principles of freer international trade. It is true that where there are no hostile political considerations involved, those who are the disciples of protection are less likely to use it to injure a state with which they are closely allied than with one with which they have no political connection. The United Kingdom has a far greater security for her continued progress in population and wealth, in the growth of her colonies, than she possibly can have in the progress of her economic views with the peoples and governments of foreign states. Let British statesmen compare the volume of trade between Canada and the United Kingdom with the volume of trade between the United Kingdom and the United States, and it will be seen how much more she will gain commercially by the addition of 5,000,000 to the population of this country, than by double that number to the population of our neighbors.

BRITAIN'S INFLUENCE.

Why should she hesitate in deciding in what direction her moral influence should be thrown in respect to emigration from the United Kingdom? She does no wrong to any other sovereignty by the good she does to a section of her own empire. It will cost her no money; it calls for no change in her fiscal policy. She is simply asked to advise her own people in the interest of the whole household. Let British statesmen then consider the facts and govern their conduct by the situation as it is. It is by a firm and courteous public policy, based upon what is obviously just, that the unity of the empire is to be promoted and its interests upheld. We cannot ask the United Kingdom, at the present time, to encourage an artisan population to come indiscriminately to Canada; but there are many artisans who know something of agriculture, who could readily learn more, and who could become more prosperous as farmers in Canada, than they can ever become as artisans at home. We have many farmers in Ontario who desire more room, and who would sell their possessions in this province to acquire a larger area for themselves and their sons upon the prairies of the Northwest.

Many small farms will admit of much more intensive cultivation than has yet been given them, and by the necessary skilled labor their products could be enormously increased. There are ordinary tradesmen, bricklayers, masons, blacksmiths and carpenters, for whom there is no room. If we add \$200,000 to the agricultural population of our territories annually, we could diffuse among them 20,000 of the classes I have mentioned. It is of great consequence that this should be done, and by this large addition from the British Islands we could venture upon securing a very much larger number from the continent of Europe than we have hitherto obtained, for we could more readily convert them into a people with British ideas and British tendencies, by making them early acquainted with our language, and by so opening to them the literature of England we would enable them to acquire our habits of thought and expression and thus become an inseparable part of our population.

If there is to be, as it is in the interests of mankind there should be, a

GREAT BRITISH EMPIRE,

teaching men to love freedom, to seek truth, to hate falsehood and oppression, and ready to make some sacrifices for the common good, the people of the United Kingdom must themselves become interested in its accomplishment. The breezes which now tend to carry us from all parts of the British dominions into the same harbor may again sleep, and may not afford, for a long time to come, so favorable an opportunity of being drawn together. I do not suggest any written constitution. I do not propose any compact. What I suggest is a friendly understanding, friendly co-operation for common purposes, voluntarily undertaken. Common enterprises for the common good, common dangers to be guarded against, will determine better, through the lapse of time, what the constitution of the British Empire should be, than any statesman, however wise or cautious, can do at the present time. I purposed to have discussed fully the subject of copyright as a matter of controversy between ourselves and the British Government. It is too large and too important a question not to discuss fully. Our right of self-government is involved, and we cannot treat the subject as otherwise than important, and to-night I shall pass it by.

The chair was occupied by Mr. J. G. Crosby, and on the platform or in the audience, besides the minister of justice, were Messrs. J. A. Walker, K.C., of Chatham ; John Cameron, London Advertiser ; Walter Mills, of Ridgetown ; D. Campbell, London ; Henry Watson, Rev. Charles Crichton, E. B. Mills, Palmyra ; Jonah Gosnell, ex-warden ; Ed. Beattie, George Reycraft, James Tape, Thomas Lee, John D. Gillis, R. C. Scott, Jos. Hornal, H. C. Foster, Frederick Scott, Peter Curr, Alex. McTavish, A. J. Gillis, Charles McLaren, James Attridge, John Brosnahan, Samuel Gosnell, D. T. Gillis, Daniel Mills, Thos. Mickle, James Stevenson, of Ekfrid ; Lawrence Tape, and many other prominent residents of the district.



