

equal to one-tenth of the surface of the whole world; the resources of the Lower Provinces are of incalculable value, while the boundless prairies of the North-West, with the fertile soil and genial climate of the Saskatchewan and Red River may be made the home of millions upon millions of our fellow beings. Our population, including the Maritime Provinces, is at least equal in numbers, and far superior in intelligence and enlightenment, to that of the United States when they asserted their independence; and under the rule of the proposed Federal Government we may grow in strength and importance as rapidly as our republican neighbors; for though in some respects they are more favorably situated than we are, there are others, and important ones too, in which we have greatly the advantage over them—for instance, a far more advantageous line of communication from the Atlantic to the Pacific can be established through our country than through theirs; indeed so great is the superiority of our route, that they never could compete with us for the through traffic from Asia to Europe, which, within a few years I trust, will pour in a continuous stream through British territory from one ocean to the other. Sir, in support of these views, I trust I may be permitted to read an extract from an interesting and instructive pamphlet by an hon. member on my left (Mr. MORRIS), in which he quotes from the words of a distinguished American statesman as follows:—

The route through British America is in some respects preferable to that through our own territory. By the former, the distance from Europe to Asia is some thousand miles shorter than by the latter. Passing close to Lake Superior, traversing the watershed which divides the streams flowing towards the Arctic sea, from those which have their exits southward, and crossing the Rocky Mountains at an elevation of some three thousand feet less than at the south pass, the road could be here constructed with comparative cheapness, and would open up a region abounding in valuable timber and other natural products, and admirably suited to the growth of grain and grazing. Having its Atlantic sea-port at Halifax and its Pacific depot near Vancouver's Island, it would inevitably draw to it the commerce of Europe, Asia and the United States. Thus British America, from a mere colonial dependency, would assume a controlling rank in the world. To her other nations would be tributary; and in vain would the United States attempt to be her rival, for we could never dispute with her the possession of the Asiatic commerce, nor the power which that commerce confers.

Sir, this is not the language of an enthusiast or a visionary, but the opinion of one perfectly acquainted with the subject, and eminently capable of discussing it—one, too, whose judgment was certainly not biased by national prejudice. And again, Mr. SPEAKER, on a more recent occasion we find the Premier of the United States, the Hon. Mr. SEWARD, using the following language:—

Hitherto, in common with most of my countrymen, as I suppose, I have thought Canada—or to speak more accurately, British America—to be a mere strip, lying north of the United States, easily detachable from the parent state, but incapable of sustaining itself, and therefore ultimately—nay, right soon—to be taken on by the Federal union, without materially changing or affecting its own condition or development. I have dropt that opinion as a national conceit. I see in British North America, stretching as it does across the continent from the shores of Labrador and Newfoundland to the Pacific, and occupying a considerable belt of the temperate zone—traversed, equally with the United States, by the lakes, and enjoying the magnificent shores of the St. Lawrence, with its thousands of islands in the river and gulf, a region grand enough for the seat of a great empire.

Mr. SPEAKER, the great consideration with me is how can we best preserve for ourselves and for our children the essence of British institutions; by what means can we best prolong the connection which now so happily exists between England and ourselves, with mutual advantage and with equal satisfaction to both parties; and how can we best prepare, when the time comes, as in the natural course of events it most assuredly will, to assume the responsibility of a separate and independent nationality? Sir, by uniting the scattered and now insignificant British Provinces under one general government, we shall, in the first place, consolidate and strengthen British feeling and British influence on this continent. By the adoption, on the part of the proposed Federal Government and Parliament, of a bold, enlightened and progressive policy, British America may be pushed forward in material wealth, in the numbers of her population and in general importance, to a point which will qualify her to take her place among the nations of the earth, in a manner and with a standing alike honorable to ourselves and creditable to the great country under whose glorious flag we have been sheltered, and by whose example we have been stimulated, while prosecuting that course of political studies which must in