

scheme towards separation, his hope and trust to the contrary, would either have been unuttered, or would have been uttered in another tone. I am well enough satisfied that Lord DERBY himself has not the most remote idea of falling in with the views of the so-called colonial reformers in England, who desire to see the colonies pay for every thing or be cast off; but he knows the hold that their views have gained at home, and he speaks accordingly. And there is no doubt, sir, that this feeling has been got up in England to an extent very much to be regretted. In this connection I have yet to notice some passages—and I shall deal with them as briefly as I can—from the very important article I quoted last night, which is contained in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, and which, I am sorry to say, expresses this feeling in the strongest possible form. But before citing them, I am bound to say that I by no means believe the views they express are universally or even generally entertained at home. I do believe, though, that they are entertained by many, and that there is much danger of their doing a vast deal of mischief. That they are loudly avowed, does not admit of doubt; and when we find them set forth in the pages of so influential an organ of opinion as the *Edinburgh Review*, the case assumes a very serious aspect. There are other passages in the article to the same effect as those I am about to read, and which might, perhaps, be quoted with advantage, did time allow. Well, here is one occurring early in the article :—

There are problems of colonial policy the solution of which cannot, without peril, be indefinitely delayed; and though Imperial England is doing her best to keep up appearances in the management of her five and forty dependencies, the political links which once bound them to each other and to their common centre are evidently worn out. Misgivings haunt the public mind as to the stability of an edifice which seems to be founded on a reciprocity of deception, and only to be shored up for the time by obsolete and meaningless traditions.

When an utterance like this finds its way into the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, a review which more than almost any other may be held to speak in the name of a large class of the ablest statesmen of England, we have reason to ask what it is all tending to. I never in my life felt more pain in reading anything political, than I felt in reading this article; and I never discharged a more painful duty than I am endeavoring to dis-

charge at this moment, in commenting on it. But truth is truth, and must be told. A little farther on, the same writer proceeds :—

It is not unnatural that the desire to maintain a connection with the power and wealth of the Mother Country should be stronger on the side of the colonies than it is on that of the British public, for they owe almost everything to us, and we receive but little from them. Moreover, the existing system of colonial government enables them to combine all the advantages of local independence with the strength and dignity of a great empire. But the Imperial Government in the meantime has to decide, not as of old, whether Great Britain is to tax the colonies, but to what extent the colonies are to be permitted to tax Great Britain—a question which is daily becoming more urgent and less easy of solution.

Further on, the writer goes on to say :—

It might puzzle the wisest of our statesmen, if he were challenged to put his finger on any single item of material advantage resulting to ourselves from our dominions in British North America, which cost us at this moment about a million sterling a year.

They do no such thing; but that is neither here nor there. Then follow these sentences, more galling still :—

Retainers who will neither give nor accept notice to quit our service, must, it is assumed; be kept for our service. There are, nevertheless, special and exceptional difficulties which beset us in this portion of our vast field of empire.

Nearly a page follows of description of what these difficulties are, being mainly those arising out of apprehended dangers from the United States, and thereon is based this observation :—

It is scarcely surprising that any project which may offer a prospect of escape from a political situation so undignified and unsatisfactory should be hailed with a cordial welcome by all parties concerned.

But one meaning can be put upon all this. In the opinion of the writer, England does not believe that these provinces are worth anything to her, while the connection with the Mother Country is worth all to us; and she would hail with satisfaction any way of escape from the obligations and dangers that we are said to cast upon her. I go on a little further, and I find what are his views as to the undertakings that, in connection with this project, we are expected to assume. What I am next quoting forms