

In view of this changed aspect of affairs, then, was it much to be wondered at that British statesmen should regard these colonies with very different feelings from those which animated them at the period I referred to. There is another reason, too, why Great Britain should regard the British North American Colonies in a different light than when she lost the thirteen colonies in 1783. At that time they formed almost the whole of her colonial possessions. It was not until 5 years after the peace of 1783 that the first colonist set his foot in Australia. Now we find in that country no less than six distinct governments, with the dimensions of European kingdoms, and with the revenues of principalities. New Zealand, was then untrodden by the foot of the white man. It is now a confederacy of colonies. The British possessions in South Africa have swollen from a port and a town to an enormous colony. The 150 millions of British India (formerly governed by native princes, or a commercial company), are now under the direct rule of the Queen of England. At that time Canada West was a wilderness, a few trappers and fur traders being her sole white population. Now we find scattered over the globe, over thirty colonies of the British Empire, all, more or less, involving the Parent Country in responsibilities; all draining, more or less, the national Exchequer. Is it to be wondered at then, that in view of the altered circumstances of the times, Englishmen should begin to think that the time had arrived when it was the duty of the colonies to assume some responsibility and to relieve the mother country of, at all events, some portion of the burden of their defence. This feeling would be found to pervade every debate that had taken place on the subject in the British parliament. As long ago as 1858, when Mr. Gladstone was examined before a committee of the House of Commons, on the subject of the colonial defences, he declared that the time had come when the colonies, with the privileges of freemen which were accorded to them, must be prepared to bear a large share of the burdens and responsibilities of freemen. That declaration had been repeated over and over again in his public speeches in and out of parliament, and not only by Mr. Gladstone, but by public men of all shades of politics, and by the press without distinction. Not only had this opinion been expressed, but it had to a large extent been acted upon, and at this moment the entire military expenditure of India has been thrown upon her own resources, while the same policy was about being applied to New Zealand. Not only is this the case, but for several years despatch after despatch has been sent from the colonial office to Canada, informing her that the time had arrived for the colonies to wake up to the necessity of relieving the mother country from at least a part of the burden of their defence. That while exercising the rights and privileges of freemen, they must also assume the responsibilities and duties which that position involved. I think, therefore, that no one can question the fact that the time has arrived when a change is about to take place in the attitude of England, towards her colonies; and that, whatever we may think of the matter, her statesmen had arrived at the conclusion, that it was necessary we should share, to some extent, the military expenditure which our connexion with her entails.

I shall refer, for a moment, to the observations made in a recent debate in the British parliament by a statesman of the highest character, and who occupies a position entirely independent of the government of the day. Lord Derby, in alluding to the present position occupied by the colonies, said:

I will ask hon. members to recall to themselves the state of North America when we met in this house four years ago. That portion of the world was then divided among what we may call three great Powers—first, the United States of America; secondly, Canada, and the settlements and dependencies belonging to our own Sovereign; and, thirdly, Mexico, a country which certainly did not possess much political power, but which in extent, resources, fertility of soil, and mineral wealth was almost unequaled in the world. In every one of these three divisions there have been immense changes. In the United States a civil war has raged for four years, and even if that war should terminate, as the hon. member for Bradford suggests, I cannot believe that we shall see the same society and form of Government established, or even, if the form be the same, certainly the spirit will be altered, as existed before the civil war commenced. (Hear.)

It is quite clear, then, it is impossible to know what relations may exist between the United States, this country, and Her Majesty's dependencies on the other side of the Atlantic. Taking these large views, then, we ought to consider that—not to-morrow or next year, but that we are on the eve of events of very great importance.

In the opinion that we are on the eve of great changes on this continent Lord Derby agrees with the general sentiment of England. The very fact of large armies existing upon our borders, which to all appearances will soon be thrown idle upon the hands of the nation, is in itself sufficient grounds to warrant apprehension for the future. For however peaceably disposed the majority of the right thinking portion of the American people might be, everybody knew how difficult it was, in a country where the democratic element ruled, to control the impulses of the masses. While, therefore, I trust that the day is far distant when the present friendly relations between the two countries is disturbed, it is impossible to ignore the fact that there are strong reasons for fearing that if the present contest should be suddenly terminated, there would be danger of an interruption of the peaceful relations which now happily subsist.

There are some indications at the present moment of the state of feeling which existed in the United States towards Great Britain which are pretty significant in their character; and I shall read to the house an article from the *New York World* in which they are summarized. The writer, after commenting upon the anxious desire of Canada to preserve neutrality, says:

But this just and amicable disposition is met, on our side, by an intemperate and undignified exhibition of touchiness and spleen. The acts by which this waspish irascibility is manifested form a long catalogue:—

1. The annoying and expensive passport system, ordered by Mr. Seward, which has nearly destroyed the business of the Canadian railways.
2. The notice given by our Government for the termination of the convention mutually limiting the naval force on the great lakes.
3. The passage by Congress of a joint resolution for abrogating the Reciprocity Treaty.
4. The reporting to the House of Representatives, by the committee of Ways and Means (Jan. 18), of a bill for putting the frontier defences in the most efficient condition. Among other appropriations this bill makes the following:—For Fort Wayne, at Detroit, \$125,000; Fort Ontario, at Oswego, \$100,000; for Fort