

Sir John Macdonald, than whom no one could be more competent to speak, in a letter written towards the close of his life, clearly indicated this. Writing to a friend on July 18, 1889, he says:—

“ The declaration of all the B.N.A. provinces, that they desired as one Dominion to remain a portion of the Empire, showed what wise government and generous treatment would do, and should have been marked as an epoch in the history of England. This would probably have been the case had Lord Carnarvon, who as Colonial Minister had ‘sat at the cradle’ of the new Dominion, remained in office. His ill-omened resignation was followed by the appointment of the late Duke of Buckingham, who had as his adviser the then Governor General, Lord Monck—both good men, certainly, but quite unable, from the constitution of their minds, to rise to the occasion. The union was treated by them much as if the B.N.A. Act were a private Bill uniting two or three English parishes. Had a different course been pursued—for instance, had united Canada been declared to be an auxiliary Kingdom, as it was in the Canadian draft of the Bill—I feel sure (almost) that the Australasian colonies would, ere this, have been applying to be placed in the same rank as ‘The Kingdom of Canada.’ ”

These words received, only the other day, confirmation from the present Prime Minister of England, who, speaking at the Guildhall on April 27, 1917, made this admission:—

“ If, fifty years ago, we had directed our minds, our power, and our influence to that end (development of the Empire) you would now have had double the populations which the Dominions at present possess, and would have diverted emigration to the Dominions instead of to other lands. And you would also have attracted a virile population from Europe.”

There is this to be said, however, for Her Majesty’s Ministers of 1867, that, fifty years ago, the future greatness of the overseas possessions of Great Britain was not so clearly discernible as it is to Mr. Lloyd George to-day, or even as it was to Sir John Macdonald in 1889. At the date of the meeting of the London Conference, the opinion was too commonly entertained by public men of both parties in England that the ultimate destiny of the colonies was independence, and that the colonists would be prepared to cut the painter as soon as they developed sufficient confidence to steer their own course. Thus, many looked upon them as a burden rather than an advantage to the mother country, and it required clear vision to foresee, as did our Canadian statesmen in 1867, the future greatness of this Dominion.

It is to be inferred from the scanty records which have come down to us that the proceedings at the London gathering were not characterized by that heat which marked some of the deliberations of the Quebec Conference. The members convened at London evidently realized that the main principles of union had been settled before they came together there, and they resolved to adhere as closely as possible to the Quebec resolutions. One of the most notable additions made thereto is to be found in Galt’s amendment to the education clause, which provides for an appeal to the Governor General in Council from any act or decision of the local authorities in any province which might affect the rights or privileges of the Protestant or Catholic minority in the matter of education.

There is an incident touching the selection of the name of the Confederation which deserves to be recorded. A clause in the Quebec resolutions provides that Her Majesty the Queen should be solicited