

the very root of human nature itself. In the first place, by some restrictive enactments, binding on their successors, to purge the social and political element from the magistracy, and make it what it should always have been—a purely judicial body. And, secondly, to help towards the abolition of the traffic in appointments betwixt governments and partisans by establishing strict competitive examinations in the public service. A variety of auspicious circumstances enables the present Administration to do this at a much smaller loss of party support than men who, longer in public life, are more or less, from the exigencies of things, committed to the evil that it is. Whatever time may show to be fatal in Mr. Forster's shortcomings, he has two premier qualities for this task,—the want of which in his predecessor, were he a Richelieu, a Mazarin, a Pombhal, or a Peel, would have disabled him from effecting change in an apparatus of government,—courage and honesty.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION (1860).

ONLY in New South Wales, where the importance of it should be perhaps most obvious, do people seem to look upon the great question of Australian Federation with indifference. It has been mentioned as an affair of moment in the speech placed by one Ministry in the vice-regal mouth, and extinguished, with the characteristic shuffle of Cowperism, by that of another. Our legislators can fight with the *acharnement* of a storming party, night after night, in the House, about questions too trivial almost for the attention of a rural municipality. But this great business of securing national growth and national advancement on a basis of territorial union, there is no one to call attention to. Mr. Deas Thompson did, we believe, take some preparatory action on the matter in the Legislative Council, but there it rests. Is the neglect because of a general belief that nothing good can come out of the Nazareth of that most ancient and honourable gentleman? Is the fact of a question, which is not only a party one, but transcends in magnitude and certainty of beneficial results all other general questions, taking

inception at the hands of Mr. Deas Thompson, sufficient to have left behind a deterring trail of the serpent?

But however supine we in New South Wales choose to be in this business, the neighbouring Colonies view it as its paramount importance deserves. Victoria, South Australia, and Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) have for a considerable time past, by their respective Legislatures, appointed delegates for the purpose of meeting to consider the matter fully, and of endeavouring to fix the terms of a Federation. The mother-territory of New South Wales has alone neglected to send representatives, and mainly from this cause, we believe, nothing has yet been done: either, therefore, our Parliament is infinitely more sagacious than the combined legislative wisdom of the three Colonies, and stands aloof with haughty indifference, for a thing too puerile to be even worth talking over; or otherwise, our rulers and our representatives are guilty of a dereliction of duty quite as worthy of debate as, for instance, the motion on which some nights since that illustrious triumvirate, Messrs. Weekes, Pemell, and Robertson, divided in the prettiest minority that ever found itself "like honey pots all of a row," since in very recent times representative bodies have come to be a laughing-stock.

Surely some of the public time set apart for such performances as the juvenile Member for Windsor's scapegrace levities and the ill-chosen asperities of the gentleman representing Paterson, might be devoted to the examination of the policy of endeavouring to effect the great scheme of Australian Federation.

The political benefits of Federation range themselves, we take it, into two classes. The first connects itself with the creation and preservation of a broad national polity. Though the advantages of this are directly and practically political, yet it is in its essential nature a moral and social gain. The curse of a small community in dealing with questions of State—that is, questions moving on great principles and liable to arrest from powerful interests—is the municipal spirit and the spirit of personality. These are intestine evils. But if the community be one of a group, it has external ones besides.

History, ancient and modern, illustrates this,—the wars of the Saxon Heptarchy, the feuds of the petty Irish monarchies, as well as the everlasting heart-burnings and strifes of the Italian and Flemish republics. Under the influence of this spirit, to hinder mutual progress and to do immense damage, it is not necessary that the spirit itself should take active practical shape, in vast armaments or invading squadrons. Its destroying power, under the conditions of modern society, when much of the military thirst of aggrandisement has given way to the commercial, may be felt in a variety of ways; and even in a group of British Colonies like our own strongly enough. It will be recollected, that during the period extending from the latter days of the American Colonial Confederation that sprang up to oppose British tyranny, to the times of the specific settlement of the Federal Union, the trade of these Colonies and their commercial honour were almost ruined by mutual jealousies and obstinacies. We suspect at this moment that there are Victorian and South Australian colonists who, as regards people from New South Wales or Tasmania, have the germs of that which in their native born descendants will ripen into national differences, and certain qualities of national feeling, about which resides some danger. And clearly, by way of a moment's digression, if the Australian Colonies are ever to become a powerful nation, it must for every conceivable reason, local and general, internal and external, be by union.

If, then, union be good, the sooner we have it the better, in order that the natives of the soil may as soon as possible feel themselves citizens of one great state and fellow-countrymen; particularly as there are immense practical advantages to come into operation the moment the thing is effected.

Let us have no local differences, some no doubt from ethnologic causes, but not a whit the more to be desired for that, and some for political reasons, both of which may be figured by the cases *qua* each other of the Englishman and the Scotchman, the Austrian and the Prussian. But of this first class of advantages of Federation, that which we would particularly insist upon as a sure result, is the elevation and enlargement of the nature of administration and of parliamentary govern-

ment on all great questions. The mischief to arise, and that has already arisen, by legislation on matters affecting Australian interests of general character, as contradistinguished from purely local affairs and local questions, would be kept in check, without interfering with the constitutional rights of the different colonies. We see here in New South Wales, day by day, election after election, what parliamentary government is coming to. The element to be most vigorously and thoroughly eliminated in a National Council is the merely municipal or parochial one. None brings in, while operating under motives perhaps honest and well intentioned enough, so much ulterior danger, none is so likely to prevent a new community from dealing with and treating all things in that advanced spirit which is creative of nationhood. We have men, worthy men no doubt, but altogether out of place, entering Parliament latterly, whom not only no employer would trust in matters requiring intelligence, capacity, and experience, matters of any profound, complex, or comprehensive kind,—but who, themselves, would claim no higher endowments than those which are loosely generalized under the phrase “common sense,” which means, in fact, the skill to drive a good bargain, to purchase store bullocks, or to do a “stroke” in land jobbing. To think of these men handling matters which may affect the country as a component of the Australian States, and so eventually affect entire Australian interests, is no very pleasant thought to people clearly alive to the possible power and glory and the benefits for mankind to flow from a great British Confederation in the Southern Ocean. In the administration of federal government on a larger arena we should have larger men; on a national platform we should have powers and sentiments of national bulk and comprehensiveness. Noble ambitions would have a noble field. Mr. A. or Mr. B., from various local causes such as we have seen exercising themselves around very little men indeed, in the recent Ministries in New South Wales, would on the floor of the Federal Chamber be reduced to the dimensions which really belong to small people away from Sydney, or Melbourne, or Adelaide, as the case may be, when challenged on the grounds of native and

actual incapacity to govern, and their equivocal abstract of character to be trusted. The other class of benefits a Federal Union of the Colonies would obtain us are too obvious to enlarge upon. A uniformity of tariff, an assimilation of land-policy, and ultimately a central power, somewhere, to *deal for purely national purposes* with the public lands, a harmonious because national management of mail systems, a large dealing with economics of immigration, a removal of all vexatious barriers of regulation likely to prevent the most fluent intercourse of the inhabitants of Australia, such as affect professional men and others, are amongst the benefits.

One has been touched upon, especially in this Journal,—the establishment of a Court of Appeal from the local supreme tribunals of the various colonies, which should supersede the only appeal at present existing,—that to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, so ruinously expensive and inconvenient as in effect to be prohibitory. In times of war, by Federation alone could the colonies effectively protect themselves, with England with enough to do on her hands elsewhere, as when war does break out she will have. And this, as an able Melbourne contemporary—the *Examiner*, we think—puts it, and not Dr. Lang’s *experimentum crucis* of “cutting the painter,” while the “painter” is an admirable appendage, is alone the way to meet war emergencies.

We have mentioned Dr. Lang. With that honourable and reverend gentleman we have few sympathies, and the measure of our respect for him is by no means large. But he is a man of great ability, and has far more of the statesman’s perception in him than is generally found amongst local men. From his turn of mind, and his habit, for years, of looking at Australian topics through a medium of national largeness, we know no man in the House, just now, in whose hands the question of Federalism would be safer.

PEN-AND-INK CARTOONS (1860).

PHILOSOPHICALLY considered, perhaps a *Punch* is objectionable. A laughing philosopher is an excellent thing in its way;