

"In studying the history of the past," says Freeman, "we are studying the history of the future," and it is only by looking before and after that we can conjecture how New Zealand's position would be effected by her inclusion in the Commonwealth. To look back: history tells us that the first impulse to modern commerce was given by the formation of the Hanseatic League, the constitution of which was signed, in 1340, by the representatives of sixty cities, and forty-four confederates, scattered in different parts of the Baltic and North Seas; and its power waned under the ravaging influence of the Thirty Years' War (1618—1638) only to yield supremacy in trade to the United Provinces.—a confederation of a monarchy with several aristocracies. Yet this confederation, formed though it was of elements so incongruous, long led the other nations in commercial prosperity and enterprise. The marvellous growth of the United States, as a confederation, is too patent to need comment. What power did the congeries of states that constituted the German Empire wield, constantly at war with one another, and stunting national development by artificial Customs barriers? Yet to-day United Germany speaks with a voice that reverberates among the nations of the world. But, perhaps, Canada teaches us the most instructive lessons. The nucleus of the Dominion of Canada was formed in 1867 by the union of Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick; in 1873 the union was strengthened by the accession of Manitoba, British Columbia, and Prince Edward Island. Nova Scotia was at first reluctant to join, but was fortunate enough to possess in Sir Charles Tupper a statesman of consummate ability and clear foresight, whose strong personality and fine intellect so far overcame the pessimism and ignorance of the opponents of union, as to secure the inclusion of that State in the original Commonwealth. Newfoundland curiously remained isolated, and, while all the States in the Dominion have advanced in wealth, population and prosperity, and, while the Dominion has produced statesmen who have

attained to world-wide eminence, Newfoundland has only succeeded in producing men notorious for their corruption and shamelessness, while the misgovernment of the colony has resulted in national bankruptcy and political chaos. Its colonists now seek to escape from their burdens, and improve their sorry plight, by selling their public works and, with them, their power of self-government, to a virtual dictator. These historic parallels show how national development is fostered by federation. Newfoundland stands out as a striking example of the retribution that may overtake a colony, whose shortsighted policy blinds it to the advantages that union would lavish upon it. And, while it does not follow that New Zealand, with her immeasurably greater resources, would suffer the same deplorable fate as Newfoundland if she decides to remain outside the pale of the Commonwealth, yet the conviction forces itself upon me, after a careful study of the question, that such isolation on the part of New Zealand would be disastrous to her political life, to the development of her natural resources, and to the evolution of the comprehensive scheme of defence, upon which her very existence depends. It is in this order that I propose to deal with the cogent reasons why New Zealand should become a State in the new Commonwealth, before answering the specious objections that have been advanced against it.

It is notorious that in New Zealand many of our ablest citizens decline to enter political life—they prefer to practice their professions, supervise their farms, control their businesses, or, if they be men of leisure, to seek convivial companions at their clubs, or the quiet seclusion of their studies, rather than become entangled in the petty strifes and provincial bickerings, beyond which our political life cannot rise. But to a high-souled man the charm of controlling the destinies of millions is irresistible; it requires a more matured judgment, a more delicate weighing of facts; it enlarges the mental horizon, and generates a high order of statesmanship, that only the discussion of