

GREAT BRITAIN AND ITS
COLONIES.

THE OBSTACLES TO IMPERIAL FEDERATION

BY

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THE OBSTACLES TO IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

To Turgot is assigned the saying that colonies, like fruit, drop off the parent tree when ripe. The statement is certainly supported by experience. The severance from the mother country or central authority of the colonies of the old world was only a question of time. The dominions of Greece and Rome, Venice and Genoa, in more remote, and of Spain and Holland in more recent times fell to pieces as local diversities increased and the sense of independence grew. In the case of the American colonies of England the tie of common allegiance proved too weak for the strain of opposite interests. It may have been the accident of the tea duties that led to the loss of America, but these accidents will arise in history, and precipitate events that would have come sooner or later without them. Revolutions are not caused by the occasions on which the signs of them become first apparent. It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that what has been is the unfailling test of what will be, or that history invariably repeats its great phases. There may have been something in the conditions of the scattered dominions of the past that made disruption inevitable—something which either modern conditions do not contain or new relations can counteract. On this account the demand for Imperial federation is not to be met with a mere epigram. The question is too important to be shelved without consideration. If Imperial federation be the only alternative to the separation of England and the colonies, it calls for a little more attention than, from colonials at all events, it has hitherto received.

The term "Imperial federation," as the late Professor Freeman pointed out, is misleading. Imperialism has no place in a system of Federal Government, which excludes all ideas of sovereignty inconsistent with the theory of equal rights among the members of the federa-

ration. Under a federation sovereignty for the purposes of the union resides in a central body, to which all the States and citizens stand in the same relation. Federation means the union for certain purposes of States, which for all other purposes retain their independence. It does not matter whether the central or federal body takes, as in the case of the United States of America, only certain delegated powers, or, as in the case of Canada, all powers not expressly reserved to the component members. In either case the central and local authorities are completely distinct; both are supreme within their respective spheres, and claim direct allegiance from the citizens. In this respect a federation is very different from a confederacy or alliance of several States. Under a confederacy the central body—it would be a misnomer to call it power—has not direct authority over the citizens, and can only act through the State Governments. Having no Executive its requisitions, if disregarded, cannot be enforced; and the history of the American Confederation, which preceded the present Federal Union, shows that requisitions are seldom respected by States that find them disagreeable. It may be regarded as absolutely certain that no Act of the present Federal Council of Australia would receive the least respect from a colony by which it was considered to any extent onerous. An Alliance is nothing more than an agreement to act together in certain contingencies. Neither a Confederacy nor an Alliance would attain the ends sought through Imperial federation. The latter system, therefore, involves the establishment of a central body, with absolute power for certain purposes over the citizens of the Empire, if the use of the term may for convenience be continued. It means a diminution, by surrender or delegation of some of them to a new body, of the powers of the

various Legislatures of the United Kingdom and the colonies. The Imperial Parliament is theoretically omnipotent now in all matters, and effectively omnipotent in regard to the internal affairs of the United Kingdom and the external relations of the Empire. It created colonial Constitutions by Act of Parliament, and in theory can by Act of Parliament abolish them. The foreign policy of the Empire is controlled from Westminster. As the Imperial Parliament is representative only of the people of the United Kingdom, the latter must, if they want Imperial federation, consent to, in theory at all events, a considerable curtailment of their powers. The omnipotence of the Imperial Parliament is now practically absolute. It is only qualified by the fact, to which Locke refers, "that the Legislature cannot transfer the power of making laws into other hands, for it is merely a delegated power from the people." But the implied delegation is for all purposes of government complete. Some of the powers thus, by necessary implication, received from the people have, contrary to the maxim, *delegatus non potest delegare*, been transferred to colonial Legislatures, and, as a matter of strict right, can be diminished or resumed.

A federation of England and the colonies would necessitate a redistribution of powers among the Legislatures of the Empire, and probably involve the creation of a new legislative body to deal with federal affairs. The Imperial Parliament would no longer be supreme. If it were not transformed into the Federal Legislature it would become a subordinate Legislature dealing only with the internal affairs of the United Kingdom. If it became the Federal Legislature its powers would extend only to purely federal affairs, and would be incapable of enlargement or diminution without the consent of the various members of the federation. It would no longer be representative only of or controlled only by the people of the United Kingdom. The Constitutions of the colonies would be beyond recall or variation at the fiat of any paramount Legislature. The colonies, on the other hand, would become in some respects more and in other respects less independent. They would have an absolute right to legislate within certain limits, and the Acts of Parliament within those limits could be repealed or amended only by the Legislature that passed them. Their independence would, however, be

lessened by the fact that the Federal Legislature would deal with all questions not purely local, and that the Federal Executive could enforce the federal laws directly against persons and property in the colonies.

Whether the proposed members of the federation are prepared for such a redistribution of powers is a matter of rather loose conjecture. Proposals are often tolerated when general which when specific arouse considerable opposition. The colonies are as yet profoundly indifferent on the question. They regard Imperial federation as a policy too far removed from the lines of the probable to be worth the trouble of serious attention. It is not likely that the people of the United Kingdom will adopt the federal arrangement, with its consequent diminution of power and prestige, without being convinced of its substantial advantages. The constitutional change would be greater than the considerations mentioned suggest. It would involve the substitution of a fixed for an unwritten constitution, and thus diminish or destroy that special quality of flexibility which constitutes the essential merit of the British Constitution. There would be no longer any automatic adjustment of constitutional relations to new conditions as they arise. The cumbersome method of constitutional conventions, or some method analogous to it, would have to be adopted to effect any proposed changes, for there would be no longer any paramount body occupying a relationship similar to that in which the Imperial Parliament now stands to the Canadian Dominion, capable of enacting what is required; and to vest Legislative sovereignty in the Legislature itself would, as Mr. A. V. Dicey says, "be inconsistent with the aim of federalism, namely, the permanent division between the spheres of the national government and the several States." Federalism, which at best is but a compromise rather than an absolute good, must, if adopted, be accepted with its disadvantages.

These considerations have, of course, reference only to a real federation. That is what the Imperial Federalists aim at, unless the title of their League is doubly deceptive. The objects of the League were at its formation in 1884 declared in the following resolutions:—"1. That in order to secure the permanent unity of the Empire some form of federation is essential. 2. That no scheme of federation should interfere with the existing rights of local Parliaments as regards

local affairs. 3. That any scheme of Imperial Federation should combine on an equitable basis the resources of the Empire for the maintenance of common interests, and adequately provide for an organized defence of common rights." The policy of the League has, indeed, become, if anything, less specific in time. In the course of an inaugural address delivered by him as President of the Leeds Branch of the Imperial Federation League on April 1, 1892, Sir Lyon Playfair, M.P., said that the idea of an Imperial Parliament as a grand Council of the whole Empire was not at the present time, though it might be in the future, within the range of practical politics. He, however, thought that a grand Council of Imperial defence with colonial representation and power to influence the issues of peace and war was possible of realization. Such a Council, if without an executive, could not, except by an abuse of language, be called federal. Respect springs from power, and without power an advisory body might in vain express its wisdom in resolutions. The body that controls the Cabinet controls the issues of peace and war. The sense of responsibility makes Ministers decide according to their interpretation of Parliamentary opinion. It is this that makes the House of Commons the supreme power in the Empire, and would continue to keep it such notwithstanding the creation of any Council, however representative its character, capable of issuing mandates without sanctions. To give the Council an executive would mean to federate the members of the Empire, for the arrangement could not work without that co-ordination of parts and organic unity which federalism, to be effective, should always display.

"Federalism," says Freeman, "is out of place if it attempts either to break asunder what is already more closely united, or to unite what is wholly incapable of union." In some respects England and her colonies are more closely united than any federal arrangement could make them; in others they are practically separate. The theoretical supremacy over colonial Legislatures of the Imperial Parliament is characteristic of a consolidation which means unity, the absence of colonial representation or control of external relations implies subordination, while the practical freedom enjoyed by the colonies, and deference to their requisitions paid by the Imperial Government, suggest independence. The relation of the

colonies to the mother country is, therefore, an anomalous one. By its closeness in one respect, and by its looseness in another, it renders the application of Freeman's test difficult. Does Imperial federation mean an attempt "to unite what is wholly incapable of union."

The history of federalism seems to prove that the union sought by a federal arrangement has been suggested, and for some purposes necessitated, by geographical proximity. The Swiss Cantons united to enable them the better to resist the aggressions of Austria, the Netherlands united to strike the harder against Spain, the American colonies to shake off England, while in each case contiguity rendered the maintenance, in warlike times, of peace difficult, and political union its best preservative. In each of these cases separation was the real alternative to federal union. The necessity of union between the three original Swiss Cantons in 1291 was quite as great as between the twenty-two which in this century were welded into the present confederation. The racial, religious, and political diversities were too great to admit of consolidation, and without that degree of mutual union for which federalism provides the individual cantons would have been crushed to pieces between the militant despotisms of France and Austria. Geographical proximity emphasized the necessity and suggested the remedy. The case of the American States was similar. Ten years before the revolution Otis said that "were the colonies left to themselves to-morrow America would be a mere shambles of blood and confusion before little petty States could be settled." When they cut the connection with England and were left to themselves the colonies had really no alternative to federation. Mutual separation would have meant increase of divergencies, and comparative incapacity against external aggression. The Union was, in fact, as Adams says, "extorted from the grinding necessity of a reluctant people." It was, as in the case of the Swiss cantons, their juxtaposition that rendered their mutual isolation dangerous and made federation possible. But the conditions of Great Britain and her colonies are essentially different.

It has been said, as Professor Seeley reminds us in his "Expansion of England," that the British Empire is one "on which the sun never sets," and "whose morning drum-beat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, en-

circles the globe with an unbroken chain of martial airs." The population of about 350,000,000 is scattered all over the globe, being in some places, as in Australia, very small, and in others, as in the United Kingdom, very large in proportion to territorial area. It contains types of almost all the races that sprang from Adam's loins, whose diversities of language and social institutions exemplify the various stages of civilization. The forms of government exhibit polar differences, from the sovereign and responsible system of the United Kingdom, the federal and responsible system of Canada, the responsible systems of Australia and the Cape of Good Hope, the representative systems of the West Indies, to the Imperial system of India and the Crown Governments of Ceylon, Mauritius, the Straits Settlements, &c. The Roman Empire itself was not composed of more heterogeneous elements. This very heterogeneity would, if the territorial area was unbroken, render the confederation of some of the members at least, if not a necessity, a consummation to be desired, but make it, under the actual conditions of local separation, an impossibility. This fact is partly admitted by the advocates of Imperial federation when they propose to limit the application of their system to the United Kingdom and colonies enjoying representative government. To extend representative institutions to India would probably mean to put an end to British rule there, but with its present system of government India could not be admitted to representation in the Federal Parliament of the Empire. The question of want of uniformity of the franchise is one of the chief obstacles to Australian federation. Had Western Australia not acquired responsible government she would not have been admitted to representation in the National Australasian Convention of 1891. But the idea of allowing the half-civilized masses of India to govern themselves as Australians do cannot be tolerated for many generations. India, therefore, cannot become a member of an Imperial Federal system. It must, like the many minor dependencies of the United Kingdom, continue to be governed as a dependency, a fact which renders the complete federation of the Empire for the present impossible. Imperial federation thus appears to be a misnomer for the admission to the absolute sovereignty of the Empire of all

British subjects enjoying representative and responsible government.

It is said that "the chief forces which hold a community together and cause it to constitute one State are three—common nationality, common religion, and common interest." Both Canada and South Africa contain mixed nationalities, and the German element in Australia is by no means insignificant. The first of the three forces is really communality of language, and to that there is a nearer approach than to ethnological unity. Common religion does not exist. Burke's remark about the American colonists displaying "the dissidence of dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion" must not be forgotten. The bitterest differences have been sectarian—between those professing different forms of the same fundamental belief, not, to use generic terms, between Christian and infidel. Professor Seeley, the champion of Imperial federation, unconsciously weakens rather than strengthens his own case when he finds in religious schisms the spirit that drove America into separation from England and turned offended colonists into a new nation. Community of interest, except as an accident of commerce and the political connection, does not exist to any great extent. In commercial matters, notwithstanding the platitude that trade follows the flag, it is independent of the political bond. The trade between England and America increased after the War of Independence. "As soon as the connection was severed," asks Herman Merivale in his work on "Colonization," "what was the consequence? Did the industrious colonists become 'sluggish foreigners' and cease to supply goods fast enough to meet the cravings of the Liverpool and London markets? Was our profitable colonial trade turned into a losing foreign trade? All the world knows, on the contrary, that the commerce between the mother country and the colonies was but a peddling traffic compared to the vast international intercourse, the greatest the world has ever known, which grew up between them when they exchanged the tie of subjection for that of equality." If the history of the trade relations of England and her colonies and dependencies be examined it will be found that if trade follows the flag it is chiefly because the force of the mother country has made it.

To say that trade follows the flag is to admit that there is no necessity for a Customs Union between Great Britain

and the colonies. The Customs Union is one of the planks of the Federal platform. Neither the platitude nor the policy will stand examination.

The value of the total external trade of the United Kingdom in 1890 was £748,944,115; of this £190,683,683 was with British possessions, more than a third of which, or £67,898,805, was with India. About 75 per cent., therefore, of the external trade is with foreign countries. The trade with Australasia is $7\frac{1}{3}$ per cent., and with the North American colonies not quite 3 per cent. of the whole. The trade with her colonies thus appears not to be of supreme importance to the mother country. That it does not depend on the flag is evident. Community of language, the political connection, and protective tariffs, have their respective slight effects upon trade, but on the whole the commerce of nations is regulated by the law of supply and demand. Canada trades more largely with the United States than with the United Kingdom, simply because it pays her better to do so. The trade with Canada is only 10·86, while the trade with Australasia is 28·75 per cent. of the total trade of the United Kingdom with British possessions, a disproportion which is inconsistent with the flag theory, and is explained by the principle that trade when unaffected by navigation laws follows the easiest and most profitable courses. Comparisons of the increases of trade with foreign countries and British possessions lead to the same conclusion. Between 1876 and 1890 the trade of the United Kingdom with the United States increased from £96,125,635 to £143,623,361, while in the same period the trade of the United Kingdom with the North American Colonies only increased from £19,048,699 to £20,717,232. The increase of the trade with Australasia was from £42,431,992 to £54,821,038, and the difference in favour of the increase with the United States is the more significant when it is remembered that the Australasian trade of the United Kingdom has since 1876 been greatly swollen by loans, while the redemption of American bonds held in the United Kingdom, which previously must have swollen the English trade with the States, has recently been checked by the fact that there are now none overdue and so capable of being redeemed.

Between the years 1876 and 1890 the trade of the United Kingdom with some

British possessions has increased; with others it has diminished. It appears to have followed the law of supply and demand. During the same period the trade of some of the British possessions with some foreign countries has, under the operation of the same law of commercial convenience and profit, very largely increased. The imports of India from Germany, for instance, increased from £9,079 to £564,145, and the exports from £198,738 to £2,782,311. The expansion of the Australasian trade also shows that the foreigner is becoming favoured.

By far the greater part of the external trade of Australasia is with the United Kingdom. Notwithstanding the operation of protective tariffs trade with the mother country has been found the most convenient and profitable. As a percentage of the total external trade of Australasia, however, it is declining. It was 77·4 per cent. in 1881 and 74·9 in 1890. The Australasian trade with foreign countries increased in the same period from 11·2 per cent. to 17·8 per cent. of the total external trade. "Prior to the year 1883," says Mr. Cogan, Government Statistician of New South Wales, in his "Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia," published in 1892, "the trade between Australasia and the United Kingdom had been growing steadily, both absolutely and as compared with the whole volume of trade. Since then, however, direct commercial relations have been established with the leading European Continental countries, and though the trade with the United Kingdom is still large in 1890 it showed a falling-off to the extent of nearly £3,000,000 as compared with the previous year, while the share obtained by Belgium, France, and Germany, had considerably increased. During the past nine years trade with the United Kingdom had increased by £6,359,304, equal to nearly 13 per cent.; the trade of Australasia with foreign countries had increased during the same period £6,169,497, or 86 per cent. The trade with the British possessions outside Australasia had never been of much value, and is now less than formerly, having fallen from £7,336,156 in 1881 to £5,476,404 in 1890."

That the trade of the United Kingdom and the colonies is affected by patriotic considerations is a fallacy. Trade goes where it pays best. The capital of England was what Australia wanted

for its speedy development, and in the matter of commodities England was the customer that gave the best terms. Trade shifts as conditions change, and now that it suits Australians to do so they increase their commercial relations with foreign countries. The total trade of Australasia with British possessions was in 1881 £57,340,763 and in 1890 £61,840,315. With foreign countries the figures were respectively £7,213,915 and £13,383,412. That Australasia borrows largely from England renders the comparison more striking. The fact that the Canadian Dominion is to be credited with 10·86 per cent., and Australasia with 28·75 per cent. of the total trade of the United Kingdom with British possessions is scarcely reconcilable with the theory that trade follows the flag. The Canadian trade, notwithstanding heavy protective tariffs, is now greater with the United States than with the United Kingdom. Since the introduction of direct steam communication between Australasia and the Continent of Europe the Australasian trade with Europe has greatly increased. The North German line of steamers began to run in 1887, and other direct lines have since been established. Between 1881 and 1890 the Australasian trade with Germany increased from £296,094 to £2,406,603, and with Belgium from £127,150 to £2,034,282. The greater part of the Australian wool shipped for the Continent now goes by way of Antwerp instead of London.

It is, therefore, exceedingly improbable that the severance of the political tie between England and the colonies would result in a diminution of their mutual trade. The diminution would require to be very great, and that it would involve an absolute loss to each should be shown, before, and when the occasion for a change arises, Imperial federation can be accepted as an alternative to cutting the connection. A Customs union of the British Empire would probably be the beginning of the end of British commercial supremacy. A protective tariff to exclude the foreigner is contemplated, and how injurious such a tariff would be to the United Kingdom, 75 per cent. of whose external trade is with foreign countries, may easily be imagined. Australasia would probably gain by the change, as, according to the 1890 statistics, £56,363,911 of its total external trade of £75,223,727 is with the

United Kingdom. As protective tariffs already exist in the Australasian Colonies, the increase of the Australasian foreign trade would only be affected by the possible shifting of some of the foreign trade to some of the British possessions within the free-trade ring. No new fiscal barrier would be erected between Australasia and foreign countries, but one between Australasia and British possessions would be removed.

The incidental advantages to the Canadian Dominion would be similar. For these advantages to the colonies the United Kingdom would have to pay. India also would suffer. In 1890 £65,115,115 of her total imports of £86,656,990 were from the United Kingdom, and £9,817,229 from British possessions, but her exports to the United Kingdom amounted to only £39,592,020, and to other British possessions £22,883,608 of a total of £105,366,720. In the case of India, therefore, there would be a considerable export trade to foreign countries to be affected by a protective tariff, and as her export trade to British colonies with protective tariff is at present only about one and a half millions the incidental advantages to her of the Britannic free-trade ring would be next to nothing.

Commercial union on the free-trade principle may be regarded as out of the question. The colonies have adopted protection, and protection is a vice that is not easily shaken off. Even a free-trade tariff, applicable to so many communities, would have its difficulties, as, owing to the fact that the principal commodities on which a revenue tariff falls are produced in some British possessions, free trade in one part of the Empire would mean protection in another. The burden of the Customs revenue, therefore, would be very unequally distributed. The difficulties of framing a protective tariff would, of course, be vastly greater. Both a free-trade and a protective tariff would in different degrees be open to the great objection that they could not easily be modified. To readjust the fiscal burdens of such an Empire as the British would exhaust the resources of political compromise. In addition a Fiscal Union on the protective principle would place the Empire in commercial antagonism to the rest of the world, and probably involve the loss of such possessions as the West Indies and Guiana, the greater part of whose trade is with foreign countries.

It is in relation to the question of Imperial defence that the best case can be made out for the federation of the Empire. Whether the British Empire is to become a series of independent States, or the military unity, which is at present rather a sentiment than a practical institution, is to become a reality, is, as Sir Charles Dilke says in his recent work on "Imperial Defence," "the greatest question that has to be answered by the present generation of Englishmen." The United Kingdom may soon ask the colonies to make up their minds one way or the other on this point. Until it is known whether the colonies are willing to co-operate with the mother country for the purpose of mutual defence no fixed plan for the defences of the Empire can be settled. The position of the colonies is at present somewhat similar to that of the American colonies upon the same question before the revolutionary war. The burden of colonial defence then fell on Great Britain. The colonies objected to contribute to their own defence, and would neither tax themselves nor allow Great Britain to tax them for the purpose. The United Kingdom has now to protect a commerce of £748,000,000. Of this £190,000,000 is with British possessions, and to the extent of that trade the British possessions are mutually interested with the mother country in Imperial defences. Besides this, British possessions have a trade of about £275,000,000 with foreign countries, which trade is also protected by the British fleet. The protection of the mutual trade of the United Kingdom and the colonies is a matter of far greater moment to the Australian Colonies than to the United Kingdom. While only 7½ per cent. of the trade of the United Kingdom is with Australasia 74·9 per cent. of the trade of Australia is with the United Kingdom. For the support of the navy engaged in protecting the Empire and its commerce the United Kingdom contributes over £14,000,000, and the rest of the Empire under £400,000. As Sir John Colomb puts it, the United Kingdom contributes 19s. 5¼d., and the colonies and dependencies 6¼d. of every £1 of naval expenditure. The contribution of the Australian Colonies is £126,000, made up of £91,000, the sum payable for maintenance, and £35,000, the amount of interest at 5 per cent. on the cost of construction, of the Australian Naval Squadron. The colonies also, of course, provide for harbour defences.

The taxpayers of the United Kingdom may reasonably object to having to bear nearly the whole burden of the naval defences of the Empire. They also have to pay the interest on a national debt that was incurred for Imperial purposes. The debt was really contracted in building up the Empire, and it is, therefore, not without some reason that the advocates of Imperial Federation urge that the colonies and dependencies should bear some portion of its burdens. That the colonies have their own local debts is no answer to the claim. These debts were chiefly contracted for purposes of development, and are represented by tangible assets. The colonies and dependencies may be said to have been part of the assets representing the Imperial national debt, but they are no longer a source of either profit or revenue to the United Kingdom. They, however, enjoy the protection of the mother country. The Newfoundland and the Behring Sea fisheries disputes are purely colonial questions, yet within the last two years they considerably embarrassed England in her relations with France and the United States respectively. Had England been involved in war with France over the Newfoundland fisheries dispute it would have been for an object of no direct interest to herself, and for a people that contribute nothing to the Imperial expenditure.

Under present conditions it has been well said that the United Kingdom has too much of the burden and the colonies too little of the power. But the colonies will not pay for the power. That is really what the supporters of the federal policy ask them to do. The Federalists say that the present arrangements cannot continue indefinitely, and that the colonies must either be represented and taxed or drift towards separation. They will probably drift. The colonies will pay as little as they can towards Imperial burdens, and are not likely to look for a status that can only be acquired by a practical limitation of their local independence. This position, however unsound it may be considered, is almost of a certainty the one they will assume. They will hesitate a long time before recognising any force in the claim that they should bear some of the burden of the English national debt and contribute to the maintenance of the navy in proportion to the protection afforded by the flag.

Separated from the United Kingdom

the individual colonies would for some years to come have very little weight in international affairs. At present they have the prestige and power of the Empire at their back. They now enjoy a comparative immunity from attack, which to a great extent depends upon the very fact that the forces of the Empire are scattered. "It is not alone," says Sir John Colomb, "the few ships on the Australian station . . . that render Australia safe from attack. It is also the ships in the European waters, in the North Pacific waters, and elsewhere throughout the world which, by closing up hostile ports of issue at the commencement of a war, would prevent the dispatch of an expedition in force too great to be resisted by the squadron of local defence." Such considerations should prevent the colonies from under-rating the advantages of the connection. These advantages might after separation be obtained by an alliance, but an alliance of such scattered communities would be an arrangement much more difficult than a federation. It would bind a community on one side of the globe to support another in its quarrels on the other side without the first having the least voice in either preventing or stopping hostilities. As long as the militant spirit exists the odds would be in favour of some member of the alliance every few years suspending its diplomatic relations with some foreign State. Alliances answer well when they are either very small or very large. In the one case they are based upon the solid foundation of unity of interest and geographical compactness; in the other they really amount to a treaty of peace between possible belligerents. But an alliance between the separated members of the Empire would not fulfil the conditions of either of the effective forms. The *casus belli* would affect one or two communities, but could scarcely be expected to affect them all, though all would be obliged to take part in hostilities. The great European alliances did not long outlive the occasions of mutual interest that called them into existence.

The colonies, in considering the alternatives of federation or separation between which they will eventually have to choose, cannot leave out of account the probable decadence of the military spirit. All systems have their day, and sooner or later reach the limits of their effectiveness. The industrial is undoubtedly the spirit of the future. The

days of militancy are numbered, and though a generation or two may pass away yet before "the battle flags are furled" the time must come when international opinion will force nations to adjust their differences with some other arbiter than the sword. Notwithstanding the armed peace of Europe and the pettishness and bluster in which the party politicians of the United States occasionally indulge towards the mother country, the tendency is to extend the arbitration principle. International law had practically no existence a hundred years ago, but during the last half-century the moral sanctions through which it secures obedience are becoming more and more respected. This change in the international spirit cannot be overlooked. It is a factor which must influence the colonies in deciding whether they will enter into a permanent federation with the United Kingdom for objects which may be better obtained without any political arrangement before another generation has passed away. Institutions that survive their objects are invariably a source of evil.

The machinery of Imperial federation must necessarily be complex and difficult to work. No recognised scheme of federation has yet been published, but such as have been suggested indicate the difficulties of applying the principle. It has been suggested by a Canadian lecturer on the subject that the Imperial Federal Parliament should consist of the entire English House of Commons, and of members of the colonial Legislatures in numbers bearing the same proportion to the populations of the several colonies that the number of members in the House of Commons does to the population of the United Kingdom. This would mean at the outset a House of about 850 members. As the basis of representation becomes more democratic, representatives become more self-assertive, and colonial members in particular would probably seek to justify the trust reposed in them by continually keeping themselves in evidence. Would the existence of such a Parliament lead to more good than evil? It is questionable. The functions of this legislative body, too unmanageable from its constitution and size, would necessarily be very few, and would only extend to such questions as Imperial defences, commerce, and diplomatic relations. If not soon exhausted the Federal Parliament would acquire even a greater

notoriety than other Legislatures for continually mischievously meddling with great affairs. A legislative body of about a thousand members might be expected to degenerate into a mob. As the population of the colonies increased the number of members would be much greater than a thousand. The representation of India, which cannot for ever remain in tutelage, would swell the membership to proportions that must render effectiveness impossible.

The advocates of Imperial Federation should seriously consider what their policy means. The change suggested is no light one, and may if realized do incalculable injury to the United Kingdom. The Federal arrangement, if a failure, cannot last, and must lead to severance of the connection under circumstances that may result in a few generations of mutual ill-feeling. That failure is probable the conditions of the case most forcibly suggest. The federation advocated is against all precedent; a federation of communities scattered all over the globe, some of them already united by the federal tie, some of them isolated, with antagonistic tariffs and interests that by consequence are assumed by the governing bodies to be mutually opposed. It would mean what appears on the face of it to be impossible, an attempt to govern a great Empire through a Parliament, the largest since the institution of representative government, and composed of members not likely to express their individualities, and thoroughly democratic in their methods. An Empire such as the British cannot be governed by a single debating Society. It has become a reality only through the active wisdom of a few and the passive sympathy of the many. Had William Pitt been hampered by a self-assertive mob of clever debaters, pulling their various ways according to the importunate interests they represented, he would never have made England towards the close of

George II's. reign the first country in the world. It was when the nation, and Parliament it's reflex, became convulsed by faction that the great Minister fell, and, as Macaulay says, "the spectacle was seen of English blood shed by English bayonets, our armies capitulating, our conquests wrested from us, our enemies hastening to take vengeance for past humiliation, our flag scarcely able to maintain itself in our seas." For Empire the dominance of a few energetic and powerful minds seems necessary. For industrial development and civil freedom democratic rule is, or at least will be when Democrats learn to leave their own limbs unfettered, the best. It was men like Clive, not the East India Company, that made India. Militancy and Empire go together. The past is for Empire, the future for industrialism. The military basis of the federal union would not last, while the commercial basis is really impracticable, and would be aimed at the destruction of three-fourths of the trade of England. If separation be, as it appears to be, the alternative, when the hour arrives the inevitable must be faced. The gradual changes of the last few years in the relations of the mother country and the colonies indicate clearly enough the direction in which events are tending. If, as the natural development of existing conditions, the political connection must eventually be severed, the parting will take place in friendship, and the old ties of blood, language, and history will be found more powerful than the now practically useless political bond. There need be no fear [for] the old country. In making the Empire England alone sustained the burden of the strife, and with concentrated energies and diminished responsibilities she will continue with stout heart to face the chances of the future.