

UNIFICATION OF THE EMPIRE

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[We make no apology for inserting an article by the president of this Company dealing with two of the most important problems which are now coming before the statesmen of the Empire for solution. The question of closer relations between Canada and the British West Indian Islands is coming again into prominence and is one in which Mr. Macaulay has long taken a deep interest. The problem of Imperial consolidation, as it applies to all parts of the Empire scattered throughout the world, is, however, of vastly greater importance. The opinions of Mr. Macaulay on questions to which he has given so much thought are deserving of the utmost consideration. These articles show the broad, statesmanlike vision of the president of this Company. We would suggest to our readers that they may do excellent work in the direction of strengthening and consolidating our Empire by forwarding marked copies of these articles to any persons who would be interested and likely to have some influence in furthering the movement or in forming public opinion.—Editor.]



ANADIANS who are interested in West Indian affairs cannot but have been gratified to observe that the question of closer relationship between Jamaica and Canada, and indeed between the Islands generally and Canada, is again being discussed, and apparently in a most sympathetic manner. We gather from West Indian friends and West Indian newspapers that there is a growing and surprisingly general desire for a closer partnership of some kind with the Dominion, but that there is also considerable perplexity as to what definite form such partnership should assume and what steps should be taken to bring it into effect.

This development is but one phase of a movement which is Empire-wide, and second in importance and interest only to the war itself. Wherever the British flag flies a powerful sentiment exists in favour of a closer linking up of the scattered units which constitute the Empire. There is a general realization that while these units have hitherto in the main thought and acted almost as a group of independent states, hereafter they must think and act imperially. There is too much truth in the charge that, in commercial matters at least, each portion of the Empire has had an horizon limited to its own boundaries and its own supposed interests. Hereafter each, without overlooking the local needs, must widen its vision sufficiently to include also the sister members of the Empire.

Prior to the war, Germans scoffed at our Empire as one which existed but in name, the constituent parts having neither commercial nor military interests in common, and being held together by ties so slight that at the first severe strain they would break. It was but another of their marvellous miscalculations, and in years to come history will record that Germany herself was the great force that consolidated the British Empire. Whatever other

results the war may produce, it is at least clear that Empire relationships can never again be on the old, selfish, isolated basis. The war has revealed to us our past commercial folly and its terrible consequences. We have at last got the vision of the Empire as a family. We realize that family sentiment and family interest require us so to develop our family resources as not merely to add to the prosperity of the individual member, but also to add to the prosperity and strength of the whole family.

The Imperial preferences granted by Canada and other parts of the Empire, the commercial treaties between Canada and many of the West Indian Islands, and similar measures are brilliant exceptions to the usual indifference to all but local considerations and are tributes to the wide vision of the statesmen who introduced those measures. Empire co-operation is, however, yet but in its infancy. It is now admitted that the resources and efforts of the Empire should be mobilized and unified, not merely for purposes of the war, but also for purposes of peace and commerce. In any scheme for Empire consolidation, questions of Imperial politics, Imperial representation and allied matters, arise of necessity, and are of the utmost importance; but personally I feel strongly that the basic and primary problem which we have to face is commercial. It is the commercial aspect of our Empire relationships which grips the mass of our people in times of peace, and if we can establish vast, close, intimate and mutually profitable trade within the family circle, so that the trade relations of each member with the other members of the Imperial family shall become of dominating importance, those trade relations will themselves supply solutions for many of the other Imperial problems, and will assist in the solution of even those that remain, step by step, along the lines of a natural evolution.

But it is not merely from the standpoint of