

is probably no subject exercising more intently the minds of publicists at home than the issues presented by the forthcoming Imperial Conference. These issues have an interest also for the man in the street and the man who writes to the newspapers,—especially in London, where the democracy has become habituated, through Jubilees and Coronations, to the splendour of Imperial pageants. And the English press gives a due share of attention and prominence to the whole matter. In the view of a dweller in the Dominion the question may now rather appear to be: Is Canada sufficiently interested? Not to speak of her leaders, are the masses of population throughout the length and breadth of the country conscious of the importance of the issues involved? Is opinion being formulated for them in an intelligent and intelligible way? Are Canadians, in short, alive to the fact that this too is a great “moment of history”?

The distinctive feature about the forthcoming conference is that it is the first that has been specially summoned, apart from some great imperial celebration, and the first for which arrangements have been made in anything more than a merely informal way. The attempt has been made to frame a regular business programme. There is to be a definite paper of agenda. To this paper the Government of Canada declared that it had no new subject to add,—the obvious inference being that it will be well content if the items left over from previous meetings can now be disposed of. On the other hand, even the Canadian Government does not withhold its approval from the substitution of “Imperial” for “Colonial,” and the title “Imperial Conference” stands therefore, by anticipation, at the head of this paper.

Twenty years have now passed by since the first Conference was held in London in connexion with the Queen’s Jubilee of 1887. The colonies were not specially invited to send their Prime Ministers to it, but in addition to the agent-general or other specially deputed representative each Government was at liberty to include any leading public man who might happen to go to England for the Jubilee, and who might be