

## A United Empire.

At a meeting of the Montreal Branch of the Imperial Federation League in Canada held on Monday, the 21st December, 1885, at which Mr. Henry Lyman, Chairman, presided, the following paper was read by Mr. Thomas Macfarlane, F.R.S.C., and is published at the request of the Branch:—

The news of the formation of an Imperial Federation league, by some of the foremost statesmen and administrators of the Empire, was indeed glad tidings to many of us. In many loyal hearts, scattered far and wide throughout Britain's vast colonial possessions, the thought of a United Empire has been hidden away for years like a dream, the realization of which seemed too much even to hope for. A hundred years ago it was more than a dream to the U. E. Loyalists. It was to them a hope, a religion, which caused them to fight on a losing side, to sacrifice house and homestead, and to begin a new exile in the primitive forests of Canada, but upon British soil and under the British flag. The Imperial Federation movement began with those hardy backwoodsmen, and in my opinion it is matter for regret that the name of our branch of the league does not connect it with that movement of a hundred years ago. If priority in originating and dying for our idea has any value, then the name of our association in Canada having for its object the closer union of all British countries should be the United Empire league. The friends of union in South Africa have adopted the title of the Empire league, and have been allowed by the Imperial Federation league in London to retain it, the aim and principles of the two societies being the same. Here in Canada it would not only be more suitable, but would awaken historical recollections of which we may well be proud, if our branch, with the consent of the society at headquarters, were to be called the United Empire League of Canada.

It can scarcely be denied that in some respects the word "Federation" is an unfortunate one for indicating our purpose. In the minds of those to whom it is mentioned

it causes visions of federal councils, new constitutions, expensive legislatures and selfish office-holders to arise, and before the advocates of union can explain their definition of federation, they have first to show what the word is not to signify. Besides, the correctness of the term is doubtful. Should a closer imperial union be brought about it will, and must be, something altogether different from any sort of "federation" which has heretofore existed. With Canada already confederated, Australia almost so, and South Africa aspiring to the same distinction, their closer union with the other parts of the Empire would become a federation of confederations, without a parallel in history. On the other hand, the words "United Empire" are much more direct and significant. They convey at once the idea that the empire is to be strengthened by union, and that only such steps as can plainly be seen to lead to that end will be advocated. The notion of a "scheme" disappears, and the advocates of the new movement may at once proceed to state what practical measures in their opinion would tend to "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."

During a recent visit to England and Scotland I think I perceived evidences, among the trading and middle classes, of the growth of a feeling of interest in, and kindness towards the colonies. So far as I can judge, this feeling takes the shape of a desire for closer union and better trade relations between them and the Mother Country. Contemporaneously with this sentiment, there seems to have arisen a deep dissatisfaction at