

their unwillingness to join the "Universal Postal Union," and, in doing so, lent considerable support to Mr. Heaton's views regarding that combination. This is what he says about it to the Postmaster General under date the 22nd, March, 1887:—"You say that owing to Great Britain and several of her Colonies being members of the Postal Union they are prevented from establishing a penny postage system among themselves. Yet this is the union which you have constantly urged the Australian Colonies to join! This Union which ties your hands, which stands in the way of reform, and which imposes upon you all manner of fettering restrictions! Surely it would be wiser to advise Australia to keep free from it, and to recover its own freedom by giving fair notice to the other powers. In my opinion, the Postal Union, so far as the Colonies and India is concerned, has proved a delusion and a snare. I find that India, Mauritius, Buenos Ayres, and twenty other places in the Postal Union are charged 100 per cent. more for postage from England than from France and Germany."

With reference to the proposed new steamship services in other parts of the Empire, and the new subsidies proposed, Lord Knutsford's summing up is as follows:—"The important proposals of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for a service of powerful steamers between Vancouver and Hong Kong, by way of Japan, was not discussed at length in the Conference, being already under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. Attention was, however, called by the Canadian representatives to this scheme as well as to that for establishing a line of steamers from Vancouver to Australia, and it was stated that the mails could be carried to Australian and Asiatic ports in considerably less time and at less cost by those Pacific routes than at present."

Much information was furnished and many projects were mooted concerning inter-British communication, and some of the members perhaps feeling themselves free from hampering details and responsibilities, indulged in enthusiastic expressions, almost suggestive of Imperial Federation and certainly pointing towards closer union. The following is an extract from the speech made by Sir Alexander Campbell in bringing the discussion to a close:—"We consider that by taking advantage of the telegraph line from the Atlantic Ocean, at Halifax, to the Pacific Ocean, at Vancouver Island, which we Canadians have established without any help from Her Majesty's Government, or any reference to them, the Governments of the various Colonies of the Empire will be lending the most valuable assistance to that which we all have in view, and which the members of Her Majesty's Government have repeatedly expressed their desire to see brought about, as it is undoubtedly the desire alike of Her Majesty's subjects residing here in Great Britain and of Her Majesty's subjects residing all over the world—that is to say, a closer connection of the various component parts of the Empire—we think we have afforded the best means of doing this by opening the line of railway telegraph across the Continent of America. We have placed it in the power of Her Majesty's Government in Great Britain to draw closer those bonds by the most important of all ties, the ties of speedy communication, the ties of interest, and the ties which spring from opportunities of making communications from one end of Her Majesty's dominions to the other by telegraph lines almost entirely within the control of Her Majesty's subjects. These we think are the most important means which could be resorted to for drawing closer those bonds between the different parts of the Empire which we all value so much."

Sir Alexander was followed by Mr. Sandford Fleming, who explained and recommended a comprehensive scheme by which the most of the submarine and main telegraph lines, as well as the new Pacific cable to Australia could be consolidated and brought within the management of one department under Government control. Then the following resolutions were passed unanimously by the conference:—

1. "That the connection recently formed through Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific by railway telegraph opens a new and alternate line of Imperial communication over the high seas and through British possessions which promises to be of great value alike in naval, military, commercial and political aspects."

2. "That the connection of Canada with Australasia by direct submarine

telegraph across the Pacific is a project of high importance to the Empire, and every doubt as to its practicability should without delay be set at rest by a thorough and exhaustive survey."

Several of the delegates expressed the hope that these resolutions would be followed up by action, but Lord Knutsford's conclusion does not go far towards sustaining such hopes. He writes thus to the Governors of Colonies:—"In connection with the subject of telegraphic communication, the proposal of an alternative line to Australia was prominently brought forward. The Colonial representatives were of opinion that their Governments would not, unless the Imperial Government also contributed be willing to subsidize another Company in addition to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company; and, in behalf of the Imperial Post Office, it was stated that the question of such a subsidy could not be sustained by that department. While, therefore, I expressed my willingness to bring before Her Majesty's Government the wishes of the members of the conference that a line might be constructed for military purposes, to be exclusively controlled by the Government, I could not hold out any hope that such a scheme would be favorably received."

From what has been brought forward of the views of the delegates it is very plain that no important work, recognized as essential to the proper defence of the Empire, or to the advancement of British commercial interests, can be undertaken, because of the difficulty of getting the various parts of the Empire to agree as to the extent to which they are respectively interested, and as to the amounts which they should severally contribute. The financial obstacles were the most formidable, and with regard to several much desired undertakings the delegates seemed to feel the difficulty of obtaining appropriations from their respective Parliaments. Another difficulty was the absence of a satisfactory basis upon which to levy assessments from the various divisions of the Empire.

But, if the proceedings of the conference have made these difficulties plain, they also suggest a remedy. They contain a proposal which sooner or later is likely to be adopted as a means of establishing an independent source of revenue for Imperial purposes, and of obtaining this on a fair basis from the various communities throughout the Empire. Mr. Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr, one of the delegates of the Cape of Good Hope, has the merit of bringing forward this scheme which in the Colonial Conference report is classed under the heading of trade questions. The following extracts from Mr. Hofmeyr's speech on the 3rd of May, 1887, will afford a clear idea of the nature of his proposal:—"The fourth of the eight subjects proposed to be brought before the Conference by the Cape delegates in their letter of 1st April, reads thus:—'To discuss the feasibility of promoting closer union between the various parts of the British Empire by means of an Imperial customs tariff, the revenue from such tariff to be devoted to the general defence of the Empire.' I find that this is not quite understood by some of the delegates, and therefore I would like to amplify it in this way:—'The feasibility of promoting a closer union between the various parts of the British Empire by means of an Imperial tariff of customs, to be levied independent of the duties payable under existing tariffs on goods entering the Empire from abroad, the revenue derived from such tariff to be devoted to the general defence of the Empire.' I have taken this matter in hand with two objects.—To promote the union of the Empire, and at the same time to obtain revenue for purposes of general defence."

Now, this conference has devoted a very considerable part of its time to defence, and we have done something; but I take it upon myself to say that, from an Imperial point of view, the proceedings of the conference in connection with the subject of defence cannot have been perfectly satisfactory. What have we arrived at? Simply this: that the Australian group of colonies will pay a certain amount annually towards the support of a few ships in their own waters. But what has the rest of the colonial empire done towards the maintenance of the imperial navy? Nothing at all. The Cape has not agreed to do anything, Canada has not agreed to do anything, and none of the other colonies have agreed to do anything, for reasons which I think are weighty, and which this conference will not

overrule. At the same time it is admitted by some high naval authorities (although not perhaps by the authorities whom we have had before us) that the British fleet is not quite so strong and powerful as it ought to be, in view of the tremendous interests that it has to protect when compared with the French and German fleets, and having regard to the limited interests that they have to protect. Supposing that the Imperial Government were to find by-and-by that it required very considerably greater assistance from the colonies towards the maintenance of the fleet and of the army than it has hitherto obtained, I doubt very much whether you would find that a system of subsidies would answer in the long run. You would in that case find very soon that the principle of representation would be asserted by the Colonies. The system of subsidies, if developed to any extent, would practically amount to a tax, and where you have a tax, the people who bear the tax sooner or later ask to be represented. In other words you might find a system of political federation brought to the fore, a system which, however much we may incline in that direction, would, we must all agree, present tremendous difficulties. The system of subsidies by the colonies to the Mother Country has been tried between France and its colonies. In the French colonial law there is a clause to the effect that the colonies shall be bound to contribute certain amounts to the maintenance of the French navy, but according to the latest report that I have seen there is not a single French colony that pays a subsidy to-day; in fact, the reverse is really the case, and the mother country has to pay for the defence, and in some cases even for the civil government of the colonies. Therefore, taking into consideration the necessity that the British Empire should have some other consolidating force in addition to mere sentiment; that it should have the force of self-interest; that at the same time something more might have to be done for the defence of the empire than has been done hitherto, and that then the colonies would not be prepared to pay it in the form of subsidies, but might not object to some indirect taxation, which practically admitted their right to greater fiscal privileges within the empire than are accorded to foreign powers. I have, following the limits that I have seen in the public newspapers from time to time, formulated this subject for discussion. The scheme which I wish to lay before the conference is one which would promote a closer fiscal union between the various parts of the empire, which would produce a revenue for imperial purposes, and which would at the same time leave the various fiscal tariffs of the different parts of the Empire, of the colonies as well as of England, untouched. I will give some figures to show how this plan might work in practice. I find that the total imports into the United Kingdom from foreign countries in 1885 amounted to £284,000,000. That is the last year I could get. The total imports into the colonies (I need not give the process by which I arrived at the figures) for 1885 would amount to £36,000,000. The two together would give £320,000,000, representing the imports of foreign produce into the whole of the empire. Now, supposing that we were to levy an average rate of 2 per cent. all round (the tariff might be arranged so that one class of goods should pay more than another), that 352 millions sterling would give a revenue of not less than £7,000,000. That is a revenue which would pay for a very considerable part of the British fleet. It would relieve the colonies from the payment of subsidies, and at the same time that it would be paid by the colonies it would be paid by Great Britain too, of course. I do not know whether Great Britain would feel it or not, but the colonies would not feel it, and it would establish a feeling on their part that whilst they were paying for the defence of the empire they were at the same time enjoying in British markets and in colonial markets certain advantages which foreigners did not enjoy. That would establish a connecting link between the colonies mutually as well as between the colonies and the Empire also, as is not at present in existence, and which might further develop by-and-by into a most powerful bond of union."

Although it may be said that the Colonial conference of 1887, this first Council of the Empire, has not been productive of very vigorous action in favour of Imperial unity, it must at the same time be remembered that those who took part in it can be confidently regarded as the sowers of the seed from which, no doubt, and in good time, an abundant and satisfactory harvest will be reaped. The record of the proceedings of the conference constitute a brief, which every believer in, and advocate of Imperial Federation must study and lay to heart if he would be instrumental in handing down to those who come after us our national heritage not only preserved and unimpaired but advantageously developed and strengthened.

SHAFTESBURY HALL.

Shaftesbury Hall, as known to the general public, has virtually been transformed into one of the largest and best appointed public halls in the Dominion. It is now two years since the Board of Directors of the Sons of England Hall Company decided that the hall must be enlarged and improved, so as to meet with more modern ideas. Early in the year, the building was given over to the contractors. On Thursday evening, November 27th, the new building was opened by Mr. H. M. STANLEY, the great African explorer, who was fronted by one of the most representative assemblies ever met together in the city of Toronto. The brilliant but subdued light brought out the dresses and jewels of the ladies to the fullest effect, and made a sight not easily to be forgotten. The majority of the male sex being in evening dress, added to the *clat* of the occasion.

The old entrance from Queen Street has been entirely reconstructed, the stairway being removed and a fine wide passage sloping from the street having replaced it, with a special entrance from James street to the gallery. The ground floor or auditorium is fitted with handsome open seats of the latest design, and will accommodate about 750 people, and is fitted up with a newly patented chair named "Shaftesbury" after the Hall. This is a most comfortable seat and very artistic in its appearance. The third floor or gallery will accommodate about 550 people. The platform is well arranged and will hold about 120 people. The floor is laid with a very handsome carpet which adds materially to its appearance. There are in connection with the platform commodious ladies' and gentlemen's dressing rooms; in addition a special cloak and dressing room is provided for ladies on the second floor. Additional exits leading into James street have been provided, and by request of the Board of Directors, Mr. Kivas Tully, C.E., has examined the building, and expressed himself fully satisfied with the means of exit in case of an accident. Mr. Tully said the building could be emptied in less than five minutes. Any doubt as to the acoustic properties of the hall was set at rest, every word Mr. STANLEY uttered being distinctly heard all over the hall.

The Directors of the Sons of England Hall Company have now supplied a long felt want in the City of Toronto—a first-class music hall, and we trust the public spirit displayed by them will receive the support so liberal a policy deserves.

The total cost of the alterations amount to \$22,000. The Directors very wisely confided the whole of the work to Canada artists, and the work as a whole, both for stability and artistic finish is a credit to native talent.

The building is supplied with both gas and the incandescent light. Special mention should be made of the chandelier which graces the centre of the lofty ceiling. It of itself is worth a visit to the hall to view its many beauties. The ironwork was supplied by the Peterborough Bridge Works, Peterborough, Ont. The chairs by Bostwick & Co., Toronto, the agents for the Preston Chair and Desk Mfg. Co., Preston, Ont.

Correspondence.

[While we give full publicity to the views of our correspondents, we wish it to be distinctly understood, we do not hold ourselves responsible for them.]

"Is This So?"

To the Editor of the ANGLO-SAXON:

SIR,—I beg to inform you that Dr. Bell, the retiring president, of Royal Standard Lodge, No. 112, received a vote of thanks for the admirable way he had conducted his duties in the chair, and many complimentary remarks were made of him by individual members. He would certainly have been elected to the presidency for this year only that he refused nomination. The future president, Bro. Purches, is very fortunate in having the valuable assistance of such a gifted immediate past-president.

There is general dissatisfaction with the way the Grand Secretary attends to the duties of his office. Is he overworked or is it he is incapable? If the former an assistant should be appointed by the Grand Lodge, if the latter he should be dismissed.

A District Deputy Grand Lodge Officer should be appointed at once for Assiniboia District, and this brother should live either at Qu'Appelle or Regina. Why not appoint Dr. G. P. Bell, who would make a first-class D. D. G. officer. Why have not the past-presidents power to install the elected officers of a lodge? The constitution says that the Executive offi-

cers must have the W. R. degree, and that the Grand President, or some grand officer appointed by him, shall visit each lodge once a year. No grand officer has visited this lodge during the year 1890 capable to confer the W. R. degree, and consequently none of our Executive officers of this lodge have this degree. Bro. P.-President Gisborne, unfortunately was not able to get this degree when he was in the East last summer, as no white rose lodges were in session.

"EXPERIENTIA DOCEAT."

Qu'Appelle, Dec. 12, 1890.

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