

### *Some Problems of Empire.*

part of the West India Islands and the Dominion of Canada. Note also the frequent conferences we have had to smooth away differences and secure mutual advantages.

Here to-day, sitting in this city, is a Royal Imperial Commission, which never could have been if we had not had these federations in the outside Dominions; and this body is at work to-day, trying to find out what is inside all this great Empire, and how it may be best developed for the good and strength of the whole Empire. Again, there has developed in these later years the Imperial Conference, in which the Premiers of the different Dominions and of the Mother Country meet together every four years, take note of the situation, and discuss questions of mutual interest, and pursue plans for mutual improvement. Over and above that, there has been this latest of all developments—the invitation from the Imperial Defence Committee to the Premiers of the outside Dominions to enter with them into the Arena of the Empire, and there to learn the conditions and circumstances of foreign policy and foreign defence. All this it seems to me may well be treasured up by the Imperialist of to-day, as irrevocable and irrefragible proof of the great steps forward to an ultimately completely united Empire. Nor has the forward movement been by any means stopped.

#### AN IMPERIAL CONSCIOUSNESS NEEDED.

It is absolutely impossible, to my mind, for this Empire movement to stop now that the course has been so well laid and the impetus given. It would require more force to stop the tendency towards complete union than it did at the first to part the impetus.

But we need still more, and one thing imperatively needed is the development of an Imperial consciousness. Our national consciousness is well developed—that of the Irishman for his native Ireland, the Scotchman for the land of his birth, the Welshman and the Englishman for theirs. The Imperial consciousness is not so keen and so strong and not so easily perfected. It is a more difficult process, and takes more time. The Scotchman is born and brought up in Scotland, and in the process he incorporates into his physical, his mental, and his spiritual being the subtle influences that make him a Scotchman till the day of his death. It is a great mistake to think that love of country is all spiritual. From the moment a boy commences to observe he assimilates the features and peculiarities of his environment. I do not know the process, but by some strange chemistry the boy, as he grows up and observes the outlines of landscape and the tints of the sky, listens to the songs of the brooks, sees Nature's changes of dress and colour season by season, and listens to the notes of native songsters, has all this photographed in his inner and spiritual being, and he is made his country's man by the very fact this process goes on. Add to that, literature, song, story, art, politics, social life—common joys and sorrows even—each adds its indelible imprint to make the national man. But even the Scotchman cannot be born and brought up both in Scotland and Australia; consequently it is difficult for him to be so thoroughly Australian as Scotchman; and the same takes place all through. What I want to point out is that the wide dispersion of this Empire of ours makes it more difficult to cultivate an Imperial consciousness than it is to cultivate a national consciousness; but the Imperial consciousness is just as necessary for the final success of the Imperial state as the national consciousness is for the national state. And we are growing; the process is naturally and necessarily slower, but it is streaming into our minds, our constitution, our life. Science, in its later applications, has brought the Empire more close than Scotland used to be even to