

Asquith's Irish Home Rule Bill had first been brought out in a Gilbert and Sullivan opera everyone would have laughed at them. Brought forward, as they are, in the Imperial Parliament they are too serious to laugh at.

In Canada a mock parliament of school boys might have debated a proposal to allow the Legislature of Quebec Province to add ten per cent. to the customs tariff imposed by the Dominion Parliament, but no gathering of full-grown men would entertain such a ridiculous proposition.

When the American colonies first became independent, each state had control of its own customs and excise legislation and administration. The arrangement proved so unworkable that it was abandoned in 1787. To-day any American who proposed that the United States Congress should surrender to the state legislatures either whole or partial control of the customs and excise would be regarded as a lunatic.

When the representatives of the British North American provinces met to discuss the basis of Confederation they were able to take advantage of the