

periods in a man's life of more intense and speedy motion; just as there is more rapid change in a boy from twelve to thirteen years of age than from thirty-five to forty, so is it with the nation. And Canada is entering upon what we believe to be an active and vigorous manhood.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

Change the word men into nations, though you destroy the metre, the sentiment is as true as before. And that tide is, I believe, flowing strong and full towards our shores, and it behoves us to see that it will be taken at the flood.

Of the various alternatives set before us at the parting of the ways there is one which is known as Imperial Federation.

Before we hastily make up our minds to adopt either of the others—Annexation, or Independence, let us consider the one, gravely and carefully. What then do we mean by Imperial Federation. Take each of the words separately. *Imperial*, we know has to do with an Empire. In this case with nothing less magnificent than the British Empire, the greatest, resting on the most stable foundation, working out its destiny in accordance with the most beneficent principles that the world has ever seen. At present that Empire is made up of the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, and her best Colonies. Vast not merely in the sense in which the Russian Empire is vast in point of territory, but in variety of climate, and soil, of resources to use, and talent to shape and direct.

Take next the word, *Federation*. It implies a combination of union with liberty. *Union is strength*. The saying is commonplace, but none the less true, and therefore, I repeat it, union is strength. No doubt federation implies some limitation of liberty, but only so much as is good for the common welfare. Wherever bodies of men unite they sacrifice a certain amount of liberty. But they are only giving up a lesser for a greater good. Less liberty for the sake of greater strength. And though it seems paradoxical, it is true that in the end greater liberty results from union, where the two principles are nicely balanced.

Take trades' unions for sample. A man certainly on entering the union sacrifices some liberty, but does he not in the end gain more than he yields? Were not trades unions started for the very purpose of securing this boon for the individual mechanic? They may degenerate in the hands of unthinking and unscrupulous men; they may become the organs of tyranny, but this arises from an overweighting of one of the scales. Union or liberty. But this is far more likely to happen in a confederation amongst one class of the community, than in one in which all classes share. None of the great component parts of the Federated British Empire would be so weak but that it could coerce the rest, more or less, or in the event of failure could stand on its own legs. It is quite otherwise with the individual members of a trades' union.

Imperial Federation, then, means a linking together by ties—strong, but yet supple and elastic—of the various

parts of the British Empire. A unity which will hold the members of the body together, but will allow of the freest possible action on the part of the different members compatible with unity. A union which will result in impregnable strength, and a full measure of liberty. Complaints are sometimes made that the definitions given of Imperial Federation are vague. It cannot be denied that there is ground for the complaint, but a very little consideration ought to satisfy all that it cannot be otherwise. There is not a cut and dried scheme put forth by a few isolated members for the acceptance or rejection of the subjects of the Empire. This is what some would like, but I confess that my confidence in the whole movement would be much shaken if its leaders adopted this method. Imperial Federation is an idea to be grasped, it is a seed to fall into the minds of men, and there to germinate steadily, to send down deep roots before it ventures to give itself definite outward form. That form will certainly come in due time, but if it is to be such as will give stability and durability, it must be pondered by many brains, and hammered into symmetry. At the time of the French Revolution many thought it was the easiest thing in the world to frame a constitution for the country. This idea cost and continues to cost the French dearly. But many seem to think likewise about Imperial Federation, that it a perfectly simple matter to say exactly what it is to be, to describe the British Empire in detail as it will be when Federation is an accomplished fact. The essential and sufficient knowledge of the object of Imperial Federation, I will repeat, is that the empire be firmly knit together, so that it remain forever the British Empire; that each part manage its own home affairs, and that there be some representation either in shape of Council, or Board of Advice, of all the parts, for those matters which are of common interest, questions of defence, tariff, etc. It is the extension of the system of Government which obtains in Canada to the whole Empire.

It does seem to me that any person who fails to understand sufficiently for present purposes such language as this, is either very obstinate or very dull. Remember you are not asked to vote for it to-day or to-morrow. In due time a definite scheme will be submitted; in the meantime we are asked to think the thing out for ourselves.

(To be Continued.)

HERBERT SPENCER'S PHILOSOPHY.

The Duke of Argyle, has drawn the attention of the thinking world, to what he maintains is a "great confession" on the part of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Mr. Herbert Spencer is an Agnostic, like Professor Tyndall, he prefers to remain in the presence of two incomprehensibles instead of one: has matter made mind? he does not know; has mind made matter? he does not know. Mr. Spencer's philosophy, is practically, the universal application of the doctrine of evolution. Problems social, political, religious