

Imperial budget

First, there is to be but one war budget for the whole Imperial commonwealth; whether as regards annual expenditures or loans, the amount of the budget will be determined by the Imperial parliament, in which all the partner-states will be represented. The share payable by each country will be calculated according to its population, or better still, according to the total income of its inhabitants. In case of refusal or neglect to pay, the Governor could be instructed not to sign Dominion warrants until all Imperial claims are settled; and, in last resort, the Customs or any other collecting department of the refractory government could be seized by an Imperial commissioner, under order from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. In his consideration of extreme possibilities, Mr. CURTIS stops there. But what of further resistances? Evidently, the army and navy of the Commonwealth would have to ensure the execution of the award.

All this strikingly resembles the means frequently adopted by conquering nations to make good their claims against China or the Barbaric states of Africa. The parallel need not excite wonder. In spite of all delusions and resounding platitudes on "British liberty" and "British democracy", imperial power, with the British as with all peoples, must finally rest on the strength of the 'mailed fist' and the 'big stick'.

For having told us the plain truth, Mr. CURTIS deserves credit and thankfulness.

Of course, as to the executive means adopted by each partner-nation to meet its imperial obligations,— what Mr. CURTIS calls "the incidence of taxation as between one taxpayer and another" — that would be left to the discretion of local parliaments. In other words, each partner would be free to choose the instrument by which it would be scorched for the maintenance of imperial power and glory.

Apportionment of the burden

To give an idea of the working of the proposed system, Mr. CURTIS has figured out some interesting statistics. As a starting point, he takes the last war budgets before the war. In the twelve months of the budget year 1913-14, the self-governing countries of the Empire had spent, on war services, the following amounts of public money, giving the *per capita* ratio indicated in the last column: