

predominance of local interests and opinions, is a novel undertaking in the history of civilization. It is one of extraordinary difficulty, or so at least it must seem to those who are guided by the precedents of the past. So overwhelming has the difficulty appeared, and so discouraging was the memory of a conspicuous failure, that at a time still recent the majority of the rulers of this country regarded the task as impossible. This despairing view was not unconnected with the rather hard and narrow syllogistic treatment of economic and political questions then in vogue. It seemed easy to show that material interests were all making for disruption; and the fashion was to ignore and deride the part played by sentiment and imagination in the affairs of men. Hence it became a note of advanced political thought to regard the separation of all the colonies as inevitable, and a proof of political wisdom to expedite the process by pouring scorn upon the sentiment which the colonies themselves perversely manifested.

A great change has been effected in the current mode of regarding colonial questions, corresponding with a great shifting of opinion upon the general principles of economics and politics. Middle-class ideas have given place to those belonging to a more extended electorate, and, therefore, more in accord with the general drift of colonial opinion. The industrial advance of other nations has also played a considerable part by undermining the tacitly-accepted ideal of England as a vast workshop turning out goods on strict commercial principles for the rest of the world to buy. A change of customers and markets has had no small share in promoting the growth of the Imperial idea. Trade has been found to follow, not so much the flag, as the language and the traditions of this little island. The old distrust

of Imperial greatness lingers, as Mr. Chamberlain notes, in the impatience with which some still hear of Imperial Federation. That impatience would have some justification were there to be found any marked insistence upon a definite scheme of Imperial Federation. The strength of the idea lies in its vagueness. The time is not ripe for translating the aspiration or—as Mr. Chamberlain does not object to call it—the dream into concrete arrangements. The dream is, however, as he justly says, one which has fired the imagination of millions of men in many climes, and is, therefore, to be reckoned with as a potent factor in their lives. A dream so welcomed is one of the most solid realities. The working out of the ideas of Imperial unity which have made such notable progress of late years must be the business of the immediate future. In one way or another, as we may probably concede to Mr. Chamberlain, the problem must be practically settled within a generation. If approached in the spirit he displayed last night amid the applause of his audience, there is reason to hope that the solution may be the consolidation of great bodies of English speaking peoples into a powerful and enduring federation.

---

THE USES OF WINDS.—1. They keep the elements of the atmosphere mixed, by maintaining a constant circulation.

2. They bear vapor from sea to land, and thus water the earth.

3. They carry heat from the overheated regions of the earth to colder regions, thus making both habitable.

4. They aid communication between nations.

Truly, the Psalmist is right, "God maketh the wind his messengers."