

ration the permanent unity of the empire.' This scheme of Federation is 'not to interfere with the existing rights of local parliaments as regards local affairs,' but should combine 'on an equitable basis the resources of the empire for the maintenance of common interests and adequately provide for an organised defence of common rights.'

The Federation of the empire is a scheme certainly calculated by its Imperial scope to strike the imagination of the political enthusiast. It is a scheme which has been dreamed of by statesmen and students since the days of Edmund Burke. Its realisation, however, is surrounded with the gravest difficulties which appear insuperable to some practical statesmen, to whom it is yet a novel question brought into prominence within a few months. A federation of the empire, in the broadest sense of the phrase, means the creation of an Imperial Parliament which may legislate for the general purposes of the empire, and the establishment or continuance of legislatures in each country or dependency to legislate for local and minor objects. Before this can be realised, England must be convinced of the necessity of reconstructing her constitutional system in vital particulars, of granting legislatures to Scotland and Ireland, of establishing a Supreme Court to adjudicate on the questions which would inevitably arise in the legal construction of the written constitution which must bind together the federation. On the other hand, Canada would have to make radical changes in her federal system so as to adapt it to the new order of things. In all probability her general parliament would have to be abolished, and each province represented in the Imperial Parliament, whose functions it would be to legislate for such general objects as now appertain to the Dominion. The tariffs of the Colonies would have to be arranged by the Imperial Parliament, and the result would certainly be, as things are now, the free trade and not the protective system which at present prevails in Canada and Victoria. Considering that such a grand scheme of federation is impracticable on the face of it, the advocates of Imperial unity propose a Colonial Council to sit in London, and deliberate on such questions as affect the empire as a whole, though no one