

and Australia feared a Russian attack on their ports ; the alarm over the aggressive policy of France and Germany in the Southern Pacific Islands—all seemed to hasten the hoped-for event. The League waxed very strong, and seizing the opportunity of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition in July, 1886, it convened a Conference, largely attended by colonial visitors. Papers were read by Professor Seeley, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Rosebery, and Sir Alexander T. Galt, the retired Canadian Finance Minister, who advocated a commercial union of the Empire together with a joint system of defence and a Federal solution of the Irish problem. When, in the following month, the League waited upon the Prime Minister, they were very cordially received, and three months later Edward Stanhope, the Secretary of State, sent out invitations to the Governments of the "Colonies under Responsible Government," asking them to send representatives to a Colonial Conference, to meet in the following spring. Thus the end of the Federation League—a political union of the Empire—seemed to be almost achieved.

Successful
interview
with the
Prime
Minister.

The
Colonial
Confer-
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moned.

But this hope was never realized, and its failure suggests the other reason for regard-