

Some Problems of Empire.

you have?—and when you here, as the predominant partner, have anything to do with the King and the Constitution, remember that you hold a trust from the oversea Dominions, for you are dealing with a priceless heritage shared by other parts of the Empire.

Something else has happened in a new way to bind the Empire together. Gradually the spirit of holding on, linking hands, and keeping together, grew up into an impulse that went further than the individual and the provincial, and not many years ago we saw the working out of that impulse in federations or unions of contiguous parts of the Empire—into new and young nationalities, as we like to call them. That was an entirely new development and one of the most powerful up to that time.

THE BIRTH OF A NATION.

I think that we in Canada have in one respect an advantage that you in Great Britain never had. You who are present can never say that you were at the birth and participated in the early growth of a new nation. You are the heirs of an old and long-formed nation. But many of us in Canada have witnessed the birth and assisted in the early building of a new nation, a phenomenon of entrancing and tremendous interest. In 1864-5, when the federation of the different provinces of Canada was mooted, I was a boy just entering college. I was a New Brunswicker. Nova Scotia existed, Quebec existed, Ontario existed; there was an indefinite notion that Britain had territory west of Ontario, and some stray information came to us that there was such a province as British Columbia on the Pacific Coast. All I knew about was New Brunswick, and all I cared about was New Brunswick. Others were cousins more or less removed, but national life for me there was none. I was limited to the boundary of my little province and I could throw a stone almost from one side to the other. What was true in my case was absolutely true in the case of every one in the scattered provinces. There was no soul, no national life, no national objective, no national ideal, no national impulse. I pass over the intervening years, and present to you the Dominion of Canada of to-day, where a new nation has been born, and a new great force developed for the Empire of the world, instinct with national life and Imperial spirit. Thereupon hope lights up the distant hills, and men's hearts burn within them; doubt has vanished, confidence holds the helm, and the future gleams strong and bright in the distance. I have lived the life and felt its thrill and seen the splendid transformation, and I shall never cease to be thankful therefor. Out of separation and weakness there has been evolved a mighty entity, vitalised with national spirit, national ideal, and national impulse. There you have an immense territory of contiguous separated portions of the British Empire of the former days, welded into one strong nationality, with a life of its own. What has happened? Progress almost immeasurable has taken place, which never would and never could have taken place if there had not been a union of ideals, a fusion of effort, and an impulse that came from the new-growing national life. Similar unions have taken place also in Australia, and in South Africa, and those two parts of the Empire are working out on the same lines, and feeling the same impulse as Canada. When people tell you that you have been long at work and nothing much has happened, point out that, if nothing else. It is one of the most real and hopeful signs that the grand, Imperial experiment will be thoroughly successful. At two periods in the history of this British Empire many prophets arose. The first period coincided with the grant of responsible government to the provinces. Then the burden