

APPENDIX III

other prominent Canadians, on the future destiny of Canada. Sir John's reply contained the following:—

SIR JOHN MACDONALD ON FEDERATION.

"We are told that we want an Imperial Federation. I will not trouble you with a disquisition on that subject just now, but I will tell you Imperial Federation is utterly impracticable. We would never agree to send a number of men over to England to sit in Parliament there and vote away our rights and principles. I am, as far as the question goes, up to the handle a Home Ruler. We will govern our own country. We will put on the taxes ourselves. If we choose to mis-govern ourselves we will do so, and we do not desire England, Ireland, or Scotland to tell us we are fools. We will say: 'If we are fools we will keep our folly to ourselves. You will not be the worse for it, and we will not be the worse for any folly of yours.'"

This statement of Sir John Macdonald, who was conspicuously British during his whole career, is exceedingly characteristic and jaunty. His seemingly off-hand words, however, are pregnant with meaning, and very cleverly express the feelings of Canadians generally on Imperial Federation. He evidently would tolerate no interference with our rights to govern ourselves as we pleased, and that, too, whether we did it wisely or unwisely. I like the manly, independent ring of Canadianism which permeates this statement of the great Conservative leader, and if ever Imperial Federationists get their hobby beyond the nebulous stage, I am persuaded that the stirring words of Sir John on this question will be re-echoed by the great body of the Canadian people of every party and of every class.

In closing my remarks I cannot but agree with the Conservative and Liberal British statesmen—comprising four-fifths of all the most eminent Parliamentary leaders—who consider Mr. Chamberlain's policy daring and dangerous alike to the Motherland and the colonies. His whole agitation, too, is decidedly un-British. This is true both of his methods and his measures. John Bull prides himself on broadening his liberties slowly, "from precedent to precedent." Mr. Chamberlain proposes a political and commercial revolution. This is certainly true of Imperial Federation, and, commercially, he asks the nation to set aside its historic British policy of "free trade and colonial freedom," and to don partly or wholly the tattered garments of American protectionism, which millions of Americans are now earnestly trying to throw off.