

Empire. But when the leading spirits of the League forced to the front that portion of the programme dealing with political federation with its necessary compliment of colonial contributions to the general defence of the Empire, marked opposition was aroused. Sir Charles Tupper himself was one of the first to express disapprobation of the idea, and in a series of articles published in the Nineteenth Century in 1891 and 1892 the veteran Canadian statesmen forcibly opposed the proposal that the Colonies should contribute to the general defence of the Empire. He returned to the attack in a notable speech which he delivered at Winnipeg on September 21st, 1893, in which with his accustomed vigor he maintained that Canada was not, as had been implied, a burden to the Empire but that on the contrary by the establishment of its great transportation system, by the peopling of its vast territory and the growth of its agricultural production, it furnished to the military defence of the Empire a much more efficacious contribution than would be a fleet or army placed at the service of the Mother Country. As the result of the antagonism aroused by the proposal the promoters of the Imperialistic movement changed their tactics. The advantages of the Colonies sharing in the Imperial sovereignty and the benefits likely to result from a custom's union were the features the more strongly pressed. But just as the proposal that the colonies should contribute to the general military defence of the Empire had aroused the opposition of leading colonial statesmen the proposal that the overseas dominions should share in the Imperial prerogative aroused the antagonism of Imperial statesmen it being held then as it was held at a later date that "that authority cannot be shared". In face of the general hostility that its projects encountered the Imperial Federation League finally ceased to exist at least under that name and what was known as the British Empire League was formed to continue the propoganda which it did in a more diplomatic and effective manner. Under its initiative and with the cooperation of the Colonial Defence Committee, which was formed at a larger stage, the movement was to make marked headway.