

tiny in all the future is now entrusted to the hands of Sir John Thompson. Of this great responsibility we have before spoken. We shall not now venture upon predictions, either sanguine or pessimistic. If the difficulties of the situation are great so are its possibilities. The Manitoba question is just now a formidable one, but Sir John is probably far too shrewd and far-sighted to allow himself or the Confederation to be wrecked upon that rock so plainly in sight. There is, we believe, a source of more serious danger in the trade question. But there is in it, at the same time, promise of a grander opportunity for the display of broad statesmanship.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

Enthusiasm in a cause which one believes to be good is always commendable. Mr. Parkin had, therefore, no need to apologize for his enthusiasm, much less to deny the soft impeachment, in his speech in the Auditorium on Imperial Federation. We quite agree with Mr. Parkin that it is impossible for the relations of such a colony as Canada to the Mother Country to continue much longer as they are. This is a view which we have urged persistently—too persistently, we dare say, in the opinion of some of our readers. The fact being admitted that a radical change of some kind is sure to come in the near future, it follows that the able and eloquent Canadian who, after giving years of his life to the study of the problem, and visiting both the Mother Country and remote colonies in order to gain a comprehensive view of its conditions, comes before us to advocate what he believes to be its true solution, is entitled not only to our thanks, but to the higher compliment of our most serious and respectful attention. Should anyone object that Mr. Parkin set out on his investigations as an advocate rather than as an enquirer, the reply is that that does not weaken the force of any sound arguments he may be able to advance, or of any facts he may be able to adduce in support of them. Excepting an occasional and very pardonable appeal to the sentiment of loyalty, he does not intimate that he expects or wishes anyone to accept his views, save as he is able to establish their soundness by facts and arguments.

Mr. Parkin laid considerable stress upon the endorsement which the scheme of Imperial Federation has received not only in newspapers and magazine articles, but from chambers of commerce and other representative bodies in different parts of the Empire. Should anyone point to the vote of twenty-nine in its favour at the recent large assemblage in the city of Montreal, contrasted with the large vote for Canadian Independence, as an evidence that Mr. Parkin's first efforts were needed in his own country, he might perhaps reply that the Montreal meeting was not properly representative of the Canadian people generally, or that the circumstances under which the meeting was called were not such as to bring out the influential classes of citizens among whom Imperial Federation finds its chief supporters. He might further call attention by way of offset to the large, intelligent, and enthusiastic audience which greeted him and cheered his strongest utterances in the Toronto Pavilion. There would be undoubted force in the answer, but this suggests the further question to what extent such audiences as that in the Pavilion and those in whose support in England

and elsewhere Mr. Parkin finds so much encouragement, really represent the great body of the people, without whose consent and cordial support no constitutional change is possible. In point of respectability, intelligence, and political influence those audiences and supporters would no doubt take high rank. But may it not be that they represent rather the comfortable, prosperous classes, as distinct from those, largely in the majority in Canada, and no doubt in other parts of the Empire as well, to whom life is an arena of perpetual struggle and toil for the wherewithal to supply the daily wants, and who may therefore be pardoned if they are disposed to take a more intensely practical view of such questions?

We find ourselves unable to come to close quarters with Imperial Federation, for the very good reason that no definite scheme, which the friends of the movement can put forward, saying "This is what is meant by Imperial Federation," is yet before us. We do not adduce the fact as proving by any means that the thing itself is impracticable. The advocates of so stupendous a change in the constitution of the greatest empire in the world may well claim more than the four or five years which Mr. Parkin has been devoting to its discussion, for the elaboration of a plan to which they may feel willing to commit themselves definitely. On one point we sympathize heartily with Mr. Parkin's view, though the fact that in so important a matter his opinions differ radically from those of Sir Charles Tupper, who shares with Mr. Parkin the honour of being one of the ablest and most enthusiastic advocates of this large project, is in itself suggestive and ominous. We should, with Mr. Parkin, be ashamed of the name of Canadians if we were going to claim the protection of the British flag in every part of the world and were not prepared to assume our full share of the responsibility. If, at this stage of the world's civilization, an immense fleet is absolutely necessary to the protection of Canadian commerce—we do not admit the fact—and if Canada is going to rely upon the British navy for that protection, it is but a matter of common honesty, to say nothing of patriotic spirit, that she should pay her full share of the cost. And this, on the sound principle, "no taxation without representation," involves the necessity that Canada shall have a voice in directing the movements of that navy. Is there any reason to believe that the people of the "tight little isles" will ever give such voice to Canada or any other outlying section of the Empire? Ask, not an enemy, but Lord Rosebery, one of the most ardent supporters of Imperial Federation. And while we are about it we may as well ask him and other prominent British statesmen what is the degree of probability that these same people, who have so long been the brain and heart of the Empire, will ever consent to share, in any real sense, the responsibility of directing any of the great affairs of the Empire with "colonists" in all quarters of the globe. From the day in which they begin to do so we may pretty safely date the decadence and disintegration of the nation.

Mr. Parkin constantly appeals to history in support of his conclusions. It is very easy to carry our faith in the familiar maxim that history repeats itself too far. In many respects the position of Great Britain and her colonies to-day is unique. History has no precedent, therefore her voice can give us

neither instruction nor warning. In view of our confederation, our highly developed powers of self-government, our relations geographical, social and moral, to our great Anglo-Saxon neighbour, and other considerations which will suggest themselves on a little reflection, it may well be doubted whether the position of Canada is not so completely sui generis as to render the teachings of history particularly worthless in regard to her future course and destiny. For a similar reason the fact that in the past, and perhaps in the present so far as the fighting nations of the world are concerned, a great naval force has been deemed necessary for the protection of a nation's commerce, by no means proves that the same necessity now exists, or will exist in the near future, for a peaceful American community. For how long did the United States carry on an extensive commerce with almost all parts of the world with scarcely more of a navy than Canada could easily set afloat in a few years.

To sum up the matter: The two great wants of Canada to-day are the national status which will enable her to compete on even terms with her powerful neighbour for her share in the influx of men and money which have enabled that neighbour to develop her resources with unexampled rapidity; and a free continental market for such of her products as cannot be profitably sent abroad. Will Imperial Federation give her either of these things? Of what real, practical benefit to her in the first named respect would any such representation as could conceivably be given her in the proposed Imperial Council really be? How much of either the consciousness or the prestige of nationality would result? Would not the position of her people be still regarded everywhere as one of inferiority, of virtual colonial subordination? And in respect to the second great need—it is no compliment to our Republican neighbours to say it, but we are in search of truth—can it be doubted by any one who knows the situation that our closer connection with Great Britain would make its attainment more rather than less difficult? We cannot pursue the enquiry further, else it might not be difficult to show that Imperial Federation would be equally ineffective in creating that national spirit among the masses of our citizens which may be truthfully described as our third great need.

We have no wish to dogmatize upon this subject, nor do we put forth these objections as necessarily unanswerable, but merely as some of those which appear to many loyal Canadians insuperable. If they are really men of straw, we shall be doing the cause a service by setting them up to be demolished.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Recent statistics show a very encouraging influx of new settlers into Manitoba and the North-West. Not the least reassuring feature of this immigration is the fact that it includes farmers from the adjoining States as well as from over the sea. If, as there seems good reason to hope, the tide has really turned, so far as the border currents are concerned, the outlook is most hopeful. Those who have lived for a time in the prairie country have but too vivid recollections of a period, some years since, when, owing partly to unwise Government