

collection and dissemination of statistics, and the general interchange of knowledge and opinions. The great precedent of the Corn Law League was clearly before them, and they adopted its vigorous tactics. So enthusiastic were they, that one cannot read the current literature of that day without being struck with their strong conviction of certain victory.

Climax of
the Im-
perial
Move-
ment.

For two reasons this Imperial Federation League is the culmination of the Imperial agitation which falls within the period of this discussion. One is, it led directly to the meeting of the First Colonial Conference in 1887, which was the first official political recognition that the Imperial problem required an Imperial solution. The League carried on its work with great energy. Branch or allied leagues were not only established all over Great Britain, but even throughout the Colonies, and the whole movement attracted to itself much public attention. The time seemed ripening fast for the final achievement of its purpose. The Home Rule controversy ; the crisis in Egypt, culminating in a spirited campaign where Australian and Canadian troops participated ; the Russian scare in 1885, when both the Cape