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NATIONAL IDENTITY.

"Unless the Mother Country learns to identify herself in the same fashion with her Colonies as the United States does with its pioneer settlements, Greater Britain will never be the homogeneous nation that, in spite of its strangely diverse elements, the United States has become. The colonies will be left to themselves, save for the dribbling of English life, and, notwithstanding talk about Federation, the breach will continually widen."—*Rev. Canon Beaumont's Paper, Read before the Royal Colonial Inst. on "British Columbia."*

We have made the above extract from a very excellent paper, dealing with the wonderfully attractive prospects and present developments of the Province of British Columbia.

The quotation, to our mind, contains an all important truth and presents in concise form the prime want and chief difficulty in the way of Federal Union of the British Empire.

There can be no doubt that pioneer settlements in the States owe their surprising prosperity to the fact that at their back they have the wealth and national sympathies of say 60 million citizens of the Republic—whose national resources are being applied in developing every part of the national estate.

Each taxpayer does his part in the great work, in oiling and turning the wheel of national fortunes.

Let us ask ourselves how much of the magnificent resources of the Western States would be developed to-day if the State of New York were bearing all the great national expenses, while all the other states were taking the narrowest parochial view of their position in the Union, and refusing to pay any of the national taxes or bear any national responsibilities except those purely belonging to the individual state? Would any one imagine that a nation thus divided against itself could prosper? If each State when reproached replied that it had constructed some important public works within its boundaries which, at a pinch, may subserve national interests, would that satisfy the New York taxpayer who was doing just the same for his own State besides bearing all strictly national expenses? Such a condition of things would be intolerable and a practical absurdity—yet such may be fairly regarded as the condition of the British Empire—and now the English taxpayer is asked, not only to bear the national burdens of the Empire, but he is to load himself still more with even local taxation,—“identify” himself with the local needs and development of every State or Province in the Empire!!

While we put the proposition thus to show its wild absurdity, so long as the present unsatisfactory relations exist between the Colonies and the Mother Country, yet we firmly believe the want of a thorough identity of each part of the Empire with the whole—as a great national unit—controlled by a thoroughly national policy, is the most urgent need of the Empire. The national energies would then permeate the remotest parts of the national domains and all the wealth and intelligence of 300 million people would be at the back of each pioneer settlement.

This, of course, implies Federal Union and that in turn means a Federal Senate or Imperial Legislative body which could regulate federal expenses. How to bring about this feeling of national identity is the question that Federationists are trying to solve—but as it is a question of dollars and cents that has first to be solved, we cannot see any prospect of its attainment until that has been practically dealt with by some form of fiscal union and common participation in the national burdens. Then we shall be a homogenous nation

—united for ever—for better or worse, and then will the humblest citizen realize and feel himself as a part of the vanguard of a mighty nation that faces all dangers and difficulties as impediments in the irresistible march of national progress.

All British colonists should let the British taxpayer know that we share a common citizenship with him—that we will neither forego our right to an equal voice with him in the affairs of the Empire nor set the cowardly and mean part of letting him bear the national expenses alone. Let us assure all British citizens that Canada's markets shall be treated as the National markets for British goods by paying only the needed revenue tolls for necessary governmental purposes, and that when we put on “protective” or hostile tariffs let it be against the foreigners and especially those hostile to us. Let us then ask that, with our assumption of the share of the National burdens, foreign produce, which bears no part of British taxation, shall not be admitted on equal terms with British goods into British markets.

With preferential trade within the Empire, and a united front towards foreigners the spirit of national brotherhood and the sense of mutual interests in peace or war would do all the rest to develop the national identity of feeling and action so much needed.

FISCAL UNION.

We confess that a very tired feeling came over us as we perused the first article of the March number of our highly esteemed contemporary, “Imperial Federation,” entitled “Treaties and Tariffs.” It quotes approvingly the remarks of the President of the Board of Trade to the effect that in according preferential tariff rates to the produce of the Empire, England would be “in fact adopting a policy of Protection upon imported food for the benefit, not of our own agricultural interests but for the benefit of the agricultural interests of our colonies.”

Apart from the miserable parochial view of the case expressed in those few words, by one who largely influences the affairs of the Empire, every citizen of which is entitled to his hands to equal protection from all forms of injustice, we emphatically protest against the thought that we wish to tax the English producer for the benefit of the colonial. A truer presentation of the proposition is this:—at present the British Government taxes directly or indirectly its productive industries equal to 12½ per cent. of the value of the produce to supply the revenue needed for maintaining the services of the Empire. Suppose the surplus produce from foreign countries, seeking a market in Britain, were similarly taxed on entry, the yield of revenue would be excessive beyond the needs—but if all kinds of home produce were taxed 5 per cent. instead of 12½ and the foreign article imported paid the same amount, we fail to see that the English farmer and other producers would suffer by having 7½ per cent. less taxation than they bear to-day. This discrimination against foreign produce would so immensely stimulate colonial industry and development that they could, without any appreciable variation of present prices supply, in conjunction with British farmers, all the food stuffs, etc., needed for the economical conduct of British industries. Again, if Britain secured in colonial markets a substantial preference for her manufactures—which she can have—it would develop her export trade immensely, for the Empire receives even now nearly one-half of Britain's exports, and the great bulk of her export trade with foreign nations would still remain to her, for, by their tariffs, they now exclude from their markets everything they possibly can of Britain's produce, so that the fear of retaliatory legislation is a bogey to frighten.

Again the proposition is nothing more than a readjustment of the present taxation borne by British taxpayers—making the imported article from foreign countries bear the same taxes at least as the home produced article and while, incidentally, the British and colonial produce would gain advantages by diminished taxation, we are satisfied that not only would the industries of Britain and the Empire be stimulated, food, etc., be equally cheap, but every consumer would be enriched thereby and better able to buy the necessities of life. The only people we can see likely to suffer are the wealthy portions of Britain's population who have their monies invested in foreign securities, and the idle leisured class who have little or nothing in common with the toiling masses of the nation,—who, just as frequently, spend their time in foreign lands and use imported foreign produce,

which, if taxed, they are well able to pay for.

We quite agree that to accord preference to colonial produce in British markets would be a questionable commercial benefit to Britain, if each colony retained the right to make its tariff as high as it pleased against other portions of the Empire—only making it a little higher against foreigners. A maximum tariff within the Empire is essential to the satisfactory working of the proposition we are considering. No one, that we know of in the colonies, that supports this policy dreams otherwise than that substantial “counter-vailing advantage” would be accorded throughout the Empire—not by adopting free imports with direct taxation, but by lowering the tariff against inter-British produce consistent with revenue requirements and placing the higher rates on the foreign.

For one colony to trade preferentially with another, and for Britain to be left out in the trade policy of the Empire would equal the absurdity of rendering the play of Hamlet without Hamlet. National identity in trade, legislation and in our foreign relations is the thing wanted as far as possible.

RECIPROCITY WITH THE UNITED STATES.

The Hon. Mr. Foster's budget speech will be memorable amongst the many which have gone before and which may come after it. It marks an epoch in the history of Canada. Once more—this speech makes clear—the question is thrown in Canada's face, by the United States Government, whether she will adhere loyally to the flag of the Empire, or accept virtual annexation to the Republic; sell the glorious inheritance of British freedom for the mess of pottage that may be temptingly laid before her.

We use the term “virtual annexation” with purpose, for, in our judgment, whatever may be urged in favor of freedom of trade between the two countries it utterly disappears when we are asked to discriminate in our tariffs against the rest of the world, as the condition of our gaining free access to the market of the Republic.

Party politicians will refuse to accept the statements of the Minister of Finance as presenting the true issue before the country, but we shall—in the absence of proof to the contrary—accept them as a fair statement of the facts. What are they?

Duly accredited representatives of the Canadian and British Governments interviewed the Government of the United States with a view of removing, as far as possible and as may be considered mutually advantageous, the tariff restrictions on international trade.

Mr. Blaine, the U. S. Secretary of State, distinctly assures our representatives that the United States would not entertain the idea of freedom of trade in natural products only.

Secondly, that even if a large variety of manufactured goods were also included, they would not agree to it unless their manufacturers had preferential treatment, not only against foreign nations, but the whole British Empire and especially against England.

Thirdly, that Canada's Inland Revenue charges would have to be equalized with theirs.

Fourthly, even if Canada were prepared to make a tariff discrimination against the rest of the world in favor of the United States, that our tariff would have to be practically handed over to their control, by the condition that ours would always have to be made uniform with whatever theirs may chance to be.

We would infinitely prefer to bargain for annexation to-morrow than to entertain, for a moment, such utterly discreditable propositions—propositions which, if accepted, would reduce our position to one of servile dependence on a foreign nation and place us, as a people, in the front rank of apostates and ingrates towards the British Empire—under whose flag we have enjoyed every national blessing, well calculated to evoke from all hearts a passionate devotion to the cause of British Unity.

It is a poor consolation for Sir R. Cartwright to retort on the Government, by telling them that Mr. E. Farrer and himself would make infinitely better negotiators for a trade treaty with the United States than the gentlemen sent there. Such an assertion—beside its vulgarity—only indicates the feeling of reckless abandonment that possesses, for the nonce, the mind of Opposition leaders.

With these plain facts before them, we trust all true Englishmen—whatever party name they wear—will be drawn into closer sympathies and into resolute united action to resist, to the bitter end, every attempt to establish

preferential trade relations against any portions of our Empire. Let us all see now what can be done to promote, in every way, a truly United Empire.

BASIS OF UNION.

The friends of Imperial Federation are in council to evolve a scheme of Federal Union for the Empire. Some think that a Union for War only is practicable at present; others think political legislative unity must precede any form of union involving taxation for Imperial purposes; finally, there are those who think the Union is only possible with commercial union as its basis wholly or in part.

The crucial phase of the question is that every part of the Empire must have a revenue to meet public expenses, and the easiest and most popular mode of raising it is the first consideration to each. To attempt uniformity in that matter would be utter folly—a reasonable latitude between the free import system of Great Britain and the revenue tariffs of the colonies must be allowed.

Hostile tariffs between portions of the Empire would destroy all sense of National Unity. This fact requires that a maximum tariff limit for revenue only—mutually agreed on—must be arrived at throughout the Empire, the higher or hostile tariffs, if any, to be allowed only on foreign imports.

Apart from all tariff considerations as between British countries, as each part of the Empire would, under federal union, have to bear its share of the cost of Imperial expenses—an all round tariff charge on foreign imports—sufficient for necessary revenue for that purpose—should be imposed, which could form the minimum tariff for any part of the Empire. This tariff would affect primarily a country adopting the free import system. To avoid the charge British produce must be used instead of foreign.

A maximum and minimum tariff within the Empire, thus arranged, would afford scope to each country for the exercise of preferences for direct or indirect taxation for revenue.

We are reliably assured that taxation in Great Britain—simply for necessary revenue—is equal to 12½ per cent. on the value of all produce. What it may be in each part of the Empire we know not, but, whatever taxation the local producer carries from his government, we hold that, in all cases, imported produce from other parts of the Empire each should, in justice to local producers, be taxed exactly to an equal amount under any tariffs in force, and that this per centage, duly ascertained decennially, should form the maximum in any case on imports from other portions of the Empire.

Under such a system British produce would find its load of taxation equally shared by all imported produce, yielding a revenue that would promptly enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to remove a large proportion of the burdens of taxation borne by the local producer, at same time it would obviate unfriendly government jealousies of foreign nations.

Taxation for revenue between the maximum and minimum limits, on imports would incidentally afford all justifiable advantages to local industries throughout the empire. Tariffs on foreign imports could be higher and vary throughout the Empire—be discriminatory or hostile, as locally desired, towards any nation; but, in all cases, a lower tariff must be charged on imports from British dominions.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

“CATHOLIC TRUTH”: A statement has been going the round of the press that the Duke of Norfolk gives away more money “to charities” than any other member of the British peerage. Doubtless this report is purposely circulated by the “Catholic Truth” Society, but we would like to learn how much of this “charity” is devoted to anything outside of Peter's pence and Papist institutions for propagating their peculiar tenets?

LEGAL JURISDICTIONS: The British State Department has sent a circular inviting colonial opinion on the proposal to make the Supreme Court judgments in all parts of the Empire effective throughout the Empire, so that the authority of legal decisions in one part will not be nullified by want of jurisdiction in other parts of the Empire. This was favourably considered at the Colonial conference in 1888, and should be heartily supported by all friends of British unity.

GOOD LEGISLATION: Legislation needed in Canada has been enacted by the South Carolina House of Representatives forbidding any member of the Senate or House receiving or using free passes on railroads, also all state

or county officials, judges, etc. We make a note of this as a bright spot in the dark scene across the border, but we do not on the Delaware whipping post and stocks for criminal offenders as the most sensible and practical cure for such offences. Goals are too costly institutions, and the hangman's rope and public whipping will clear any state quicker of criminals than anything we know of, and that is the desideratum.

POLITICAL HUMBUG: The bitter attacks on Lord Salisbury for his Exeter speech in which he very properly denounced the attitude of Romanism in political affairs, brought to the front a focmal in debate that exposed the canting hypocrisy of Messrs. Gladstone and Harcourt in charging others with denying Catholics the “rights of majorities” in British dominions: Mr. Chamberlain the Unionist leader replied by quoting a passage from Mr. Gladstone's writings, which says: “To secure rights is the aim of Christian civilization; to destroy them and establish the resistless domineering action of a purely central power is the aim of the Roman policy.” Mr. Chamberlain also quoted a similar passage from Mr. Morley's writings. Then he asked, “Is it not strange that the Gladstonians may steal a horse when we cannot look over the hedge?”

DENOMINATIONAL GROWTHS: The recent census returns for the colony of Victoria reveal the fact that the adherents of the Church of England form one-third of the total population. The Roman Catholics come next in order, 22 per cent. against 37 per cent., and then follow Presbyterians and Wesleyans, each between 14 and 15 per cent. From thence downwards with a rapidly diminishing proportion, we come to Baptists, Independents, etc. The Jews are returned as under 7000, about the same number as the Pagans, of whom the Chinese form the largest contingent. The Anglicans, the Methodists and the Baptists have maintained a steady rate of progress since 1871 in their percentage to the population, but the Presbyterians and Roman Catholics have, on this standard, fallen away.

THE BY-ELECTIONS: The Irishman who just landed at New York expressed the intention to vote “agin the government,” has his counterpart in Canadian constituencies which make it a point to always send government supporters to Parliament. They know that little or no public money will be spent in their constituencies unless they do so. Outside of such considerations we are satisfied that the average voter is entirely sceptical of party purity and is more than weary of the licentious use of mud-slinging by the partisan press. Again a large and loyal portion of the population refuse to read freedom of trade in the Cartwright-Farrer proposal to abolish tariff shackles between us and the United States but tightening and adding to those on our trade with the rest of the world—and a still larger number refuse to tolerate any fiscal policy which discriminates against other portions of our Empire. All these influences have told against the Liberal party—the verdict is happily decisive enough as an eye-opener—and should lead them to initiate a policy in harmony with sound Liberalism and loyalty to British unity.

THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY: Our brother colonists at the antipodes seem not a little proud, and properly so too, of their naval squadron. This is the way the Leader writes of it: “Of all the visitors to the colony during the year, the most distinguished was the auxiliary squadron. It was received with the utmost enthusiasm as the first appearance of Australia as a naval power. The instinct of the race is against militarism, and it may be conceded that there is no probability of a large standing army being required in these colonies. They are “sea surrounded,” as is the mother country and their policy must be that of Great Britain—to meet all enemies on the open sea. Lord Carrington has made some stupid comments upon the squadron, but most Australians recognise that the “federal fleet” is the initiation of an Australian navy which will ultimately make the country respected by Europe and Asia, and contribute to the strength of the Empire.” We admire the pluck of the Australians in willingly putting up cold cash towards constructing and maintaining a squadron which will “contribute to the strength of the Empire”—which will help to protect Canadians!!

STATE RAILWAYS: The Melbourne (N. S. W.) Leader of Jan. last says that the Government measure to bring the Government railways more direct-