

THE COLONIES AND THE EMPIRE.

Perhaps the most gratifying sign of Jubilee rejoicing and goodwill which is being exhibited at the present moment is that displayed by the distinguished colonists who are now the guests of the Mother Country. The manner in which the Prime Ministers of the great self-governing communities over-sea have spoken at the public gatherings assembled to welcome them, and the general character not only of their reception, but of their acknowledgments of that reception, has been everything that could be desired. No reasonable person can, indeed, contemplate the existing relations between the Mother Country and her daughter States without feeling that they are in every sense satisfactory. The power of managing their own affairs entirely in their own way possessed by the colonies is used by them so loyally, so discreetly, and so reasonably that there is no cause of friction or complaint. They respect the rights of the Mother Country and of the Empire as a whole, just as the Mother Country respects theirs. And, though the United Kingdom makes no claim of any kind on the colonies, it is quite clear that the English-speaking communities beyond the sea who acknowledge the headship of the Queen would in case of difficulty and danger strain every nerve to help the land they acknowledge as their ultimate "home."

Some impatient critics have talked as if the relationship which thus exists between our great colonies and us was so slender as not to be worth preserving, and have clamored for something which shall bind more closely and more rigidly. We must confess to being unable to feel any great sympathy with such an outcry. It seems to us that a system which has produced results such as those we are now witnessing cannot be so bad as it is represented. We admit that the day may come, though it is probably still distant, when it may be wise and prudent to create a closer and more formal union between us and our colonial fellow-subjects. A great increase in the rapidity of communication and the growth of population in Australia and Canada may ultimately produce a need for something in the nature of a federation between themselves and the United Kingdom. But though we do not deny that this may come, and though under altered circumstances we should welcome it most gladly, we hold that it must be the outcome of a real political need and not of sentiment. When we say this, let it not be supposed for a moment that we wish to condemn sentiment, or to speak as if it did not play a great part in the affairs of nations and states. We fully admit the importance of sentiment, but we hold that the sentiment of Imperial unity and racial brotherhood is amply provided for by the existing system. The loyal affection of the colonies for the mother country, and of the mother country for the colonies—signs of which are everywhere apparent—is a proof that the present common citizenship gives quite a sufficient support to the Imperial sentiment. Little by little, however, we may expect that political needs will grow up which will make for closer union and will create new ties. Out of these gradually created new ties, again, may grow the formal federation of the Empire. The great point to remember is that the good feeling, and mutual confidence and loyalty between the mother and daughter States, which we all agree is the essential thing to obtain, cannot be created or maintained by a paper constitution, and that to get its full development this much-desired sentiment must be allowed a free growth. There is, indeed, little doubt that a premature and ill-considered plan of imperial federation forced, or apparently forced, upon the colonies, might injure and stunt, if it did not actually destroy, the sentiment of loyalty. People must not fail to remember that the self-governing colonies are young and rapidly-growing communities, who are expanding and feeling their way in every direction. Hence restrictions which to a long-settled and fully-grown community seem quite bearable may appear to them most irksome and disagreeable. But any form of imperial federation must carry certain fixed restrictions with it, and restrictions which conceivably might at particular moments be very unpleasant to certain colonies. We ought not, then, to think of Federation till the colonies have reached a stage of political development different from that in which they now find themselves. When we speak of the restrictions which a Federal system implies, it must

be remembered that those restrictions could not be as easily and rapidly modified as can the existing system. Imperial Federation must mean, not merely the establishment of a new relationship between each colony and the Mother Country, but also among the colonies themselves. Under Imperial Federation alterations as regards the relationship and its restrictions could not be settled off hand between the Mother Country and the daughter States. In such a case, all the rest of the Empire would have to be consulted and to give its consent, and this consent might not always prove obtainable. In a word, Imperial Federation is not suitable to a rapidly growing and diversified Empire, and could not be applied without grave risks.

But though Imperial Federation is obviously full of dangers, and not suitable to the exigencies of the present case, we do possess a system which is exactly fitted to meeting the difficulties of a diversified and quickly expanding Empire. That system is the one which is now in existence. It has proved extraordinarily successful in preserving the integrity of the Empire and in retaining the loyalty of the colonists, and we should be mad to throw it away for some untried piece of academic statesmanship. By all means allow the present system to expand and grow, and always in the direction of Imperial Union, but do not let us discard it in order to try what some believe to be a better plan. It has, no doubt, been often argued in the past that an Empire so loosely knit as our own is not worth having, and that therefore we must either abandon it as a useless incubus, or else proceed to turn it into something different—i.e., into something more strong and rigid. It is to be hoped that the manifestation of loyal feeling which has taken place in this year of Jubilee, and the conferences on matters of common interest, at which the Colonial Premiers will doubtless be present later in the summer, will finally put an end to all such foolish talk. It will surely be impossible to say that our Colonial Empire is, under present conditions, not worth having, after the proofs that are now being afforded us of colonial loyalty. Were we in peril as a nation, who can doubt that the colonists would stand by us as stoutly and as loyally as the people of these islands? And how can we say that a system which has produced such a result is a failure, has been framed on mistaken lines?—*London Economist.*

DISQUIETING RUMORS.

A story about the transfer of the Grand Trunk shops from Stratford had arisen some days ago and was printed in the *Herald* of that town. At a later date the *Herald* people asked the general manager if the story they had printed was true, and Mr. Hays replied as under. Many a paper might well take it to heart:

"I regret that when you had, as you say, reason to 'hope this is but another of the misconceptions such as have arisen now and again as to your [Mr. Hays'] policy, and been proven to be absurd or foundationless,' you should have first published the article in your paper criticizing and condemning the management, and then written me asking me whether there was any reason for your having taken such action. How can we be blamed for withholding information from the press if we are treated in this unfair manner? The constant agitation throughout the columns of the newspapers of rumors, often originating with some discharged or disgruntled employee, simply keeps such of our employees as are desirous of attending to their duties and retaining the goodwill and favor of the management upset and disturbed with apprehensions as to what may take place affecting them, when, as a matter of fact, there is no ground for such apprehension whatever, other than guesswork on the part of some irresponsible party. So far as concerns the matter to which your letter refers, there is no inclination or intention on the part of the management to transfer its power terminus from Sarnia to Port Huron. If hereafter you will talk these matters up with me personally before publishing widespread through your columns, and afford me an opportunity to give you the facts in the case, I shall appreciate it very much, and it will only be according us fair treatment."

—Small Boy—"Please, I want ter buy some soap." Grocer—"Yes. Do you require it scented." Small Boy—"No; I have to take it with me."

MUNICIPAL DEBTS.

The greater New York will begin business as a municipality, so to speak, on January 1, 1898, with a municipal debt in excess of \$200,000,000, a debt larger, according to the *New York Sun*, than that of any four other cities of the country. There is a general opinion, for which, however, there is no real warrant, that the debt of American municipalities is based upon their population, area, age, and resources; but the fact is that while these elements regulate the running expenses of American cities, the debt is fixed rather by the form of government they have enjoyed or suffered from in the past. Boston and St. Louis are cities of the same size nearly (the difference in population between the two was less than 3,000 by the last census), yet the municipal debt of Boston is three times greater than that of St. Louis, while, on the other hand, the tax rate in St. Louis is 50 per cent. greater per \$1,000 of valuation than it is in Boston. Louisville, a city of 200,000 population, has a debt of nearly \$9,000,000, but Covington, in the same state, with a population of 37,000, by the last census, has a debt of \$2,400,000, and Newport, Ky., a city of 24,000, has a debt of \$1,000,000. Chicago, which has a population considerably in excess of 1,250,000, has a municipal debt of \$17,000,000, whereas New Orleans, which has a population of 250,000, one-fifth of Chicago, has a debt of \$15,000,000, and some local improvements under way will materially increase it. Indianapolis, with a population at the last census of more than 100,000, has a debt of \$1,108,000, whereas Evansville, which by the last Federal census had a population of only 50,000, one-half as large, has a debt of \$2,100,000. The municipal debt of Kansas City is \$4,000,000, and Sioux City, Iowa, owes \$1,200,000. The municipal debt of Philadelphia is \$2,000,000, and of Pittsburgh \$12,000,000, but Providence, which has about one-half the population of Pittsburgh, has a municipal debt of \$13,250,000. Milwaukee and Detroit are two cities having almost the same population—205,000 by the census of 1890. Since then Detroit has increased more rapidly in population, and the area included in it is somewhat larger than is the area of the Wisconsin city. Yet the debt of Detroit is \$4,800,000, whereas the debt of Milwaukee is \$6,200,000. San Antonio, Texas, an ancient town of less than 40,000 persons, has been wide awake enough to contract a municipal debt considerably in excess of \$2,000,000, whereas the city of Fort Worth, which has been generally alluded to as being a thriving and enterprising settlement, has a debt of \$1,300,000 only. In New York State, Buffalo has a bonded debt of \$12,000,000, Syracuse of \$5,800,000, Troy of \$1,200,000 only, Long Island City of \$3,500,000, Yonkers of \$3,000,000, Albany of \$4,100,000, Rochester of \$8,400,000, Utica of \$360,000, Poughkeepsie of \$1,700,000, Dunkirk of \$275,000, and Mount Vernon, N.Y., of \$800,000.—*St. Louis Democrat.*

WELDLESS TUBE PLANTS BOUGHT BY AN ENGLISH SYNDICATE.

A Pittsburg correspondent states that a syndicate of English capitalists has secured control of valuable patents and two of the largest weldless tube plants in the world. A Pilkinton, J. F. J. Piercy, J. H. Piercy, and H. N. Taylor, of Birmingham, England, represented English interests, and closed the deal last week. Henry W. Hartman, vice president of the Elwood Weldless Tubing Company, with factories at Elwood City and Grenville, Pa., was instrumental in getting the foreigners interested.

H. A. Lozier, the Cleveland bicycle manufacturer, is president of the Elwood Company. He, together with his associates, still retains an interest in the company, which will make an extensive increase to their plants. The deal amounts to about \$3,000,000. The object of getting English capital interested was to go into the manufacture of weldless tubing for boilers, the weldless tube having entirely superseded the lap-welded tube.

The new factories, which are to be built this year will be devoted entirely to that branch of the industry, as the Elwood and Grenville plants are employed in making bicycle tubing. The National Tube Works at McKeesport, the largest lap-welded tube company in the world, has switched since the trade has been falling off, and is building an immense plant at McKeesport to manufacture weldless tubes from ingots.—*N.Y. Shipping and Commercial List.*