

1882. Of all this Canada has—directly, at least—contributed nothing, though not only has her commerce in all parts of the world been protected just as securely as that of England herself, but special services have been from time to time rendered on her behalf, as, *e. g.*, in the Behring's Sea controversy. Thus, to sum up the argument of the pamphlet, as it relates to the self-governing colonies as a whole and to Canada in particular, the navy, employed and relied upon for the protection of the whole empire, is provided and maintained entirely at the cost of the people of the United Kingdom, though there are eleven millions of people of the same race, inhabiting some of the richest countries of the world, carrying on one one-seventh of the whole commerce to be protected, and occupying a territory to be defended fifty times greater than that of the United Kingdom, who contribute practically nothing to that expenditure.

It must be admitted that the Imperial Federation (Defence) Committee make out a strong case. What is to be said on the other side?

In the first place, it will be seen that the argument assumes that the navy is created and maintained, if not for the sole purpose of protecting the commerce of the Empire, at least only for such purposes as are of equal interest and importance to the people of the colonies and to those of the Empire. Is that so? Is the protection of commerce the principal thing in the minds of those in the Mother Country, in Parliament and out, who support and vote for resolutions pledging the resources of the United Kingdom to vast expenditures for the strengthening of the navy? May not the predominating motive be rather the preservation of the naval supremacy of the kingdom, with a view to possible European complications? How else are we to account for the standard so often set before Parliament and the people, that, namely, of keeping the British navy superior to the combined navies of any two of the other great maritime powers, thereby sustaining the pre-eminence of Great Britain, at least on the high seas, among the nations of Europe? We are not sure, however, that there is much force in this suggestion. We throw it out for what it is worth. It is true that the Mother Country may have motives and interests in maintaining her influence in European politics, and being prepared, if need be, to take a hand in European conflicts, which appeal but remotely to the colonies. On the other hand, it may be argued with perhaps even greater force, that it is precisely upon this naval superiority that her ability to give ample protection to the territory and trade of her colonies in all parts of the world depends. Should the commerce of Canada, for example, ever need the protection of an armed fleet, it would be, in all probability, only in conse-

quence of its being threatened by some maritime power or powers, at war with the Mother Country, and seeking to wound her in the most vulnerable point.

But even if it were to be admitted that the interest of the colonies in the maintenance of the navy is proportionately less, and less direct, than that of the Mother Country itself, the principle involved would remain the same, the only difference being that the colonies, instead of being in justice bound to contribute to the support of the navy in full proportion to the extent of their trade or population, should fairly be required to pay in some smaller proportion. They still would be bound in fairness to pay to the extent of the benefits admittedly derived by them.

The next objection which is suggested is that which, so far as Canada is concerned, has been ably and persistently urged by Sir Charles Tupper, the Canadian High Commissioner, in Great Britain. This, in effect, admits the obligation, but claims that Canada is already fulfilling it and doing her share of the work of protection, by building and maintaining railroads, such as the Inter-colonial and the Canadian Pacific, by constructing and keeping in operation expensive canals to facilitate internal communication, by keeping up coast guards, maintaining and drilling a force of militia, and so forth. To all such pleas the ready answer is that all these expenses were incurred by Canada for her own local defence and commercial purposes, and that in no one case were they incurred for the purpose of aiding in the defence of the empire at large. The United Kingdom, it will be said, is obliged to bear all the enormous burden of equipping and maintaining the navy, in addition to providing for all those local purposes and maintaining a costly army for Imperial defence to boot. Referring to the claim which has been made that "Canada contributes seven million dollars per annum to the defence of the Empire, because certain canals and railways have been made in Canada, because Canada maintains a militia, a permanent militia, mounted police and police boats for the protection of her inshore fisheries, and because Canada subsidizes a line of steamers which place her in communication with Japan," the pamphlet before us says: "If these be contributions to Imperial defence, there must be added to Great Britain's expenditure for that purpose, the cost of the Manchester Ship Canal and fifty others, some £900,000,000 sterling spent upon railways in the United Kingdom alone, the cost of militia, standing army, reserves and volunteers, the cost of Irish constabulary, city and metropolitan police, and subsidies to all the steamboat lines which carry her mails; and still the British taxpayer pays nineteen and ninepence in the pound on the cost of the naval defence of the empire, and Canada nothing." Without admitting the force of the analogy in all the particulars

enumerated, we fear the impartial Canadian will have to admit enough to invalidate the claim that has been made in his behalf and confess that Canada at present contributes nothing to the support of the Imperial navy on which she relies so confidently for the protection of her commerce on the high seas.

We have but touched one or two salient points of a subject which is rapidly ripening for discussion and which ought to be exhaustively discussed, even apart, as we have said, from any question of Imperial Federation. It is not unfair, perhaps, to assume, from Lord Rosebery's relations to the defunct (?) Imperial Federation League, that he sympathizes, to a certain extent at least, with the view so strongly put forward by the Committee. What significance, if any, attaches to his choice of the Earl of Jersey to represent the British Government at the Conference, time must reveal.

There are those in Canada, though they are probably a small and not very influential minority—apart from certain parties in Quebec whose advocacy of the idea is a source of weakness rather than of strength—who believe that, as an independent nation, Canada's position in the world, fortified by scrupulous attention to her own affairs, would secure her and her commerce from molestation, without the protection of more than a very modest fleet for police purposes. It might be open to such persons to advocate a way of escape from the obligation or alleged obligation under discussion. But the ready, and in the opinion of the great majority, effective answer to all such views is, that Canada without a strong fleet could not possibly maintain an independent existence. They are constantly referred to the great and indispensable advantages which we enjoy as a colony from the protection of the Imperial navy. It will be for those who hold such opinions, and at the same time pride themselves on their loyalty to Great Britain and British connection, to show how Canadians, as an honorable and loyal people, loving British fair play, and willing to put themselves in the place of their fellow-subjects in the United Kingdom, can continue willing to accept all these advantages at the cost of the British tax-payer.

Of course, it goes without saying, and will, we judge, be freely admitted by the committee responsible for the pamphlet, that, in the words of one of the resolutions passed by the Conference which founded the Imperial Federation League in 1884, "if the self-governing colonies take their share in (such) a system of defence, they must have a proportionate share in its administration and control."

It is hardly possible that the British Government and people would not be willing to pay this price for colonial assistance.