

*LORD LUCAS,*

*AND MEMBERS OF THE EIGHTY CLUB,—*

It is a high gratification for me to be present here this evening, as the guest of this influential club, and to be asked to express my views on a subject which I have long earnestly considered; a subject which I venture to think is of the greatest interest to every British community.

The proposal which I am privileged to explain, as briefly as possible, to the "Eighty Club," is not altogether new; but, heretofore, efforts have been confined largely to the circulation of letters and documents designed to educate the public mind on what may be regarded as a new subject. It is not a party question. No Government has, as yet, been definitely committed to it in its entirety. The attempts made to educate, have, in some parts of the Empire, and especially in Canada, met with a measure of success. I hold in my hand a sessional paper which, within the last two or three weeks, has been issued by the Canadian Parliament. In this Parliamentary Return much detailed information is set forth: it contains 63 pages, which I would greatly wish to condense into a few sentences, in order that I might bring the matter to your attention this evening.

Unlike previous proposals which have been made, such as those for creating an Imperial Council or an Advisory Council, schemes of Imperial Federation, or other great schemes for the organisation of the Empire, the present modest suggestion is very simple and very practical, and, if I may venture to say so, I think it has also the merit of being characterised by a