

The fact is, as Lord Rosebery happily remarked the other day the greatest discovery of the century by the people of England is the discovery of the British Empire. The colonies, he added, have not made the discovery, for they have always been perfectly aware of the existence of their Empire. Great popular movements in England are like the making of the young flood tide upon her coasts. They are slow movements at first, and even when they have gathered volume and grown deep, and full, and strong, like the advance of the flood in its spring, they are often like that mighty movement of ocean, so silent that they are unheeded and unobserved till the appearance of rising waters in some unexpected quarter startles the loiterer on the beach and warns him that the world of waters is at hand. And so it has been with this movement in favor of Imperial Federation. It has for years past been silently but surely making head; but it was altogether unheeded, till one day, the 29th of July, 1884, it startled the British public by welling up in a most unmistakable way in the city of London itself; and from that point it has with astonishing rapidity overflowed the land. This generation has witnessed no such marvellous political movement in England as this movement in favor of Imperial Federation. But it has not been confined to England; it has extended to the remotest confines of the Empire. It has swept over Australasia, and it has kindled afresh the hopes and aspirations of our fellow-countrymen in South Africa. It is here with us in Canada too; and—Professor Goldwin Smith to the contrary notwithstanding—I say it has made great and substantial progress in the Dominion. It was only in 1885 that the Canadian branch of the league was formed, and already it comprises among its members some 60 members of the Dominion Parliament, and many others of the foremost men in the Dominion. Why, only the other day a branch of the League was formed at Ottawa, and there in the capital itself some 140 or 150 of their leading citizens, with Mr. Sanford Fleming as president, enrolled themselves as members. And why? I will tell you. Because the people of Canada have a warm heart to their kindred beyond the seas; because they regard with veneration and gratitude the mighty mother of nations from whom they spring; because they glory in their own Empire; and because they are also firmly persuaded that their material interests are best