

realization—is a matter of such vast magnitude and such great complication that it cannot be undertaken at the present time. But it does not follow that on that account we should give up our aspirations. (Hear, hear.) It is only a proof that we must approach the goal in a different way, that we must not try to do everything all at once, that we must seek the line of least resistance. To create a new government for the British Empire—a new government with large powers of taxation and legislation over countries separated by thousands of miles of sea, in conditions as various as those which prevail in our several dependencies and colonies—that, indeed would be a duty from which the boldest statesman might shrink appalled. We may, however, approach this desirable consummation by a process of gradual development. (Hear, hear.) We may bear in mind the words of an old poet—that

“No vast design was ever snatched in haste;

“’Tis patience heaves it on.”

(Cheers.)

COMMON INTERESTS AND OBLIGATIONS.

We may endeavour to establish common interests and common obligations. When we have done that it will be natural that some sort of representative authority should grow up to deal with the interests and the obligations we have created. What is the greatest of our common obligations? It is Imperial defence. What is the greatest of our common interests? It is Imperial trade. (Hear, hear.) And those two are very closely connected. It is very difficult to see how you can pretend to deal with the great question of Imperial defence without having first dealt with the question of Imperial trade. Imperial defence is largely a matter of ways and means, and ways and means are dependent upon the fiscal and other commercial arrangements you may make; and, therefore, the conclusion to which I arrive is this—that if the people of this country and the people of the colonies mean what they have been saying, and if they intend to approach this question of Imperial unity in a practical spirit, they must approach it on its commercial side.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

We have a great example before us in the creation of the German Empire. How was that brought about? You all recollect that, in the first instance, it commenced with the union of two of the States which now form that great Empire in a commercial Zollverein. They attracted the other States gradually—were joined by them for commercial purposes. A council, a Reichsrath, was formed to deal

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