

to devolve a large portion of its work upon local legislative bodies. At all events its imperial functions must be separated from its local functions as a parliament of the United Kingdom. The direction of imperial policy and protection of imperial interests must then be handed over to a body specially selected for the purpose and the way prepared for an Imperial Council that shall represent the empire as a whole. Such a body already exists in the Imperial Conference, organized in 1907 as a permanent institution of the empire. For, like some of the greatest institutions known to history and specially to the history of England, this Imperial Council has already come "without observation," and exists in their midst as an institution before men have yet called it by a proper name. For the present, it is true, it is still in infancy and its power is limited. It has no right of legislation, and perhaps may never need to have, so far at least as the autonomous portions of the empire are concerned. It advises only, through the deliberate advice of such a body would have all the moral weight of a command. Yet, composed of all its leading statesmen, it is the most representative institution of the empire as a whole, were the basis of its constitution so adjusted as to make it in some way truly and fairly representative of all the parts. To such an Imperial Council give the sole direction of the foreign policy of the empire and the function of maintaining its defence, with full control at least of the imperial navy. Give it, in addition, the power to levy a small tax directly upon the citizens of the empire at large as a sign and pledge of the unity that underlies them. All are eager in professing loyalty to king and crown, and would no doubt heartily contribute when once they had a voice in the shaping of