

change were we to lose amidst the system, science and learning of our universities and colleges our sympathy for our fellows, our interest in their affairs, and the romance and

wonder which the heroic or reverent spirit is able to trace almost anywhere be it in outer nature or in the joys, fears, struggles and hopes of the common multitude.

Imperial Federation.

BY ALEX. McTAGGART.

IF we will but pause for a moment in this busy, bustling age and turn over the pages of history, we shall find that that history was marked at various points by great epochs, and I venture to say that, in this the early part of the twentieth century, we, the British nation, are approaching an epoch of vital importance to the existence of our empire. That existence is dependent upon the governance and unity of the empire, which, I make bold to say, presents one of the greatest unsolved problems in the world to-day. Indeed, on its solution hinges the destiny of our race. If, then, we hold dear the existence of our great empire, Imperial unity should be our watch word. It is, however, with that form of unity—Imperial Federation—that this article is intended specially to deal.

The term Imperial Federation means the uniting into one great league all the self-governing colonies in the empire, with one supreme parliament at Westminster, composed of representatives from every autonomous state in the realm. The idea originated in the year 1884, when there was formed in London what was known as the Imperial Federation League, whose chief resolution declared that in order to

secure the permanent unity of the empire, some form of federation was necessary. For many years that league worked remarkably well. It stirred up public interest and was indirectly instrumental in the inauguration of imperial conferences for the consideration of matters of imperial moment. Amongst the subjects discussed by those conferences was this idea of Imperial Federation, and the ultimate conclusion that was arrived at with respect to it, at least in the form presented by the league, was to the effect that it would mean the encroachment upon the principles of self-government and would tend towards colonial subjection. I have not the audacity to challenge such a conclusion, but what I do declare is—surely there is to be found some form of federation that can be made practicable. The devising of such a scheme is at present engaging the attention of some of the greatest minds in the race—men of foresight fired with spirit of empire preservation. If such a scheme can be devised, I think we can lay claim to having succeeded in working out the greatest political conception that has ever exercised the ability of any people in part of the world. And surely such a