

supporters of the movement could devise. Finally, our own Colonial Secretary has taken the chair at the recent Colonial and British Congress in London, and has there publicly not only intimated his own desire, and, as we must assume, that of the Government, for Imperial Protection, but has sketched an outline of such a scheme; and *The Times*, in its earlier and better days an unflinching advocate of Free Trade, has patted the Colonial Secretary on the back.

Under such a concatenation of favourable circumstances it was to be expected that our Neo-Protectionists would have made some progress. But no! At this congress in London the Canadian delegates dared to propose nothing more specific than a vague resolution in favour of an arrangement

*"as nearly as possible in the nature of a Zollverein, based upon principles of freest exchange of commodities within the Empire consistent with the tariff requirements incident to the maintenance of the local government of each Kingdom, Dominion, Province, or Colony now forming part of the British family of nations."*

This resolution, which, but for the ambiguous term "Zollverein," might be accepted by a Free Trader, was felt by some of themselves to be too vague, and an amendment was moved to the effect that—

*"This Congress records its belief in the advisability and practicability of a customs arrangement between Great Britain and her Colonies and India on the basis of preferential treatment."*

But so little did either the resolution—apparently harmless as it was—or the amendment meet the views of the assembled delegates, that the proposers of both found it necessary to withdraw them, and to substitute a perfectly meaningless resolution, to the effect that the Government should be invited to summon a Conference to consider the subject.

Even Canada, which, under the leadership of Sir Charles Tupper, was the prime mover of this Neo-Protection scheme, has at this critical moment thrown off his baneful guidance, and declared herself for a Ministry which is opposed to the principle of Protection.

Under these circumstances it seems almost superfluous to enter at length, for the hundredth time, upon the reasons which make any such proposals as those of the Canadian delegates and of Mr. Chamberlain—for they are in effect one and the same—undesirable and impracticable. Purposely vague as they were and consequently presenting as small a front to attack as possible they have been felt to involve principles which the country is unwilling to accept, and have fallen through with no result except discredit to their promoters.

But as the Cobden Club are often told that they answer