

The Week.

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND LITERATURE.

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A FATAL objection to the Colonial Commercial League proposed by Sir Alexander T. Galt, in the *Imperial Federationist*, and mentioned in the *Globe* last week, is that it requires members of the league to adjust their tariffs, not according to their material interests, but from sentimental considerations. Business is to be encouraged with another member of the league, however far distant, by a discount on duties, which we suppose is to countervail any disadvantage the members may be under in the increased cost of their products and increased cost of freight, with respect to nearer non-leaguers. Thus if an article of Australian product would cost, laid down in Canada, 20 per cent. more than a similar article of United States product, we give the former—if Australia is a member of the league—an artificial advantage by allowing a sufficient discount off the ordinary duties. But this is not business, it is sentiment; and between commercial communities it is unworkable. In such a case the Canadian taxpayer would naturally ask why Canada should foster an Australian industry by remitting a perhaps 25 per cent duty. This might perhaps be done with advantage in exceptional cases, where for instance a return consignment of Canadian product could be placed under a similar condition of reduction of duty; but this would be Reciprocity, which might otherwise be attained quite independently of Federation, and at any rate could not but be of very exceptional occurrence.

SIR A. T. GALT's general plan of Imperial Federation, as he explained it at the recent conference of the League, starts with the assumption that the British Empire is being shattered into fragments, and so it is better to set to work at once and pull it to pieces. He proposes that the Constitution be broken up to suit this suppositious crumbling to pieces; and then when Home Rule has been established everywhere throughout the United Kingdom,—Ireland and the Isle of Dogs, we suppose, and every such centre of local influence having its independent legislature for local affairs—an omelette is to be made of these broken eggs, to which the colonies are to contribute an egg or two apiece, and the whole mixture will ensure a thorough consolidation of the British Empire. So it might, perhaps, if the eggs were all of the same size and nature; but we doubt if an omelette composed of several hen's eggs and one roc's—even though the roc's be first subdivided—will taste of anything but roc. England is too big a country to place on a level with Scotland, or Wales, or Ireland, or any colony—she will overshadow them all put together; and the result of confederating such disparate parts can only be that the smaller constituents of the confederation will perpetually combine and cabal against the larger. We have had a foretaste of this in the late election, when Mr. Gladstone attempted to array Scotland and Wales with Ireland, against England; and the dissolution of the United Kingdom in the manner proposed by Sir A. T. Galt, by forcing these countries more apart would, by fostering in each an individuality it does not now possess, offer a rich field for the intriguing politician.

ADMIRAL SIR A. COOPER KEY contributes to the current *Nineteenth Century* a paper on the "Naval Defence of the Colonies," which gives a suggestive sketch of what may be done towards a military federation of the Empire. There is no colony without foreign trade; and under present conditions the Mother Country is expected alone to bear the cost of protecting this foreign trade, in which, as far as hostile tariffs can affect it, she may have no greater share than a foreign country. The duty of the Imperial Government of course is to afford protection to British subjects and interests wherever situated; but in fairness there is a limit to this obligation in the case of a colony which, like Canada, sets up a wall of protection against British commerce. Why, too, should Great Britain alone bear the cost of safeguarding the transit of Canadian produce across the Atlantic? She is at the same time protecting British shipping, it is true; but that is only an incident in the case, the main fact remains that the safety of the foreign trade of Canada—the marketing of her produce—is secured at the sole cost of the British taxpayer. If this security were withdrawn, Canada would have to provide a naval force for the protection of its foreign commerce, or the whole farming interest throughout this country would be

ruined. Admiral Key discusses the subject of Imperial Defence generally as it concerns all the colonies. These he distinguishes as—naval stations for the repair and equipment of ships of war and *places d'armes*, such as Malta, Gibraltar, Hong-Kong, etc.; coaling stations, such as St. Lucia, in the West Indies, Perim, in the Red Sea, Port Hamilton, near the Corea, etc.; and the colonies proper, which class includes the Dominion of Canada, the Australasian group, and South Africa. The two first classes he considers as military colonies, whose maintenance should be at the sole charge of the Imperial Government; the Royal Navy would also protect trade on the high seas in all parts of the world, and in the neighbourhood of the last-mentioned class of colonies; but in each of these latter there should be established at least one port as a naval station—such as Halifax, N. S., and Sydney, N. S. W.,—as is actually being done by Australia. A naval force should be maintained there for defensive purposes at the cost of the colony. This force is to be solely for the purpose of defence; but as it is certain that an efficient and reliable naval force cannot be extemporised—it must be the growth of years, of years during which the *personnel* must apply their whole energies to obtain a knowledge of and practice in their profession,—it is proposed that the Imperial Government shall provide the necessary vessels and maintain them in efficiency as part of the Royal Navy, under the command of the admiral on the station, the cost being paid annually by the colony to the Imperial Government, on an estimate previously agreed on by both Governments. A remedy would thus be found for all the difficulties inherent in the organisation of separate colonial squadrons independently of the Royal Navy, of which the vessels would be, perhaps, provided with different arms and ammunition; and the Royal Navy being open to the colonists, they would receive an invaluable training and their federation for defensive purposes would be established, which would be more efficient than could be any colonial force.

At the dinner of the City Liberal Club, Lord Granville gave some account of the progress made in fortifying some of these *places d'armes* and coaling stations, and, what is most satisfactory to add, he was able to say that the colonies are aiding in the work. Alive to the importance of Imperial defence, the Colonial Ministers and Downing Street are settling between them in a friendly way the problem that cost England the American colonies; and at half a dozen stations the British colonies have consented to pay part of the expenses of fortification. At Hong Kong, Singapore, Trincomalee, and Sierra Leone, the works are "well advanced, and will be completed as soon as the armament is provided." "In Mauritius, Jamaica, and at Esquimaux, the works will be commenced at once, and the defence of Table Bay and St. Lucia will shortly be undertaken." At Simon's Bay and Aden, works are in progress, but apparently not yet in an advanced condition. The Dominion of Canada has undertaken to construct the defences of Esquimaux; the Australian Colonies will bear the expense of fortifying King George's Sound and the Torres Straits; while Hong Kong, the Straits Settlement, and Mauritius have also undertaken to provide the works if the Imperial Government send the armament,—the same arrangement as that on which the Dominion Government and the United Kingdom are to divide the expense of fortifying Esquimaux. This is a most pleasing statement, and it shows that Lord Granville's Colonial administration, though short, has, like Lord Rosebery's administration of foreign affairs, been most active and useful to the country.

THE announcement of the Irish policy of the Government, made by Lord Salisbury at the Lord Mayor's banquet, is quite satisfactory so far as it goes. Perhaps it is too early yet to indicate what measures the Government propose in order to remedy the agrarian discontent—it is necessary that something be done, but that something will necessarily require careful elaboration,—but it is reassuring to know, at all events, that the Nationalist Conspiracy, which has been trading on this discontent, is to be rigorously suppressed. "It is the duty of every Government," Lord Salisbury said, "to devote its whole energies to freeing the loyal people of Ireland from the constraint exercised upon them, whether in the form of riot or in the more dangerous, insidious, and effective form of outrage and intimidation." The present Government bears a direct mandate from the English electors deciding firmly and irrevocably that Home Rule shall not be granted; and it is their duty, armed with this final decision, to restore in Ireland that social order which has been banished by the government of the National League. To do this it would seem that Conspiracy must disappear with the Gladstone Administration it succeeded in capturing, and on whose weakness it thrived till, throughout Celtic Ireland, law and order everywhere gave way to outrage and disorder. It is to be hoped the Empire has seen the last of her Gladstone Governments; and that the late era