

LEADING ARTICLE FROM THE "STANDARD" OF WEDNESDAY,
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The address which the Canadian MINISTER OF FINANCE delivered to the Imperial Federation League yesterday afternoon is of peculiar interest at this crisis in the policy of the New World. It may, perhaps, not have been intended as a manifesto to the waning admirers of the McKinley Tariff, or to those who advocated annexation to the United States solely on the ground of the ruin which this short-lived measure would inflict on the Dominion. Indeed, there were at the time men of little faith on the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence, the Saskatchewan and the Fraser, who believed that, by the Protective Tariff which was to shut out their wares from the neighbouring markets, Canada would be compelled to seek salvation in some form of Union little short of absolute severance from the mother country. The result has been absolutely the contrary of what was expected. Instead of the Canadian exports diminishing, they have increased—new markets, more constant and more profitable, having opened as the old ones were temporarily closed. Thus, while in 1890 the Dominion spared of her surplus products ninety-six millions of dollars' worth to other countries, in the nine months of the present year she sent abroad one hundred and fourteen millions' worth—an increase of nearly ninety per cent. over what she exported in the year when the British Colonies in North America formed the present confederation. Of this trade the greater part came to great Britain, which the Canadians have discovered to be "an infinitely better customer" than the one they lost. This discovery Canada is not likely to forget. For it must be remembered that though the United States contains sixty million souls, the Dominion can hope to feed very few of them, and to clothe and supply with tools and timber a still smaller proportion. The manufacturer or farmer, for example, within a stone's throw of the frontier might, assuming that the wall of tariffs were broken down, cross it in a few minutes. But the instant he does so he has to face the competition of scores of farmers, and millmen, and lumbermen, who can supply what he has to sell on terms quite as favourable as he can offer. And every mile he penetrates the United States this rivalry becomes keener, until in time the man who has brought his goods many hundreds of miles cannot possibly sell them as cheaply as the local producers. It is, for example, hopeless for the manufacturer from Quebec, or Montreal, or Halifax to compete in the open markets of San Francisco, or Portland, or Seattle, even were the Dominion and the Republic one. The week's railway journey across the continent is better "protection" to the local producer than the most ridiculous tariff which it ever entered into the mind of a McKinley to devise. It is much cheaper and quite as quick to ship the stuff across the Atlantic to what are practically the only open markets of Europe, those of the mother country, with its forty millions of consumers, who must have bread, and would, all things being equal, rather buy it from Colonies than from foreigners. In this way Canada and Great Britain are, in an informal way, effecting that Federation which would, for all practical purposes,