

Imperial Parliament, together with every colony, whether it have or have not full representative institutions, should send from both its Houses certain delegates elected by those Houses to form an entirely new Imperial Parliament. "This scheme for the representation of the Empire has the advantage of simplicity, and it provides for a kind of double-sifting process, whereby the best and most experienced men from each portion of the Empire would be detained for the purposes of the Supreme Council of the whole nation."

Although, for reasons already given, it is not considered that an "entirely new" parliament would be possible, it seems quite practicable to apply Mr. Little's idea of representing the parliaments rather than the peoples of the Empire. In an Imperial Senate, for very good and sufficient reasons which need not be stated, the United Kingdom would require to have the weightiest voice, but such as would not drown those of the Colonies and Dependencies. On the other hand, for the latter to expect such a number of votes as would enable them to impose their will on the people of England would be highly ridiculous. The most they could demand would be such a representation as would enable each colony to bring forward and urge its views on any question in the hearing of the assembled wisdom of the Empire. Neither could they reasonably ask an influence out of all proportion to the amounts they might contribute for Imperial purposes. In fact these amounts ought to be the measure of such influence, and the joint-stock principle might very well be applied in constituting an Imperial Senate. We shall make the attempt to apply it and to reconstruct the House of Lords at the same time, although this undertaking may appear even more rash than the framing of an Imperial Budget.

Supposing that various divisions of the Empire were to contribute towards an Imperial revenue in the shape of a certain amount of duty on their foreign trade, as has been proposed by Mr. Hofmeyer, they would probably have to be represented in proportion to about the following percentages:—

United Kingdom	85.6
India, etc.	7.2
Canada	3.8
Australasia	2.0
West Indies, etc.	1.0
British Africa	0.4
	100

It can be maintained that such a basis as this would be perfectly fair, and preferable to any scheme of representation according to population, wealth or extent. If these proportions were adopted in transforming the House of Lords into an Imperial Senate, and assuming that the latter were to consist of 500 members, then these would be distributed in the following manner:—

United Kingdom	428
India, etc.	36
Canada, etc.	19
Australasia	10
West Indies, etc.	5
British Africa	2
	500

The Lords Spiritual and Temporal at present number 540. Deducting the Princes and Bishops there remain 512, of whom 16 are Scotch electors and 28 Irish life peers, besides 80 Scotch and Irish lords sitting and voting under English titles. Deducting these also, there remain 379 English Peers who are members by hereditary right, the great majority of them taking very little part in the business of the House. It surely would not be too much to ask the English Peers to allow themselves to be represented, as the Irish Peers are, by a certain number of themselves, elected by themselves for life. In this way it would be possible to make room for members from the Colonies and Dependencies, as well as from the House of Commons and the various Colonial parliaments. It would probably not be too much to provide that the latter parliamentary representatives should make up one fifth of the Imperial Senate, and that they should be nominated by the various executives in power from time to time in the different parts of the Empire, or elected by the Colonial Legislatures. In a Senate of 500 members this would leave 400 to represent the aristocracy of the United Kingdom, the native princes of India, and men who have attained distinction in the Colonies or Dependencies. In the opinion of many people it would be a great misfortune if the utter divorce of church from state were to be consummated everywhere in the British Empire, and therefore it would only be wise to retain the representatives of the Church in the Imperial

Senate. The proportion of such in the present House of Lords is five per cent., but in order to provide for the representation of other religious bodies besides the Church of England, it would probably be necessary to increase this to ten per cent. There would thus remain 300 life members whose distribution according to the percentages just suggested would be as follows:—

United Kingdom	308
India	27
Canada	13
Australasia	7
West Indies	4
British Africa	1
	360

Under this scheme the number of British Life Peers entitled to sit in the new Imperial Senate would be reduced by about one-third. It might be convenient to apportion the 308 life representatives of the United Kingdom according to population, and, in this case, the English Peers would be called upon to elect 228, the Scotch 34 and the Irish 46 members. These would constitute the permanent nucleus of the Imperial Parliament, and it would seem that in such a reconstruction of the House of Lords, in order to increase its influence and usefulness to the whole Empire, the rights of its present members would not be unnecessarily or unreasonably interfered with. As regards the 36 members from India it would probably be right to leave to the Indian Government their selection from among the native Princes, or Englishmen versed in Indian affairs; the actual appointment to be by the Crown. In a similar manner it might become the duty of each Colonial Government to recommend to Her Majesty's representative men of position and character in the Colonies as Life Senators, regard being at the same time had, to the representation of the Provinces constituting a Colony. For instance those from Canada might perhaps be distributed as follows:—From Ontario, 5; Quebec, 5; Lower Provinces, 2; Northwest Territories and British Columbia, 1. It seems unnecessary further to discuss the details of the composition of the proposed Imperial Senate or indicate the manner in which the Christian Church might be represented in it. Such particulars could readily be adjusted if the main features of the scheme were approved. It will be sufficient to recapitulate here the proportions of the proposed representation:—

Life Members—	
English Peers	228
Scotch Peers	34
Irish Peers	46
Senators from India	36
do Canada	13
do Australasia	7
do British Africa	1
do West Indies	4
Church representatives	40
	400

Members holding seats during the existence of the Parliaments or Ministries appointing them:—

From—	
House of Commons	80
India	9
Canada	6
Australasia	3
West Indies	1
British Africa	1
	100

Total members. 500

Provision would possibly require to be made for changing the composition of this Highest Parliament, from time to time, just as variations took place in the amounts of the contributions to the Imperial Treasury. These contributions from the various Imperial Dominions would increase in amount with their population and wealth. They would also increase wherever the local customs duties on foreign imports were lowered, and the more the expenditure for local government was derived from direct taxation. Higher protective duties would tend to lessen trade with foreign countries, and decrease the amount of revenue collected for Imperial purposes. The Colonies would thus have an inducement to adopt a free trade policy, because of the increased representation which a more extensive trade with foreign nations, and consequent increase of the Imperial contribution, would entitle them to.

By giving the Federal Senate the control of Imperial concerns, the English House of Commons, at present overburdened with work, would be able to give thorough attention to the affairs of Great Britain, and the necessity would be avoided for instituting local parliaments within the United Kingdom.

There is probably a great deal more which might with great fitness be brought forward with reference to the constitution of an Imperial Senate, but

it seems unnecessary at present to follow the subject further. Enough has been said to gain for the present proposal some consideration on the part of thoughtful men, and to induce them to believe that the establishment of a truly Imperial Parliament on the lines here indicated is perfectly practicable.

There is every reason for anticipating that this Parliament of Parliaments, the lineal descendant of the Witenagemote of twelve centuries ago, would in course of time, surpass the old Roman Senate, and every representative assembly which the world has yet seen, in dignity, influence, stability and power.

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