

Ottawa on June 20, 1887, and largely attended by members of Parliament. It was then resolved: "That this meeting suggests for consideration Imperial reciprocity as the trade policy most in accordance with the objects of the league and reiterates the opinion that trade between different parts of the Empire should take place upon more favorable terms than trade with foreign nations." This resolution was reiterated at the annual general meeting of the league in Canada, held in Toronto on March 21, 1888. "That the Imperial Federation League in Canada make it one of the objects of their organization to advocate a trade policy between Great Britain and her colonies, by means of which a discrimination in the exchange of natural and manufactured products will be made in favor of one another, and against foreign nations; and that our friends in Parliament are hereby called upon to move in support of the policy of this resolution at the earliest possible moment."

This principle has also been formulated by the Privy Council of Canada, which long ago declared "that trade should be as free as practicable between the various portions of the Empire, having regard solely to their own interests, and undeterred by any obligations to treat others with equal favor."

In April, 1801, the United Empire Trade League was formed, whose chief object is to establish "mutually advantageous trade relations among all who share allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen." Much more important than the proceedings of such associations are the conclusions reached on this subject by the Parliament of Canada and the second Colonial Conference. On April 28, 1892, the former body passed the following resolution:

"That if and when the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland admits Canadian products to the markets of the United Kingdom upon more favorable terms than it accords to the products of foreign countries, the Parliament of Canada will be prepared to accord corresponding advantages by a substantial reduction in the duties it imposes upon British manufactured goods."

A similar resolution is to be found among

those adopted by the Ottawa conference. It reads as follows: "Resolved.—That this conference record its belief in the advisability of a customs arrangement between Great Britain and her colonies, by which trade within the Empire may be placed on a more favorable footing than that which is carried on with foreign countries." These resolutions prove that the movement in favor of British commercial union has developed considerable strength, although no attempt has yet been made to formulate the details of the measure for bringing it into existence.

So far as the present writer is concerned, he would rejoice if satisfactory modifications could be made in the existing tariffs throughout the Empire for the encouragement of inter-British trade. But the practicability of such arrangements is doubtful, and they are not likely ever to be consummated, for the following reasons:

1. The interests concerned are too varied, involved and conflicting to admit of satisfactory compromise in the framing of such reciprocal tariffs.

2. Such attempts would be regarded by very many as preliminary to the establishment of a system of artificial encouragement to particular manufactures; in short, as a return to protection.

3. Even if successful, this system of imperial reciprocity, as it has been called, would only influence local industries and benefit English or colonial finances, but would not provide any revenue for imperial purposes, without which a strong, united Empire is impossible.

4. Such a proposal, whether made by the Mother Country or a colony, might reasonably be characterized as more or less selfish in nature, and intended chiefly for the material benefit of its originator.

The problem of establishing a British commercial union assumes, however, a totally different aspect, when the idea of interfering with existing tariffs, or so modifying them as to give them a reciprocal character is abandoned, and the plan of obtaining a revenue for the common purposes of the Empire, by means of an Imperial tariff, is taken into consideration.

