NSCIOUS TRAITORS

or

Canada, The War and
The Empire

By

D. B. BOGLE

50c.

"A new chapter has been opened in the history of our nationhood."
Sir R. L. Borden

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Introduction

The phrase "unconscious traitors" requires some explanation. The essence of any crime is the intention of committing it. Consequently it would seem as though "unconscious traitor" was a contradiction in terms. But it expresses something for which I cannot find a phrase more suitable. It modifies indignation against individuals, while at the same time it emphasizes the enormity of policies, actions and statements for which they were only not responsible if they were sleep-walking at the time. Yet occasionally it has required more charity than I possess to make the extenuation of sleep-walking fit.

If I go up to a fellow-man and deliberately hit him on the head with a brick in such a manner as to cause death I am a murderer. If on the contrary I am laying bricks from a scaffolding and accidentally dislodge one which falls on a man's head and kills him, I am not a murderer, but—and the point lies here—the consequences to the victim are the same. In both cases he is dead.

Unconscious treachery seems to be due to an attitude of mind incapable of realizing human affairs in their broader relations. It works as much damage as deliberate treachery, of which it is frequently made the tool and catspaw.

There is, for instance, the type of man, fortunately rare, at least since the stone age, for whom nothing exists except himself. He is not wilfully selfish, but simply incapable of seeing anything beyond himself. That is an Egoist pure and simple. There is another man who cannot see beyond his family. To his family he is often passionately devoted. But the whole fabric of society of which he is a member might go to smash so far as he is concerned. He discharges no public duty whatsoever. A third type has his vision limited by his municipality. Considerations of provincial, national or imperial moment slide off him like water off a duck's back, but the rivalry of Snook's Corners and Oddlots will rouse him to his depths. Such men make as admirable town councillors as they make execrable representatives in any larger sphere. They are quite ready at

any moment to wreck their party and ruin their country, so far as in them lies, because Snook's Corners was in some way preferred to Oddlots by the central government, and to congratulate themselves and their constituency upon the possession of so faithful a member. Then there are the provincially hidebound. They are very common even now in Canada. There are men of great public spirit who hold their province so close up to their eyes that their vision of the Dominion is obscured. What is for the good of the whole cannot but be for the good of all its component parts, else it is not a whole, but a mere fortuitous collection of separate and hostile atoms.

Every country possesses these types of character I have described as unconscious traitors, but Canada, or what was to be Canada, was at the time of Confederation so bogged and enmeshed in their pernicious activities that only the preternatural patience of Sir John A. MacDonald and the brute force of Sir Charles Tupper brought us through at all. In fact, the internecine dissensions had gone so far that they reacted against themselves. Many sup-

ported Confederation simply on the ground of getting a stay from things as they existed, and thus became unconscious instruments at the birth of an organism whose future growth they had neither the insight to comprehend nor the heart to love.

When, however, a leading man in a political party justifies armed rebellion without rebuke, when we find all the "aliens independents and annexionists" in sympathy with or affiliated to a particular party, when that party itself has consistently opposed all the corollaries of Confederation necessary to its fullest maturity, when it has advocated policies regarding which it has been warned that they would lead to annexation and merely responded "even so," when, while regarding the perfect liberties of our citizens with great complacency it has repudiated any sense of obligation to the power which guarantees and protects those liberties, then it becomes a question whether the phrase "unconscious traitors" should not give place to Macdonald's phrase "veiled treason."

Similarly there are men who cannot conceive of any consolidation of the Empire except through the extinction of the Canadian Confederation. I endeavor to make clear in this book that the forces aiming at the consolidation of the Empire are the same forces which brought about Confederation, that there is a historical continuity in the process of social evolution at work. More than that, the forces against which the nascent organism is compelled to fight are the same forces which almost strangled Confederation at its birth. The war has brought into clear relief the necessity of a self-realized Empire for the defence of its liberties and the development of its activities towards the needs of the phase of civilization it expresses; just as the threatened disintegration of British North America, through internal disputes and external economic pressure from the United States, brought about Confederation. An almost complete parallel might be established, in nothing more clearly than in the unconscious treachery against which the struggle for life must be made. It is not hate we have to fight,

though hate there is, so much as lack of vision, not deliberate treachery, but treachery that is unconscious, which nevertheless would drive the Empire into a disintegration from which, if it were only visible to them, the unconscious traitors would themselves recoil with horror.

Confederation

As to the facts surrounding Confederation which make up the history of the movement I do not wish to say anything, except to remark that if it had not been in harmony with a deep-seated principle of social evolution, something which subsequent events have already shown, the difficulties which were encountered could never have been overcome. There is nothing in history which gives to the observant mind a deeper sense of destiny, a providence guiding the footsteps of man, than the relentless accomplishment of apparent impossibilities which characterized Confederation. What I have to do with is the National and Imperial significance of Confederation, and I may linger longer over the beginning of things than may seem warranted, but readers inclined to skip these chapters may be reminded that in order to open a locked door it is just as well to have the key.

Biologists have observed two processes in organic evolution. One is where a cell disintegrates and splits up into a number of

separate cells, each sufficient to itself and possessed of an independent life. This is called katabolism. The other is where separate cells tend to inhere in one another and produce a larger and more complex organism possessing an identity of its own. This is called anabolism. Analogies of this kind may be pressed too far, and are only useful as illustrations. But it is possible to see in the history of the British Empire something like the operation of those processes by whose action and reaction organic evolution is carried on. What the British Empire is, and when it began to be, are questions to which it is singularly difficult to formulate an answer. We know that it is, but not what it is. It is not disloyal to say that it is still formless and inchoate.

Great Britain holds enormous tracts of the earth's surface, by all kinds of different tenures, conquest, discovery and settlement, peaceful annexation. It may be observed however that Great Britain has never entered into war with the object of acquiring territory. Wars of conquest have always been foreign to the British character.

Another thing, the colonies and dependencies of Great Britain do not regard her as Alsace and Lorraine look upon Germany, whether she be mother in blood or only stepmother.

Perhaps the best way to describe the British Empire is as a vast system of nerves running through a geographical area possessing subsidiary ganglia in its several branches, but with the main ganglion (brain would be too dignified a term) in an office in Downing Street and the ultimate power in the Government of Great Britain.

The only result of such a condition, had it remained immobile, would have been a bureaucratic administration virtually irresponsible, of all forms of government inconceivably the worst.

There is a story told of two urchins who were viewing the procession at Queen Victoria's jubilee. A particularly smart troop of Australian horse passed along, causing a murmur of appreciation in the crowd. Says the one gamin to the other: "O Bill, 'oo's them? His them the colonies?" "Naow," was the answer, given with the supercilious contempt of superior knowledge,

"them h'int the colonies; the colonies his black."

This sapient youth was born out of time. He had shown the proper qualifications for an understrapper in the Colonial Office in olden days. Before, however, we become too severe upon the stupidity and obstinacy of the Colonial Office, we should remember two gentlemen named Macdougall and Dennis, who involved a quite well-meaning Dominion government in a lot of avoidable trouble in the early days of Confederation, when Ottawa stood to the Northwest much as Downing Street to Ottawa.

However, to get back of our primary concern. The Imperial Government showed a steady process of devolution by which representative and responsible government was acquired by what are now called the self-governing colonies. The logical end of this process was independence, or a bond between the colonies and the United Kingdom of an extremely tenuous and fragile description. But life begins where logic ceases.

It might be thought that Confederation

would accelerate this process of detachment and bring nearer the time when it would be advisable to "cut the painter". Confederation has had precisely the opposite effect. Even a quarter of a century ago talk of annexation to the United States or independence was rife in Canada. Today there is not a word regarding either one or other. The cause of that is that Confederation dignified Canada. The Dominion of Canada is a very different thing from Upper Canada or New Caledonia or Rupert's Land. The relations between Canada and Great Britain have gradually acquired the character of "conversations" between equals, Great Britain remaining only princeps inter pares. This result of Confederation has contributed very greatly to the smooth working of Imperial machinery and is the strength of the Empire in times of crisis.

It was only the vital principle contained in and expressed by Confederation which caused it to survive all assaults. If it had been merely a political expedient it could never have beaten back the attacks delivered against it. But the more the young

plant was trampled upon and abused by our unconscious traitors, the deeper it struck its roots into Canadian soil. The reason was that it gave to Canadians a national ideal, not superseding but transcending provincialism, racialism and theologism, and after all, it is by ideals planted in the soil of tradition that men live and move and have their being. Canada bent her back to gigantic tasks and took colossal burdens on her shoulders with the serenity of one conscious of being in tune with destiny.

Of all the men active in Canadian public life at the time of Confederation, Sir John A. Macdonald seems to have had the clearest view of what it meant. He had his fits of despondency, no doubt, as when he wrote Lord Dufferin: "I may be wrong, but my opinion was and still is, that in the hands of the present Opposition, connected with and supported as they are by the 'alien,' 'annexation' and 'independent' elements, Confederation would not last ten years." In fact, handing over the direction of affairs to "unconscious traitors" deeply influenced by "conscious traitors" filled his

mind with gloomy premonitions. Within a few weeks of writing these words he was out of office, and the Opposition on a general election swept the country. Yet Confederation not only survived the Pacific Scandal, but it survived the Mackenzie administration, a much more wonderful thing.

Sir John's single-hearted belief in the epochal character of the work of which he had been very largely the instrument is well expressed by himself in a letter:

> "A great opportunity was lost in 1867, when the Dominion was formed out of the several Provinces. This remarkable event in the history of the British Empire passed almost without notice. The new Confederation had at the time of the union about the same population as the thirteen colonies when they rebelled and formed a nation imbued with the bitterest feelings of hostility towards England. . . .
>
> "The declaration of all the B.N.A. Provinces that they desired as one Dominion to remain a portion of the Empire showed what wise government and generous

treatment would do, and should have been marked as an epoch in the history of England. . . .

"The union was treated by them (Monck and Buckingham) much as if the B.N.A. Act were a private Bill uniting two or three English Parishes. Had a different course been pursued—for instance, had United Canada been declared to be an auxiliary kingdom as it was in the Canadian draft of the Bill—I feel sure (almost) that the Australian colonies would, ere this, have been applying to be placed in the same rank as 'The Kingdom of Canada'."

I have often thought, in contrasting two of the greatest protagonists of Confederation, Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Charles Tupper, that the former was more possessed with the moral and institutional features of the plan, the development of an enlarged national character of a capacity to do bigger things, and of a wider and nobler outlook upon men and things, while the mind of the latter rested more on conditions of national prosperity and material enrichment.

Sir Charles Tupper lived to see what his prophetic vision had so fearlessly prophesied, but Sir John A. Macdonald, having barely saved Confederation from an insidious but none the less almost fatal blow in a fight beyond his strength, laid down his arms.

The Enemies of Confederation

It is difficult to appreciate at the present time that Confederation in its central idea could have had any enemies. Difficulties in arrangement of a stupendous character were bound to be. What is now Canada consisted of three colonies on the Atlantic Coast, jealous of one another and physically separate from Lower Canada although not wholly geographically detached, Upper and Lower Canada enjoying mutual relations similar to those of two cats tied by their tails over a rope, the Western Beyond given over to the sovereignty of the Hudson's Bay Company, and British Columbia, on the Pacific, separated from Eastern Canada by natural obstacles equal to at least three Atlantic Oceans. With everybody agreed upon general principles, the particular application must have been daunting to the most intrepid. But in addition to such obstacles, Confederation met with the most violent hostility from very powerful men and powerful forces. Religious differences had much to do with this, to an extent in

fact that would be incomprehensible now. But with a Catholicism in Lower Canada which belonged to the era of Catharine de Medici, and a Presbyterianism in Upper Canada which did not appear to have moved since the days of John Knox, there were bound to be sparks flying.

Apart from these, which do not concern this inquiry, bitter hostility was aroused among men from whom a wider view might have been hoped. The root of the opposition in Quebec is clearly put in a newspaper of the day, of which only one copy survives:—

> "When the Ministers undertook their Confederation they had in view only the English Colonies. The basis of all their calculations, of all their hopes, of all their projects, was always the English Colonies.
>
> "Well, that is not the way we politicians of the Papineau school look at the matter; when any change whatsoever is proposed in our political or social institutions, we do not look to see whether this change will be of use to the English Colonies or to any other neighbor; we

think only of Lower Canada and the French race.

"What have we in common with the English Colonies? What interests, what relations bind us to them? Is it a matter of origin, religion, language, national aspirations? No, not at all.

"We have nothing in common with the English Colonies, except that we are dependent upon the same metropolis."

Later in the same article:

"We do not care a fig for the English Colonies, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland. We have the same relations with them as with Australia. We are colonies of England, that is all. The only difference is the distance, greater or less, which separates us."

The article ends:

"You have succeeded, gentlemen, you have obtained a temporary triumph, but you have killed nationality."

Another article in the same newspaper winds up heroically:

"Will the people at last understand

that the Canadian ministry are the valets and slaves of the Colonial Office?"

These excerpts are interesting, not merely because they are from the pen of an able and ambitious young lawyer named Wilfrid Laurier, but because they give a glimpse of what was meant by "nationality" among the French opponents of Confederation. To them it meant an association of individuals united by race, religion and language, who would raise these as barriers against everything different, and pursue their development upon strictly racial lines, suffering, if an unfortunate colony, a condition of valetage and servitude to a foreign power. That is an absolutely un-British and anti-British idea. The British Empire is inclusive and not exclusive. In this it follows Rome, with this great difference, that Roman citizenship was a donated privilege while the British Empire extends to all within its governance rights and liberties which it recognizes as inalienable from every human being.

It would be most unjust to make Sir Wilfrid Laurier, or any other man, responsible for the intellectual exuberance of

youth, heightened in his case by association with older men more bitter even than he. But he was a leading spokesman for the irreconcilable spirits of Quebec, who hated Confederation on the grounds of separateness from and even hostility to everything British.

The opposition to Confederation in Upper Canada is hard to get at the roots of. There was of course the converse of the questions of race and language raised in Quebec, but that was not of very high importance. Indeed, if we are to judge by the result of the first elections under the B.N.A. Act, nowhere was the opposition to Confederation a practical force in any part of Canada except Nova Scotia, where it reached dangerous heights, but sprang purely from local Provincial considerations.

The fact is that Confederation presented Canada with an entirely new national environment which supplanted old associations, sympathies and antipathies, to many men a painful process. The opposition to Confederation always reminds me of that famous sentence of Milton's, too hackneyed

for quotation in full, which begins "Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep" and ends "while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with such also as love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means, and, in their envious gabble, would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms."

We may say of Alexander MacKenzie that he was like a cave dweller suddenly introduced into a great room whose splendors his penurious soul was unable to grasp, if we please; we may say of George Brown that he was a man of imperious and dictatorial temper, incapable of loyal service in a movement he did not dominate; we may say of Edward Blake that he was so obsessed with the power of reasoning about things, that he was apt to overlook the reason that is in things; we may say of Sir Wilfrid Laurier that he was carried away in youth by his traditional surroundings; we must also remember that it is easier to cast our minds back in the light of experience, than to cast them forward with certainty as to the result of actions in

the present: but whatever may be said about these men and many others in excuse, palliation or aggravation of their motives and designs, they were all "unconscious traitors" to Canada as we know it now. Their attitude and actions were such that, if they had deliberately intended the ruin of their country, they could not have adopted more certain means of bringing it about. Without Confederation there would have been no government to take over and assume the responsibility of governing the Northwest. Of course, people could not forever be kept out of the Northwest. It would have been overrun from the South as tributary to the Northern Pacific Railway. Difficulties would have been sure to arise between the American settlers and its moribund sovereign, the Hudson's Bay Company. The result would have been a settlement between the Company and the United States, easily acquiesced in by the government of Great Britain in the then state of indifference to overseas development. By whom could protest have been raised? By whom could action have been taken?

British Columbia lying between Alaska and Washington, Idaho and Montana would assuredly have experienced the fate of the ham in a sandwich. The Eastern provinces would have had before them the opportunity of rising to the somewhat questionable dignity of South American republics or of losing their identity as inconsiderable American states. Their status as fractious colonies Great Britain would probably have been as willing to terminate as they themselves would have been unwilling much longer to endure.

The opponents of Confederation had a certain following in the country among the Reformers in the Upper and the Rouges in Lower Canada. It has always seemed to me one of the most ludicrous mis-applications of words to which constant use dulls our wits, that men who were actually witnessing under their noses one of the greatest political reformations the world has ever seen, and who constituted themselves its most vigorous opponents and upholders of the chaotic and archaic system it supplanted, should nevertheless continue to call themselves Reformers. Out of these elements was formed the Liberal party of Canada.

Corollaries of Confederation

It has been said of each of the leaders of the Liberal Party and of the party itself, often in these very words, that they "loyally accepted" Confederation after it was an accomplished fact. They did, very much as a burglar loyally accepts a jail sentence or a traveller an impassable river which he desires to cross. They had held that Confederation would be a failure, they desired that it should be a failure, and they did their best to make it one.

The Dominion Government created by Confederation is, after all, like all forms of Government, just a piece of machinery. No matter how good a machine may be, it will do nothing if not set in motion and may do more harm than good if not skilfully handled. The first thing on hand was to acquire the Northwest from the Hudson's Bay Company and assert Canadian sovereignty there. The two imperative reasons for this were to prevent the Northwest from falling into the hands of the United States, as Alaska had already fallen, and to open a clear route for a railway to the

Pacific. The troubles that ensued hardly belong to this narrative, but involved a serious danger.

While the territory was poised in the air as it were between the Hudson's Bay Company and Canada, the half-breeds rebelled and established a provisional government at Fort Garry, now Winnipeg. At the same time great efforts were made in the United States to recruit a force to assist this government. There being no other de facto government in the country, rights might have been set up on behalf of this provisional government, and if United States citizens became involved with the provisional government's consent, the consequences might have been very serious indeed. However, a display of overwhelming force caused the provisional government to vanish, and with it the machinations of American speculators.

The bitter conflict in which this miserable affair involved Canada was not really political, but racial and religious. It gave, however, the coming leader of the Liberal party, Sir (then Mr.) Wilfrid Laurier, an opportunity to deliver himself as follows,

in the first speech he made in the Dominion Parliament in English. He refused to regard Riel (the leader of the rebellion) as a rebel.

> "How," he asked, "is it possible to use such language? What act of rebellion did he commit? Did he ever raise any other standard than the national flag? Did he ever proclaim any other authority than the sovereign authority of the Queen? No, never. His whole crime and the crime of his friends was that they wanted to be treated like British subjects and not to be bartered away like common cattle."

There is more of it, but that is enough. Riel was openly in arms against the Governor-General who represents the Crown in Canada. My point, however, is that such a statement, coming from such a man, was a wonderful proof (save the mark!) of loyal acceptance of Confederation.

Many years later the same gentleman declared, in reference to the second Riel rebellion, that if he had belonged to the half-breed community on the banks of the

Saskatchewan he would have shouldered his musket in defence of the rights which the Government persistently denied, and in protest against the grievances it would not redress. This, says his eulogist or apologist, as you choose, was tortured into a threat that he would "shoot down the Canadian volunteers." Why "tortured?" The one statement is not as rhetorical as the other, but they both mean about the same—unless, indeed, Mr. Laurier intended to direct his aim against the playful rabbit or the merry antelope exclusively.

The sovereignty of the Hudson's Bay Company eliminated and the Province of Manitoba created, the vital principle of Confederation remained still as inexorable in its demands as a healthy baby. It was imperative that a railway should be built connecting the railway systems of Eastern Canada with the Pacific. The railway was necessary to Confederation. It was not a question of whether the railway could be made to pay or not. It was a natural necessity. British North America could not become a confederated whole

without it. The fact that its construction was a condition of the inclusion of British Columbia was not the reason of its necessity; it merely disclosed it in part. And yet the imagination recoils from the picture of Canada with British Columbia a part of the United States or even an independent colony. A curious lopped-off object it would appear on the map. To be cut off from the Pacific would have extinguished the brightest future prospect of Confederation. The construction of this railway was not a matter of debatable policy, nor of commercial advantage. It was a matter of national necessity, and without it the Dominion would have been a lame duck indeed.

Our "unconscious traitors," in order presumably to show loyal acceptance of Confederation, proceeded by all means in their power, both directly and indirectly, to oppose the project. When the terms of union with British Columbia came up in Parliament, Sir George Cartier was induced to make an amendment at the instance of the Opposition, that the Pacific railway should be built by private enter-

prise, and Mr. Dorion, a very prominent leader of the Liberals, wished to add the words "and in no other way." This attitude was adopted by the "unconscious traitors," not from any conscientious objection to construction by the Government as a public work, but because they argued that no private capitalists would look at such a scheme, and that thus the road would be frustrated. The Liberals always insisted that the railway should be built only when it was commercially feasible, and when there was sufficient colonization in the West to support it. They refused to recognize a national necessity for such a railway at all costs, because they had either never grasped, or inwardly hated the very idea of "national" as applied to a confederate policy.

Shortly thereafter, while so far futile negotiations were going on about the railway, came a general election, and following that the Pacific scandal, which drove the Confederation party out of power and brought in the Liberals. I have often thought that this was a most advantageous circumstance for the Dominion. It gave

Sir John A. Macdonald time to think, and it also gave the people of Canada a convincing demonstration of what was to be expected from a government with which was affiliated "the alien annexationist and independent" elements in the country. The result of Sir John A. Macdonald's cogitation was that, in order to stimulate interprovincial trade and to provide work at home for the many Canadians drifting to the United States, and to prevent Canada from being made a dumping ground of surplus products, industrial independence achieved by protective duties was necessary. Constitutional union was incomplete and ineffective, unless backed up by industrial independence. For the abstract economic theories of free trade and protection Sir John Macdonald did not care a rap. He saw what Canada needed, and came forward with the third and last corollary of Confederation, the National Policy. The commercial aspect of the scheme needed no defence. There was not an industry in Canada but might have to close down at any moment because some manufacturer in the United States had miscalculated his

home market and advertised a bargain sale to the Canadian trade to get rid of his surplus. Canada was buying large quantities of stuff from the United States and sending the men across to engage in its manufacture, simply because of the insecurity of the market at home. But it was not the question of dollars and cents which caused the National Policy to triumph. It was recognized as the natural completion of Confederation. Its aim was to make Canada industrially independent, to find in factories and workshops the proper complement of Canada's farms and forests and mines and fisheries, to save men rather than dollars for Canada and the Empire. There is a world of significance in the word "national" being used to define a purely fiscal policy. It showed an early recognition of the close relation between fiscal and national policy, something which the example of Germany and the teachings of Joseph Chamberlain are now bringing home to all except those who are stone blind and deaf. The National Policy has stood the test of time, and it is very largely through its operation that we now have 250,000 men

for the defence of the Empire, and another 250,000 behind them, if necessary, instead of having a great population of Canadians in the United States manufacturing indiscriminately for friend and foe. The result of the adoption of this policy was to bring the Conservatives back to power in 1878 with a sweeping majority, which inaugurated the protective policy Canada has lived under since and lives under today, and was strong enough to drive the Pacific railway through to the Coast.

The Great Betrayal

These activities bring us down to 1886, and to the beginnings of the great betrayal of Confederation and all that followed in its train, which came so nearly to success as to make men shiver now when it is recalled. Canada was now a united whole from ocean to ocean and the railway had been put in operation. But the strain upon the resources of the country had been terrific. Canada at that time was a very poor country in actual as opposed to potential wealth, and it requires actual coin to keep the pot boiling. Policies such as had been inaugurated were not the wands of conjurers to bring down a shower of gold from the skies. Seed time was over, but the harvest was not yet ripe. The great capital expenditures upon the transcontinental railway had ceased, and it must be remembered that these bore as great a relation to the business of the country and affected as many people relatively to the population as three times the amount of money spent would now. The Northwest had so far attracted few except those who thought they

could sit down beside a small equity in a town lot and watch it grow into a fortune. In fact, for the time being, things were not highly prosperous in Canada.

As a remedy there sprang up an agitation for commercial union with the United States, or unrestricted reciprocity, as it came afterwards to be called. In the writing of a gentleman with many pretentions to be a publicist, and the eulogist and admirer of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, occurs the following:—

> "The controversy was keen and bitter, the note of continentalism had distinct utterance, and it may be that the movement bred annexation sentiment. But it is not at all clear that political union with the United States was the avowed or even the secret object of the chief spokesmen of the movement."

Consider for a moment the stupendous admission of that second sentence. It is stupefying. Here we have a group of men earnestly thrusting a public policy upon their fellow-countrymen, and the best that can be said for them is that it is "not at all clear" whether they were traitors or

not. It is tolerably clear now. Commercial union meant political annexation, and its advocates were either deceiving themselves or trying to deceive other people.

The leader of this movement was Goldwin Smith. He was a man whose fatal defect it was to be as bad as his creed. He tried to apply the philosophy of individualism to practical affairs. It barred him from realizing that the family, the tribe, the nation, the empire, are all great levers of destiny by which social evolution is carried out. He reduced everything to the individual, by whose desires and gratifications everything that happened came about. The logical conclusion of this dreary gospel is philosophic anarchism. Of his attitude in this commercial union movement, the same writer (Willison), from whom I quoted a moment ago, says, "Sometimes we seemed to see the Imperial pride of an Englishman wrestling hard with the cold philosophy of his economic teaching."

If that is a true observation, if it means anything at all, it means that what he advocated as for the good of Canada was leading straight to the absorption of Canada

by the United States, and the disruption of the British Empire. The easiest and shortest way to put that is that Goldwin Smith was a conscious traitor, who was ashamed of himself at intervals.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, now become leader of the Liberal party, in his heart disliked the idea of commercial union, but not upon patriotic grounds. So I believe, at least. But he was in the peculiar position of being an experimental leader as a French-Canadian, and without commanding authority in the Ontario wing of the party. Sir Richard Cartwright, the Ontario leader, however, swallowed the whole policy, bait, hook, line and sinker. He reveled in it as a council of despair, the last chance of a country upon the verge of complete and total ruin.

So far the movement for commercial union had been outside of party politics, and many of its supporters were frankly annexationists. But in 1888, the Liberal party was committed to unrestricted reciprocity by the following resolution offered by Sir Richard Cartwright:—

> "That it is highly desirable that the largest possible freedom of commercial

> intercourse should obtain between the Dominion of Canada and the United States, and that it is expedient that all articles manufactured in, or the natural products of either of the said countries, should be admitted free of duty into the ports of the other, articles subject to duties of excise or of internal revenue alone excepted; that it is further expedient that the Government of the Dominion should take steps at an early date to ascertain on what terms and conditions arrangements can be effected with the United States for the purpose of securing full and unrestricted reciprocity of trade therewith."

This declaration, which was the single issue of the election of 1891, would, if carried out, have uprooted the national policy, rendered the work of building a railway to the Pacific quite superfluous from a national point of view, and would have destroyed Confederation by demonstrating its complete fatuity in the circumstances. The advocates of unrestricted reciprocity had to strive against the

authority and opinion of three of the greatest statesmen of the day. Speaking at Belfast, the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain said, "Canada knows perfectly well that commercial union with the United States means political separation from Great Britain."

He was equally explicit in Toronto:—

> "I am in favor of the widest possible commercial union and intercourse not only with the United States but with all the world. That is the true unrestricted reciprocity. There is however a restricted reciprocity which would make you dependent for your financial freedom upon the government of another state, and perhaps pave the way for the surrender of something which is still more important. I mean your political independence."

To Sir John A. Macdonald, as indeed to all Conservatives and quite a few Liberals, the proposal was abhorrent. He saw everything to which he had given his life endangered. His opinion as a great statesman need hardly be quoted. But it was summed up in his address to the electors. The

famous concluding sentences are known almost by heart:—

> "As for myself, my course is clear. A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die. With my utmost effort, with my latest breath will I oppose the 'veiled treason,' which attempts by sordid means and mercenary proffers to lure our people from their allegiance. During my long public service of nearly half a century, I have been true to my country and its best interests, and I appeal with equal confidence to the men who have trusted me in the past and to the young hope of the country with whom rest its destinies in the future, to give me their united and strenuous aid in this my last effort for the unity of the Empire and the preservation of our commercial and political freedom."

The third great statesman to whom reference may be made was the retired leader of the Liberal party, Edward Blake. The letter in which he summed up his opinions remains one of the most magnificent pieces of cold-blooded irony ever

penned, whether conscious or unconscious is a different question. He begins by admitting everything his own party claimed about the condition of Canada to be true. Confederation was a failure, the Northwest was empty, manufactures were languishing, expenditures had increased, the tone of public life was lower. He grants that commercial union might be a last resort, but does not disguise his opinion that commercial union must be followed by political union. The campaign sophistries of his party simply disappear under his treatment. Then he concludes:—

> "Whatever you or I may think on that head, whether we like or dislike, believe or disbelieve, in political union, must we not agree that the subject is one of great moment, towards the practical settlement of which we should take no serious step without reflection, or in ignorance of what we are doing? Assuming that absolute free trade with the States, best described as commercial union, may and ought to come, I believe that it can and should come only as an incident, or at any rate, as a

> well understood precursor of political union, for which indeed we should be able to make better terms before than after the surrender of our commercial independence. Then so believing, believing that the decision of the trade question involves that of the constitutional issue for which you are unprepared and with which you do not even conceive yourselves to be dealing—how can I properly recommend you now to decide upon commercial union?"

There is nothing in controversial literature which surpasses in irony the hint that if the matter were taken up at all, it would be better to advocate political union first as giving a firmer basis for negotiations over commercial union, and there is no statesman living or dead, except Edward Blake, who would have had the glacial impertinence to tell the leaders of his own party that the consequence of their policy should really be taken up first, that consequence being the very thing which they were attempting to persuade the people was not the inevitable result of their action. Naturally, that enormous proportion of the

human race to whom irony is a sealed book, were mystified, so Mr. Blake came down from his Socratic pedestal and said, simply, "I crave space to say that I think political union with the States, though becoming our probable, is by no means our ideal, or as yet our inevitable future." Edward Blake was never forgiven, and if the habits of Ottawa had been the same as those of Athens, many a Liberal would cheerfully have voted him a hemlock cocktail.

These three statesmen were surely of commanding authority. In addition there was Cartwright when he first dallied with the proposal "seeing a risk," and Goldwin Smith's "Imperial pride" wrestling hard with the "cold philosophy of his economic teaching."

It is almost impossible to believe that the main leaders of the Liberal party at this time had not in their hearts accepted what their lips repudiated, political union with the United States. In his speech upon the death of Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that his conscience compelled him to say "that of late he has

imputed to his opponents motives which I must say in my heart he has misconceived." How was it possible for anyone to avoid imputing motives to men who were flying in the face of all reasonable authority as to the result of their policy, and were closely in alliance with those who openly desired its inevitable consummation?

The Liberals were beaten although the times were ripe for innovation and even revolution. A good deal of what they had to say about the condition of Canada was true, although all the causes assigned for it were incorrect. Also industrial and financial disturbances, which began in Germany, spread to England, and were to burst in a cyclonic storm upon this continent two years later, were already restricting credit and hampering development. Still they were beaten, and the last danger to Confederation and the National Policy overcome. After the death of Sir John A. Macdonald in 1891, and especially after the death of Sir John Thompson, the Conservative party was rent by internal dissensions and intrigued in domestic issues which were extremely important no doubt,

but which have nothing to do with the present narrative, and in 1896 its defeat by the Liberal party under Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a foregone conclusion. Confederation and the National Policy, however, were not defeated. They remained unassailed, and for the future unassailable.

The Lesson of Confederation

I have dwelt so long upon Confederation and what grew out of it, not because these were political facts, but because they represented a germinative process, and one not by any means to be confined to Canada. It is needless to observe how Canada has been raised in dignity and honor, or how the Canadian character has at once been strengthened and restrained, restrained from febrile outbursts of colonial dissatisfaction, and strengthened for the due maintenance of the rights and position of the country in the Empire.

Without Confederation and the National Policy the tremendous strain requisite to open the resources of the country to even the partial degree as yet attained, could not have been undertaken, and the great increase in material wealth which has taken place could not have been realised. Thus in every relation which really counts for the general benefit, institutional or moral, and in the acquisition of material wealth, and as to both, in the inspiration of well grounded hope for even greater

things in the future, Confederation and its corollaries have been the sole operative cause of Canadian growth and expansion. Canada as it stands today makes all the activities of the enemies of Confederation, the "unconscious traitors," look very small and paltry. But they were not small and paltry when they were undertaken. They were serpents which, for their strangling, required an infant Hercules, though a Hercules, partly grown, may now look upon them with disdain.

But the operation of this germinative process was not restricted to Canada. Whether the colonies of Australia and South Africa would have been federated or not had the Canadian example been stifled at birth or proved a failure, is one of those questions to which no answer can be given, but most unquestionably they received a stimulus toward the overcoming of obstacles from the example of their elder sister. In their federation the same germinative process is seen at work which I have endeavored to trace in Canada, and it is a matter of little consequence whether it is derivative or co-ordinate.

These three great Confederations, Canadian, Australian and South African, have been of very great benefit to the colonies involved. They have also been equally beneficial to the Empire as a whole, as the war has conclusively demonstrated. The spectacle of five great nations, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, marching to war as a solid unit, bending all their resources to the purposes in hand, is calculated to give the world pause. The war will change the history of the world. It will also vitally change the relations between these nations themselves. The Empire has proved itself an organic union by the most acid test which can be applied, but it is left for it still to express itself as an organic union in institutions and binding ties, which will not only increase its dignity and power, but prove a bulwark against the insidious forces of disruption. The two paramount considerations for any state, nation or empire, in its external relations, are defence and commerce. To deal with those some form of organized government must exist. To our ideas that form of government

must be representative. So that the problem of Empire today is the method by which such a form of government may be secured in order that the purpose for which it exists may be best carried out. It would have been very remarkable if, with the example of Canada to go by, and the evidence of a new principle of unification and co-ordination which it afforded, there should not have been thought of applying it to the Empire at large, so far at least as its self-governing parts were concerned. And there was. The phrase "Imperial Federation" became very popular and was often heard. An Imperial Federation League was founded in Great Britain, which ate a great many dinners and listened to a great many speeches, but bridled over the question like a hen that refuses to sit, and quite naturally nothing came out of that.

Three difficulties had to be faced:

(1) The British Parliament was not co-ordinate with colonial parliaments. In name and fact it was the Imperial Parliament, superior in status and powers, and apparently under the necessity of erecting something superior to itself before Imperial

Confederation could become a fact. To the mind of the Latin this would probably be an insuperable objection, but to the Anglo-Saxon mind the difficulty is slight. Can we imagine the House of Lords interfering with the findings of its judicial committee? There is a body qua its special functions superior to that which created it and of which it is a subordinate part. Necessary and respectable anomalies are among the things which least alarm the stalwart defenders of the British Constitution.

(2) The only possible basis of Imperial Federation in policy apart from governing machinery was a fiscal system involving protection. There of course the protagonists of Federation went plump into the abstract doctrine of free trade, that materialistic and denationalising Calvary upon which British patriotism has been so nearly crucified. The war has settled that. It must be obvious to the least instructed human being that if during the last twenty years a system of Imperial preferential trade had been in being, Germany could never have so built herself up as for a

moment to dream of menacing the whole Imperial fabric. What was supposed to be gained in silver has been paid for in blood and gold. This should develop a tendency to consider trade from an Imperial, even as Canada considered it from a national, point of view.

(3) The question of defence. It is the pride of a Canadian to say that that difficulty has solved itself.

In 1899 Sir Charles Tupper, then Canadian High Commissioner, told the Imperial Federation League in a speech at a banquet some very plain truths. Among other things he said:

> "I am afraid that you will not be able to maintain public interest in the league much longer unless you propound some practical policy for promoting the union of the Empire, which is your avowed object. I therefore venture to suggest that a conference may be called by the Imperial Government of representatives of the self-governing colonies to consider the best means of promoting the object."

To be called upon to do something by Sir Charles Tupper would at least leave a vivid impression of having been called. His language never left anything to be desired in the way of directness and emphasis. The echo of his speech went across the sea and brought back the following letter from Sir John A. Macdonald.

"My Dear Tupper.—Your speech on Federation has excited much attention in Canada and a good deal of dissatisfaction in Quebec. The manner in which it has been treated by the English press generally, which will insist that you have spoken the opinions of the Canadian Government, and as if by its authority, has aroused the suspicions of the French and makes me look forward to some unpleasant discussions in our parliament. The opposition will oppose, of course, and they will attempt to make cause with the French, and may carry a vote against (1) Imperial Federation and (2) a conference as proposed by you. It would be well I think for you to let it be known as

widely as possible that you spoke your own opinions and not in any way as High Commissioner. Yours faithfully,

J. A. MACDONALD."

It is highly significant that Sir John A. MacDonald, who at the time was nervous over his French following in the House, should have been afraid that Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then leader of the Opposition, would put himself and his party on record as opposed to anything and everything, however tentative, which contemplated Imperial Federation and an organic union of the Empire. As advocate of commercial union with the United States, the Liberal party could have placed itself in no other position. But the letter of Sir John A. MacDonald throws a powerful light upon the treachery, not only to Canada but to the Empire, of their whole mental attitude. To the closest bonds with the United States their arms were open, but when the question was of Great Britain and the other states of the Empire there was only visible suspicion and hostility, sufficient to occasion that letter. And it must not be

forgotten that the Conference suggested by Sir Charles was to deal specially with questions of trade. That is to say, intra-Imperial reciprocity in trade was frowned upon while at the time a continental Zollverein was the beginning and end of their policy.

Quite by accident this letter powerfully illuminated the treachery which the old statesman was combating and which was almost under his guard.

About this time many other minds were revolving the question of Imperial Federation. Lord Salisbury, to a deputation of the Imperial Federation League, called it an "enigma," and said that many wise brains would have to toil over it before the solution was accomplished. Of Lord Rosebery's sympathetic attitude many of his speeches give ample evidence. Cecil Rhodes, writing to Sir John A. MacDonald on the elections of 1891, said:

> "I have read your manifesto and can understand the issue. If I might express (a hope) it would be that we could meet before our stern fate claims

us. I might write pages, but I feel that I know you and your policies as if we had been friends for years. The whole thing lies in the question, can we invent home ties with the Mother Country that will prevent separation? There must be a practical solution which will be of benefit to generations yet unborn. England's curse lies in English politicians, who cannot see into the future, and who think that England will always be the manufacturing centre of the world, but do not understand what a system of protection, coupled with reciprocal relations among the different parts of the Empire, means."

It is impossible not to see in the attitude of Salisbury, Rosebery, MacDonald and Rhodes towards the question—that in their opinion (and the same might be said of many others) the pear was not yet ripe. But that is a very different thing from trying to cut down the tree, an attempt to which the Liberals of Canada gave many years of strenuous effort.

The New Dynasty

In 1896, through a curious jumble of political circumstances, the Liberal party came into power under Sir Wilfrid Laurier, or perhaps more correctly, Laurier came into power over the Liberal party. He was the master of a situation, not the exponent of a platform or policy. Anyone inclined to be epigrammatical might say that in one part of the country race beat religion, and that in another religion beat race, while Laurier beat them both. There would be as much truth in this as in most epigrams.

So far as Laurier himself went, he assumed office entirely unburdened by any political platform or pledges. A few of his followers did not think so, but it must be said that he led his party into power with an indefiniteness of expression and a definiteness of purpose which left nothing to be desired, the definite purpose being to stay in power. His mental furniture so far as politics is considered, seemed to consist of—

1. An indifference to and aloofness from

all Imperial interests which, in relation to Great Britain, went so far as a scarcely veiled hostility.

If this language appears too strong, it would certainly seem to be justified by his own on different occasions, as for instance—

> "Is there a Canadian anywhere who would not hail with joy the day when we would be deprived of the services of British diplomacy?"
>
> "I am ready any day, whether I am charged with annexation or not, to take a Yankee dollar in preference to an English shilling."
>
> "I have again and again repeated that the goal of my aspiration is the independence of Canada."

Again,

> "I hold out to my fellow countrymen the idea of independence, but whenever the day comes, it must come with the consent of both countries, and we shall continue to keep the good feeling and the goodwill of the Motherland. If we are true to our record, we will exhibit

to the world the unique and unprecedented example of a nation achieving its independence by slow degrees, and as naturally as the severing of a ripe fruit from the parent tree."

"The only tie that binds Canada and the Mother Country is a sentiment of affection. A day will come necessarily when they will have to part. I am a subject of the British Crown, but whenever it comes to pass that as a Canadian I have to choose between the interests of England and the interests of Canada, my whole heart is with my native land. It is manifest to me that the interests of my country are identical with the interests of the United States."

These of course are picked passages, but their context and the circumstances in which they were spoken do not by any means lower their value as an expression of the true Laurier, and they are not inconsistent with his description as a young man of the Canadian ministry as "the valets and slaves of the Colonial Office." When Sir Wilfrid Laurier says, "whenever it comes to pass

that as a Canadian I have to choose between the interests of England and the interests of Canada, my whole heart is with my native country," he spoils a most laudable sentiment by the use of the word "whenever" instead of "if ever." He assumes the certainty of the choice coming to pass at some time. When he goes on to say that the interests of Canada and the United States are identical, he goes far in a disloyal direction, for nobody could pretend to believe that the interests of England and the United States, while not necessarily hostile, are identical. At the present moment, for instance, the chief interest of the United States appears to be to uphold a neutrality which will permit her to sell copper, rubber, cotton and such like to Germany, as well as to neutrals, without let or hindrance. This is hardly the interest of Canada—at least I hope not—although it would be quite in accord with the doctrine of Canadian conditional neutrality, which Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself propounded.

2. An academic acceptation of the doctrine of "free trade as they have it in England."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was never a convinced free trader. In his early days he seems to have leaned towards the principle of protection as accessory to his Quebec nationalism. But when he blossomed out as an adherent of the Manchester school of politics and economics, he took over free trade with the rest of the furniture, but strictly for rhetorical show purposes. That part of it, however, was not known in 1896. He was hailed as the transatlantic apostle of undiluted Cobdenism.

From what has been said, it must not be assumed that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was the dictator of Canada, or even of the Liberal party. He had a great many separate and conflicting interests to reconcile. And reconcile them he did with astonishing adroitness. He was always ready to give way in any direction when the pressure became too strong, and he could make others yield by the rather simple expedient of pointing out to them the inevitable consequences if they did not, and in some cases, perhaps, the quite agreeable consequences if they did. This kind of government led surely to the

corruption of his party, steady and progressive. But it suited the people of Canada for the time. To borrow an expression from the stock exchange, controversial issues received only professional support. A great wave of material advancement and prosperity was beginning to break over the country, the result of earlier struggles, and passive stolidity of government was what the people most desired. No question of domestic politics seriously disturbed the placidity of the administration. It is worthy of note here what will be treated in greater detail later, that it was Sir Wilfrid Laurier's preposterous and fantastic ideas upon Imperial defence which were embodied in his naval policy that first shook his power' and his sacrilegious hand laid upon the National Policy threatening our fiscal independence and the unity of the Empire as a consequence, which threw him over.

The change of dynasty, however, in 1896, left the outlook for Canada from a National and Imperial point of view, pretty blue. The "alien annexation and independent elements" still lingered under the illusion that they were the mainstay of

the Liberal party. The last great effort of the party had been a determined attempt to undermine the foundations of Confederation, while the old penny-wise and pound-foolish politicians of the type of Alexander Mackenzie remained exceedingly prominent.

On four main matters, however, the country had every reason for self-congratulation. The first of these was that the Laurier administration left the National Policy absolutely intact. The National Policy was not a particular tariff put in force by a certain party, but the embodiment of the principle of protection in Canadian policy as essential to the national welfare. A particular tariff is like a suit of clothes. It will not wear forever, and requires alteration and renovation at intervals. But there is a great difference between altering and renovating a suit of clothes and going naked. The Fielding tariff in no way antagonized the principle of protection. It was all very well to say that it was a step in the direction of free trade. It was quite the reverse, if only for this, that it left protection as the

declared and fundamental trade policy of both political parties, as, since 1878, or indeed from 1876, it had been of the people as a whole. Some few people were confused by the Fielding tariff, but thoughtful protectionists and the manufacturing interests were never deceived for a moment.

The second cause for congratulation was the British preference. As it stood, the preference granted amounted to comparatively little. But there is sometimes virtue in a word. The preference always reminded me of those great colored glass vases which druggists placed, or used to, in their windows, and which, lighted from behind, threw a blue, yellow, red or green glare across the street. They were filled with water, perhaps with air only, and themselves contained no healing potions or soothing medicaments, but they advertised to all and sundry that such were to be found within. It was something to get the word "preference" into the political dictionary. In addition, preference in trade is a strict application of the protective principle. To lower duties all round might be a step in the direction of free trade,

but to lower a duty in one direction and not in another is protection of trade in one quarter as against another. The trade policy of the Laurier government left the opposite party in rather a curious position, but that has nothing to do with the national aspects of the question.

The third matter on which the country is to be congratulated was that the government completely abandoned the policy of penurious parsimony, miscalled economy, of which the Liberal party had always been the exponent. This, however, only touches the subject in hand indirectly. The greatest mistake a new country with good credit can make is not to spend money. It is greater even than that of spending money foolishly. Parsimony and waste are the Scylla and Charybdis of a country requiring development.

As to these three great branches of national policy, the first thing the Liberal party did when it got into power was to stigmatize itself as having pursued a wrong, foolish, vicious and unpatriotic course for thirty years. But I have nothing to do here with political ethics or the ethics of politicians.

The fourth cause for congratulation to the country was that the Liberals carried out a most energetic and effective immigration policy. For this there is fair credit to be given to them. I have nothing to say about the methods of this policy or about any of the scandals which arose in connection with it. Imperfections of men and abuses that arise are wholly separate from administration itself, considered in its purposes and effects.

I am no believer in a policy of restricted immigration. If we have fear that our laws, liberties, institutions and customs are not strong enough to make good citizens out of the offspring of any normal human being in the second or at most the third generation, then we have neither legal nor moral right to claim so large a portion of the earth's surface which we can neither occupy nor utilize. There may be ethnical gulfs which are too wide to bridge; I believe there are, but they are not discoverable in the races with which the bulk of our immigration originates. There is also the economic question to be considered. It is not good policy to introduce more of

different kinds of specialized labor than there is need for, because those who come can only displace the same number of those who are already there. An extra piano tuner, for instance, in a district already amply served by two, would not be a desirable addition to the community, but an unmitigated nuisance.

No country, however, has ever remained great and powerful for any length of time which has not been "liberal of naturalization." Deficiency in this respect has proved the great weakness of the Greeks, Spaniards, French and now apparently the Germans. The more their dominions spread and their apparent power increased, the weaker in reality they became. It was quite the contrary with the Romans. They bestowed citizenship in its various degrees upon individuals, families, cities and peoples. Great Britain has followed the same course, which gives the Empire a just expectation of long continuance. But with the Spaniards, French and Germans, the idea of race seems inextricably bound up with that of citizenship. The hyphenated Roman citizen was unheard of. A man might speak and think

of himself as a Jew and also a Roman, but the two ideas remained quite distinct in his mind. There is probably no people more tenacious of racial tradition and idiosyncracy than the Scottish. Hyphenization would land the Scot in a very curious position. Scottish-Briton, Scottish-British subject, they do not seem to fit, and if anybody dubbed a Scot a Scottish-Englishman there would surely be an outbreak of private war, entirely justifiable in the circumstances.

So in these respects the Liberals started fairly well accoutred for their long lease of power. Nine-tenths of their equipment which was of any value was taken from their prostrate foes, who had become too weak to carry it. But as the people at large have always displayed a singular lack of charity towards down-fallen politicians, that did not matter much.

The First Colonial Conference

After 1896 the milestones of progress towards Imperial unity and solidarity are few and far between, and one reason for that is the somewhat remarkable attitude adopted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier as Canada's chief representative in Imperial affairs. Canada was busy, and becoming busier every day, and even the question of the South African war and Canada's participation therein, while it was a very serious and by no means creditable episode in Canada's administration, did not inflame the people as it might have done had a sudden right-about-turn by the Government not saved the situation.

At the same time the leaven of the Imperial idea was working, and not in Canada alone but all throughout the Empire. Quite a number of years before Lord Rosebery had drawn attention to the fact that Britain's foreign policy was gradually becoming more and more a colonial policy, instead of circling round India as it had done previously. The interests and affairs of the overseas

dominions in relation to Great Britain, and through Great Britain with other powers, were beginning to overshadow all the other external affairs of the United Kingdom. In this period of flux and transition there appeared the commanding figure of the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain. What the British Empire owes to him is but dimly realized as yet. He saw the situation clearly, and put it clearly before the world. Concerted measures for defence, mutual trade preference, and Imperial representative government to deal with Imperial affairs, were the keynotes of his policy. His character, position and great mental qualities afforded a tremendous leverage to the cause of the Empire. His superb powers of analysis and ruthless shearing away of the unessential were certainly greatly needed. In all discussions there seemed to be a fatal tendency for the outline of the Empire to become lost in clouds of wind-driven rhetoric or narrowed down to particularities pathetically small. In fact, much of the earlier literature in reference to Imperial Federation recalls to me the saying of an old friend whose

opinion I had asked upon a new book which had made a great stir. He said it reminded him of a "roomful of mist with a rake drawn through it." In truth, the idea of a self-governing Empire embracing so enormous a portion of the earth's surface and possessing within its own boundaries and among its own people all the needs of the most advanced, complex or artificial civilization, is so stupendous that it does not readily take form in the public consciousness. It requires a long period for gestation. But war is a great quickener. No state was ever great, either morally, socially, intellectually or materially, which was not cradled in war. Perhaps from this greatest war will emerge the greatest state the world has yet seen, whose cultivation through the arts of peace will be left to generations succeeding this, which has bedded its roots deep in the soil of sacrifice.

The year following that of Laurier's accession to office was the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign, her Diamond Jubilee. It was made the occasion of a tremendous outburst of loyal Imperial

enthusiasm. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's eloquence and charming manners made him well fitted to represent Canada in the ceremonial pageant, and in this respect he served Canada well. The opportunity was taken of the presence of all the premiers of the overseas dominions in London to call the first Colonial Conference. A resolution was passed requesting the denouncement of the Belgian and German commercial treaties, ridiculous anomalies the existence of which the British preference in Canada brought to notice. Denounced they were. But it is very doubtful whether Germany did not enjoy as much benefit as Great Britain from the preference after all. To re-export what were substantially German goods from Great Britain as British goods, was a matter extremely easy for Teutonic ingenuity.

The Conference could hardly confer without immediately coming upon the questions of Imperial organization, defence and trade. As to the first, it passed a resolution to the effect that the constitutional relations between Great Britain and the self-governing dominions were satisfactory. In this Canada

acquiesced. In fact, it was observed both here and afterwards that Canada was more or less linked with British official indifference to render anything a Conference might attempt entirely negative. That this is not an overstrained description of the attitude of Canada as represented by Sir Wilfrid will appear amply later. He consistently put his foot down upon everything which would tend to give the Conferences substance and status. He opposed their summons at regular intervals, and then proposed six year intervals. His course in the Conference of 1907 is only too well known, and for the last, in 1911, there is nothing in the name of Canada on the agenda. Sir Wilfrid Laurier at that time was probably too busy with Reciprocity.

However, to return, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was extremely popular during the Jubilee festivities, and his speeches tended to enhance his popularity. Lofty sentiments of vague Imperialism presented no difficulties to him. For instance, responding to the toast of the Empire, he said:

> "At no distant date it was manifest to all that the parting of the ways would

be reached by England and her Colonies, and when the parting of the ways should have been reached, the problem would be whether the Colonies would be more closely united with the Motherland, or whether their relations should cease altogether. The Colonies had a national pride, and no tie and no bond would be permanent in the Colonies until it gave their national pride the greatest possible expression. In Canada, they had unbounded faith in their country. When she reached the full development of her manhood, nothing would satisfy her but Imperial representation. He knew that this question was not free from difficulties. Illustrious as had been the career of the Parliament of Great Britain, perhaps no less illustrious would be the career of the Parliament of Greater Britain."

Again, at the National Liberal Club, he said:

"If he had another thought to add, it was that while he did not believe in the Parliament of man, he believed in the Parliament of Greater Britain."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier gave utterance to those sentiments without ever having recanted and repudiated these:

> "Is there a Canadian anywhere who would not hail with joy the day when we would be deprived of the services of British diplomacy?"
>
> "I have again and again repeated that the goal of my aspiration is the independence of Canada."
>
> "If we are true to our record, we will exhibit to the world the unique and unprecedented example of a nation achieving its independence by slow degrees, and as naturally as the severing of the ripe fruit from the parent tree."
>
> "The only tie that binds Canada and the Mother Country is a sentiment of affection. A day will come necessarily when they will have to part."

This is the same Laurier also who declared the constitutional relations between Great Britain and the Colonies satisfactory, and who attempted, and most successfully, to block all the endeavors of the Colonial Conferences to arrive at any joint

understanding upon organization, defence or trade.

Here we have a tri-composite Laurier and a triple inconsistency. For the first and second set of ideas do not agree, and the second and third do not agree and the first and third do not agree. There are only two explanations possible of statements so opposite. The one is that Sir Wilfrid Laurier yielded to the temptation which is fatal to many orators, that of gaining applause by flattering their immediate audience; that, in his remarks in 1897, his object was to flatter the vague Imperialism of British audiences; that, in his earlier statements, his object was to flatter those the goal of whose aspiration is the independence of Canada, and that his action in the Conferences was designed to flatter the vis inertiæ of British officialdom with which he was in contact. The other explanation is that he wished to soothe Imperialistic sentiment because the fruit was not yet ripe by his public utterances, and by his action in Conference to maintain the conditions which were ripening it. The one explanation implies unconscious

treachery, the other, treachery which could not be unconscious.

As to defence, the British ministers showed great interest. But nothing of any moment was accomplished. I take from Willison's "Laurier" a resume of the reason put forward for non-participation. It has the merit of being short, accurate and clear.

> "The Colonial view, however, was not materially modified by the representations of British ministers. This view in short was that the Colonies were developing great stretches of the Imperial Dominion, that they had to meet heavy expenditures for the construction of railways and other great public undertakings, that there was no comparison between the domestic obligations and requirements of a finished country like England and a new and virgin territory like Canada, that the growth of the Colonies was substantially growth and strengthening of the Empire, and that, until the heavy burden of Colonial development was materially reduced, direct

contributions for Imperial defence could not be fairly exacted."

There is a modicum of truth in this if defence be regarded solely as a matter of dollars and cents. A new country is compelled to use its credit to the utmost limit upon capital expenditures which are not immediately productive. But it must be remembered that growth in wealth is increase in weakness, or rather liability to attack by an aggressor, if it has not adequate protection. There is nothing so weak as unprotected wealth. Consequently, the more Canada demonstrated her enormous resources, the more attractive she would become as a prey. In fact, if wealth not utilized in part for self-defence were strength, then India and China would be the strongest countries in the world. But the point is not worth dwelling upon, as these did not happen to be Sir Wilfrid Laurier's real reasons for his negative position, as his subsequent attitude will make abundantly plain. That to which he objected was Canada doing anything in conjunction with Great Britain and the

rest of the Empire. He seemed to regard everything of the kind as the tentacles of an octopus which would smother Canada, instead of tentative efforts to find the means of linking great forces together for the common good.

If I were to restrict myself solely to what happened at the Conference of 1897 in reference to Imperial preferential trade there would be very little to say. The funeral of what Lord Rosebery termed a "corpse" had already taken place. The death blow was administered by, of all people, Sir Wilfrid Laurier within a few minutes of his arrival on British soil, and the funeral oration pronounced by the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain, who had been responsible for its existence, when he said that he "would not now touch it with a pair of tongs." Mr. Chamberlain evidently did not like corpses.

On the other hand, to present a clear idea of what actually took place and its bearing upon Imperial union is extremely difficult with reasonable limits of space. When the Liberals adopted the Conservative policy of Imperial preference, nobody

had any doubt that reference was had to reciprocal preference. In fact, nobody cared very much. The question was regarded very much as part of the political stock-in-trade of both parties. And although there was a current of feeling setting towards reciprocal preference in Great Britain, the whole matter was regarded more as a pious and loyal aspiration than as of serious present moment. When, however, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's government introduced the British preference without making it conditional upon reciprocal concessions, it was generally felt that, whether the move were wise or not, it would at least bring to a focus, as it were, the ideas to which Lord Salisbury, Balfour, Devonshire and, more than all, Chamberlain, were known to be sympathetic. The British government was in decidedly a receptive mood as to proposals for a reciprocity in trade preference.

Mr. Chamberlain brought forward a proposal in a very guarded and tentative way, which if carried out would have reached by rather a different route virtually the same result which his later policy of

tariff reform, coupled with the exigencies of war, has now rendered inevitable. His idea was that the self-governing Colonies should put their tariffs upon a revenue basis purely, and prefer Great Britain, whereupon Great Britain was to prefer their products by imposing duties upon the competing products of foreign countries. It was virtually to make the British Empire a free trade area within itself, but a protected area against foreign countries. In essence, his plan involved the substitution of an Imperially designed protection for locally maintained protection. But the Colonies were to maintain their entire fiscal independence. It was to be by their own agreement, by their own concession, in return for an equivalent consideration, that the scheme was to be worked out. The difficulty, of course, was to find common ground for mutual agreement between a free trade country eager for preferential trade for Imperial reasons, but unwilling to abandon free trade, and protectionist countries, equally eager for preferential trade for Imperial reasons, but unwilling to abandon protec-

tion as units. Whether if this idea had been elaborated and modified where necessary in frank and sympathetic consultation the consolidation of the Empire would have been further advanced than it is today, or whether it was better in the long run that Great Britain should find her own feet in the matter through the struggle over tariff reform not yet at an end, is one of those speculations which can never be resolved. But the proposal of Mr. Chamberlain afforded a basis of negotiation. It laid the question wide open, and, if the proper spirit of Imperialism had been present, much might have been done. But it was not.

I can imagine an ardent Canadian protectionist approaching such a proposal with great caution. The safeguarding of manufactures built up in Canada by protection would naturally give him food for thought. Similarly, a free trader in Great Britain would have his eyes fixed upon the country's supply of food and raw material. But why a believer in free trade or tariff for revenue only, like Sir Wilfrid Laurier, should not have leapt at such a proposal

as affording a basis for Imperial trade consolidation is more than I can understand, except upon one hypothesis, namely, that he did not want Imperial consolidation in trade or in anything else. Be that as it may, when he was welcomed at Liverpool by the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Halsbury, the former of whom made some guarded reference to the receptive attitude of the British government on the question of trade preference, Sir Wilfrid Laurier responded in a speech which electrified Great Britain and Canada and left the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain to mourn a dead project. One sentence of his remarks is more than enough:

> "Ours is a free gift. We ask no compensation. Protection has been the curse of Canada. We would not see you come under its baleful influence, for what weakens us must weaken you."

It is little wonder that Mr. Chamberlain, having taken this body blow to his pet scheme, was moved to say:

> "It would have been hard enough to carry through the idea had all the

> Colonies been persistent and enthusiastic advocates of it, but Canada does not favor it and New South Wales opposes it. These are the leading colonies, and with them in practical opposition, it becomes impossible, and I would not now touch it with a pair of tongs."

Mr. Chamberlain had also to submit to the polite raillery of Lord Rosebery, who declared:

> "Mr. Chamberlain had a proposal which had some force and gained some strength, but now it must be approached with the reverence due to a corpse, for Canada's premier has said that if the British Empire is to be maintained it can only be on the condition of the most absolute free trade."

If Sir Wilfrid Laurier's action stirred Chamberlain to indignation and Rosebery to gratified amusement, it was received in Canada with something akin to stupefaction. It agreed so little with the position he was supposed to occupy, and Canada as represented by him. But at

the same time, while his language might seem grossly inconsistent with his trade policy in Canada, it was in harmony with every other action he has ever taken in Imperial affairs. Never has he shown in any case where Canada came, or had the opportunity of coming, into vital contact with the Empire, any disposition to treat Great Britain and the other portions of the Empire except as foreign and separate countries, leaving the mouldering and ceremonial trappings of colonial dependence to gradually approach their final discarding. That Sir Wilfrid Laurier hoped for and aimed at the ultimate disruption of the Empire might be too strong a statement, but there can be no doubt he looked forward to it as a certainty, and viewed the prospect with equanimity.

The South African War

The results of the first Conference may be summed up in the words of Mr. Chamberlain, spoken in 1898:

> "It is not for us to take the initiative. We would rather follow the lead; but what I think I have already accomplished is to convince them that wherever they live, however far their home may be from the centre and the Motherland, we at any rate are prepared to meet them more than half way in any proposal they may make to us, in any desire which they may express for their closer union, and, gentlemen, it will come, if not in our day, then in that of our successors. . . . But in whatever way it may be presented to us we shall not be deterred, either by the economic pedantries or the selfishness which is a virtue with some politicians, from giving favorable consideration to any proposals which our brethren across the sea may make to us. And in such consideration I for one do not believe the English people will keep a strict account of profit and loss."

So far as actual accomplishment goes, that is meagre enough, but it is rich in promise. And it is impossible not to observe in every phase of Mr. Chamberlain's long struggle, that questions of money and trade, although enormously important in themselves, were always subordinate to the higher purposes of civilization to be served by the "unity and solidarity" of the British Empire.

Considerations of practical organization were, however, to be suspended for a while. The Empire was inevitably drifting towards war. As to the merits or demerits of the Boer war, I have nothing to say. It was fiercely attacked on the Continent, in Great Britain herself, and the United States. But there is this about it, that, unlike most wars, the further it recedes into history the more thoroughly justifiable it appears. It certainly had beneficial results to the Boers who were beaten, to South Africa at large, to Great Britain, the hopeless inefficiency of whose military system it exposed, and to the Empire which it disclosed as, if somewhat crudely put together, none the less a concrete reality.

My intention is to deal with those gentlemen in Canada, and that gentleman in particular, who deliberately endeavored to make the Boer War the occasion for demonstrating that the Empire is not a concrete reality, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to wit.

There is no need of arguing pro-Boer or anti-Boer, because at the time when all the moral resources of the Empire were being brought to bear in the attempt to convince the Boers of the absolute futility of resistance, Canada put herself on record in a most unmistakable way in a resolution of the House of Commons, passed 31st July, 1899, as follows:

1. Resolved that this House has viewed with regret the complications which have arisen in the Transvaal Republic, of which Her Majesty is suzerain, from the refusal to accord to Her Majesty's subjects now settled in that region any adequate participation in its government.

2. Resolved that this House has learned with still greater regret that the condition of affairs there existing has resulted in intolerable oppression, and has produced great and dangerous excitement among several classes of Her Majesty's subjects in her South African possessions.

3. Resolved that this House representing a people which has largely succeeded by the adoption of the principle of conceding equal political rights to every portion of her population, in harmonizing estrangements and in producing general content with the existing system of government desires to express its sympathy with the efforts of Her Majesty's Imperial authorities to obtain for the subjects of Her Majesty who have taken up their abode in the Transvaal, such measure of justice and political recognition as may be found necessary to secure them in the full possession of equal rights and liberties.

This resolution caused no protest. It aroused no pro-Boer agitation in the country. It is perfectly true that there were pro-Boers in Canada. A country which harbored Goldwin Smith could not fail to possess at least one. It is also true that there was a more general pro-Boer sentiment in Quebec than in any other part of Canada. The French, many of them, did not see beyond a comparatively insignificant people attempting to assert racial sovereignty against the absorbent power of the Imperial idea. Within days after this resolution was passed, war had

become a certainty. When, however, the actual clash took place and the Boers invaded Natal, the Canadian parliament had been prorogued. All the overseas dominions fell headlong over each other with offers of assistance—except Canada. Very naturally, there were murmurings at the country's inaction, not very loud at first, but deep.

At that point Sir Wilfrid Laurier issued his famous Globe interview, designed to let the country know the government's position. I quote what is essential:

> "As I understand the Militia Act—and I may say that I have given it some study of late—our volunteers are enrolled to be used in the defence of the Dominion. They are Canadian troops to be used to fight for Canada's defence. Perhaps the most widespread misapprehension is that they cannot be sent out of Canada." (Then follows argument that they could be sent abroad provided attack was the best means of defence. But the case of South Africa was not analogous.) "There is no menace to Canada, and, although we may be

willing to contribute troops, I do not see how we can do so. Then again, how could we do so without Canada granting us the money? We simply could not do anything. In other words we should have to summon parliament. The government of Canada is restricted in its powers. It is responsible to parliament, and it can do very little without permission of parliament. There is no doubt as to the attitude of the government on all questions that mean menace to British interests, but in this case our limitations are very clearly defined. And so it is that we have not offered a Canadian contingent to the Home authorities."

This statement is quite clear. It says three things: (1) that the Canadian Militia could not be sent to Africa because "Canada was not menaced"; (2) that the government could not send contingents to Africa without summoning parliament and getting an appropriation for the purpose; and (3) that these were the reasons no contingent was offered to the Home authorities.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was acting as a lawyer looking for a pretext. All three statements are demonstrably false—the first is quite unimportant, so far as sending the Canadian Militia to Africa is concerned, but the statement that Canada was not menaced by the Boer War is not true. By this time we know how gravely it was menaced. Yet ignorance of the Teutonic intrigue behind the Boer war might well be pleaded then. But the point is that no portion of the Empire may be attacked without menace to the whole and every other part. It is as though a man were to be kicked in that region particularly adapted by nature for the purpose, and knocked his assailant down with his fist. Would he be fined for unprovoked assault because his fist had not been menaced? This part of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's statement is incidental. But very often in the incidental there is a revelation of a man's real character and motives, and the words "Canada was not menaced" betray Sir Wilfrid Laurier's innate anti-Imperialism and that of those whom he led and represented. The second statement that Canada could not send a

contingent without summoning parliament is sufficiently disposed of by the fact that Canada did send contingents without summoning parliament. The position of the government was the converse of that of the obstreperous passenger put in irons by the captain, who stormed, "But you can't put me in irons," when the impossible thing had actually occurred to him. Sir Wilfrid said, "I can't send a contingent," while subsequent events showed that his action was perfectly free except for the inhibition of his own will. As to the third, that lack of parliamentary sanction was the reason why no offer of a contingent was made, it was not the real reason at all. Sir Wilfrid Laurier did not wish to, and did not intend to give any assistance to the Imperial cause, and would not have done so unless he had been compelled. And the real reason for that was that he wished to assert the independence and separateness of Canada from Great Britain and the rest of the Empire in defence as well as in trade, under pretext of an autonomy which in neither regard was ever in question.

Within an incredibly short time, only a matter of days in fact, the first South African contingent was authorized and dispatched. The minute of council by which the government committed itself reads:

> "The prime minister in view of the well-known desire of a great many Canadians who are ready to take service under such conditions (as prescribed by the Imperial Government) is of opinion that the moderate expenditure which would be thus involved for the equipment and transportation of such volunteers may readily be undertaken by the government of Canada without summoning parliament, especially as such an expenditure under such circumstances cannot be regarded as a departure from the well-known principles of constitutional government and colonial practice, nor construed as a precedent for future action."

Nothing like this right-about-turn was ever seen in politics before outside of the imaginative pages of comic opera. The

fact is that the government had stirred a very ugly temper in the country. Something had to be done and done quickly, or else the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier would have ceased to exist. And there is one virtue which may always be cheerfully acknowledged in that gentleman—the virtue of necessity. Of course, the whole matter required explanations of various sorts. It got them. If there is anything calculated to inspire a reasonable man with a perfect detestation of the very name of Transvaal and South Africa, it is the records of the Session of 1900 and of the campaign which preceded the election of that year.

The Honorable J. I. Tarte's explanation is the most humorous:

> "Canada has not sent any troops against the Transvaal. She has merely authorized the enrolment of volunteers destined for the expedition. Canada had dressed these volunteers and transported them, a very different matter."

These are quoted as Tarte's words. But I am not quoting from Hansard. If they are not, he said the same thing in

different words so often that no injustice is done. Then we find a member of parliament taking umbrage at a letter from the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain in which he spoke of Canada's action as having demonstrated "the unity and solidarity" of the Empire, when nothing had been said by Canada as to any intention of making such a demonstration. Somewhere, but where and when I forget, and it is not worth looking up, there gleams across a page the italicised lament, "This is Imperial Federation." If you take institutional regulations and contractual parchments—No! But if you take the spirit and unity of purpose afterwards to evolve these things as their external embodiment—Yes!

But of course it is the explanation of the government and of Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself which is important. I do not know where his position is better summed up than in his own words, as follows:

> "It is only too true, sir, that if we had refused at that time to do what was in my judgment our imperative

> duty, a most dangerous agitation would have arisen—an agitation which in all human probability would have ended in a cleavage in the population upon racial lines."

Sir Wilfred Laurier is here speaking of the sending of the contingents, not of the refusal to send them. So that what was impossible and undesirable upon the 3rd October, 1899, had in his mind become an "imperative duty" by the 13th March, 1900.

Well, the contingents were dispatched to avoid an agitation, which is perfectly true, but it was not at all that kind of agitation Sir Wilfrid Laurier represented. I do not believe there were fifty men in Quebec who understood the quasi-legal, quasi-constitutional position of their leader, and I am certain there were not more than ten who cared a button about it. There was in Quebec a good deal of pothouse and street-corner pro-Boerism and anti-Imperialism, but I question if it would ever have reached any greater, if as great a head as the Nationalist movement later

under Bourassa, who by the way, with Tarte, was the leading anti-contingent politician at that time. The only thing that was in any real danger was the Laurier government itself. There are two sentences of Sir Charles Tupper's which put the matter very clearly. They do not occur in juxtaposition, but they may be so quoted without injury.

> "He (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) tried to chloroform the feeling which was setting towards the goal which it ultimately attained in spite of him."
>
> "Fortunately for Canada the overwhelming public sentiment of this country . . . soon taught my Right Honorable friend that he would have to choose between abandoning his contention that nothing could be done because to do anything would be a violation of the constitution, and that either he would have to violate the constitution, or somebody else would be in charge of it at a very early day."

The truth is that Sir Wilfrid Laurier gave the sanction and support of the

government so far as he dared to this ill-conditioned pro-Boer and anti-Imperial sentiment led by Tarte, Bourassa, Monet and a few others, and rampant chiefly in Quebec, where provincial prejudices and sympathies were with the Boers, because it appeared to minister to that essential separatism and policy of non-participation in Imperial concerns which lies ever at the root of his being, and always finds its appropriate echo in the party which he leads.

The whole case for non-participation in Imperial wars was put very clearly and succinctly by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in this same debate of 13th March, 1900, stripped of the fripperies about Balcas collections and Suez Canal shares, not to mention Tarte's puerilities that recruiting, dressing and transporting troops was compatible with non-participation:

> "But I have no hesitation in saying to my Honorable friend that if as a consequence of our action today the doctrine were to be admitted that Canada should take part in all the

wars of Great Britain and contribute to the military expenditure of the Empire, I agree with him that we should revise the condition of things existing between us and Great Britain. Under that condition of affairs, which does not exist, we should have the right to say to Great Britain: If you want us to help you, call us to your councils; if you want us to take part in wars, let us share not only the burdens but the responsibilities and duties as well. But there is no occasion to examine this contingency today."

That is fairly put and it was just as fairly met by the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain when he said:

"Gentlemen, we do want your aid. We do want your assistance in the administration of the vast Empire which is yours as well as ours. The weary Titan struggles under the too vast orb of his fate. We have borne the burden for many years. We think it time that our children should assist us to support it, and, whenever you make the request to us, be very sure we shall

hasten gladly to call you to our councils. If you are prepared at any time to take any share, any proportionate share, in the burdens of the Empire, we are prepared to meet you with any proposal for giving to you a corresponding voice in the policy of the Empire."

The Second Conference

The words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which have just been quoted, with the response of Mr. Chamberlain, spoken in his address opening the second Conference, would, of course, have gone a very long way towards settling or laying the foundation for a settlement of Imperial organization, if the famous "call us to your councils" had been either a prayer or a demand. It was nothing of the kind, although laid down as precedent to full participation and responsibility in Imperial affairs, and in appearance as expressing the Canadian aspiration as well. It does, but not as from the lips of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Everybody admits that "calling to council" conditions full responsibility in government and participation in defence. Mr. Chamberlain put the case very clearly when he said: "If you are prepared at any time to take any share, any proportionate share in the burdens of the Empire, we are prepared to meet you with any proposal for giving to you a corresponding voice in the policy of the Empire." Canada was prepared and has taken her share. Whether

proportionate or not, it has been all she could do, every man, every ounce of weight, every dollar, not that she could spare but that she could raise. The idea of bargaining has never entered Canada's head, but the consequences are as inevitable as they are gratifying to every loyal Imperialist.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, however, was not prepared to assume burdens, nor was the Liberal party which he led, nor was the unconsciously treacherous sentiment in the country, which he represented. His argument was as though he said, "If I am to fly, nature must give me wings. Nature does not give me wings, therefore I can make no attempt to fly." If Canada is to participate in the burdens of administration and defence, Canada must be called to council. Canada is not so called, therefore Canada does not participate. Sir Wilfrid Laurier placed the "calling to council" as a necessary condition of participation, which was in his view impracticable, or to use his own word "Utopian," and in the interest of Canada undesirable, and therefore an excuse for non-participation.

Any other construction placed upon his language would be inconsistent with his

earlier aspiration for severance and Canadian independence, with the brick he threw which made a corpse of Chamberlain's first trade proposals, with his acquiescence in the resolution affirming the constitutional relations between Great Britain and the Colonies to be satisfactory, against the protests of Richard Seddon and Sir E. Bragg, with his negative attitude to the Conferences generally, with his naval policy and with his doctrine of conditional neutrality. He was deliberately and consciously unprepared at any time to assume any of the burdens of the Empire. In actual affairs, apart from ceremony and sentiment, his conception of Great Britain, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand was that of countries foreign to Canada's interests and destiny.

To many this may appear strong language, unjustifiably strong. To them it may seem as though the haziness of thought and looseness of expression common to the most acute minds when a huge idea is just beginning to take shape in the consciousness, had been taken advantage of to fix upon Sir Wilfrid Laurier sympathies of

which he was innocent and aspirations which he never entertained. The proof of his attitude and the real meaning and intention of his words can be made categorical.

Mr. Chamberlain, in his address at the opening of the Conference, drew attention to the wonderful demonstration afforded by the South African War of unity existing without visible expression or bonds. He quoted Laurier to show that such a condition would not last forever, and responded to him in the famous passage I have quoted above. He then went on to outline three possibilities: (1) representation in the Imperial Parliament, to which he said there was no objection in principle, (2) "the creation of a real Council of the Empire, to which all questions of Imperial interests might be referred," (3) such a council "in the first instance a merely advisory council." From that it may be argued reasonably that Mr. Chamberlain recognized the paramount necessity of giving administrative substance to the sentiment which had unified the Empire in war. Very well, on 13th March, 1903, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said, in the House of Commons:

> "As to the political relations which exist between Canada and the Colonies generally and the Motherland, they are perfectly satisfactory; they could not be improved, and any attempt which has been made with a view of improving them has only led to Utopia."

Surely that makes his language, actions, impulses and ultimate aspirations clear enough. He declined to contemplate participation in the burden of Imperial administration and defence, because we were not "called to council". He declared all ideas of being called to council Utopian, and opposed them, because they would entail participation in the Imperial burden. That policy he endeavored unsuccessfully to put in force in the matter of the South African contingents, and, unfortunately, successfully in the matter of naval defence, and in expression, quite unequivocally in his abominable doctrine of conditional neutrality. It is in mercy only to the manifold weaknesses of human character that that is to be called "unconscious treachery."

The question of defence at this second Conference circled entirely or almost en-

tirely round naval defence. It was quite natural that it should. None of the land forces of the Empire had any role to play except the defence of Imperial territory from actual invasion, nor was it conceived that they ever would at that time. On this account localization of effort was in no sense harmful. But with regard to the navy, the state of the case was and remains absolutely different. The command of the sea is an essential condition of there being any British Empire. The British navy does not defend Great Britain alone, but the territory, trade and commerce of one-fifth of the earth's surface. The security of Canada is as much dependent upon the British navy as the security of London.

The position then was, and it became accentuated afterwards, that the British navy was declining in power relatively, a condition of things immediately due to the naval activity of Germany.

At the same time the burden of naval defence on the British taxpayer was simply staggering, twenty-nine shillings and threepence per head of the population per annum, as against two shillings in Canada.

It is little wonder that the weary "Titan" appealed for assistance. It is quite true that the purpose of the British navy is the defence of Great Britain and that the defence of Canada is incidental. But if the defence of Great Britain involves the defence of Canada, the defence of Canada also involves that of Great Britain. During the war, the Empire has retained the command of the sea. We have only to ask the question where the trade and commerce of Canada, and even the security of our homes, would have been if it had not, to realize that Imperial naval defence is one and indivisible, and that either there must exist an Imperial naval power without partition, or the Empire must cease to be capable of adequate defence and be subject to disruption. The navy is by nature Imperial. By virtue of necessity, it expresses in a concrete organization the Imperial idea as nothing else does. It is almost unnecessary to say that I do not mean the navy of the United Kingdom, which has been compelled to assume functions and carry burdens which ought not to belong to it alone.

THE SECOND CONFERENCE

At this Conference, Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony, Natal and Newfoundland all increased their contributions to the naval defence of the Empire. Canada alone did nothing except contribute a very vaguely-worded statement made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the First Lord of the Admiralty:

> "Sir Wilfrid Laurier informed me that His Majesty's government of the Dominion of Canada are contemplating the establishment of a local naval force in the waters of Canada, but that they were not able to make any offer of assistance analogous to those enumerated above" (that is, the offers of Australia and the others).

One is at once struck by the word "analogous." It does not mean "less than," "greater than" or "equal to"; it means "similar in kind." All that Canada had to offer was a period of contemplation prolonged for years, whose final parturition produced those nautical monstrosities, the Rainbow and the Niobe, which surely required all the beams of Laurier's rhetoric

shining through the tears of the one to irradiate the other. It is not hard, especially in the light of later events to observe the microbe of separatism at work in Sir Wilfrid Laurier's mind. He made no attempt to overcome the difficulty of a single naval organization provided by separate parliaments and separate exchequers. To overcome this objection was necessary to the Empire's safety, but it was insuperable to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which showed that the Empire's safety was far from paramount in his opinion. And when he did install a navy in Canadian waters, he took good care to get ships which could not leave them in case of war, for the simple reason that they dare not. The main point at present is, however, that sympathetic comprehension of every country represented at the Conference of the Admiralty's position, as compared with the attitude of Canada as represented by Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

On the third great question affecting the Empire, that of preferential trade, this Conference passed a resolution embracing five subdivisions.

In itself this resolution led to nothing, and has long ago been forgotten (so far as Canada is concerned it was politely buried in the next budget speech of Mr. Fielding), and it would be hardly worth a reference but for two things: first, it stated the position with great exactness; and, second, it was the natural forerunner of the tariff reform propaganda in Great Britain. The first clause recognized the principle of mutual preference as the basis of Imperial trade organization; the second declared free trade within the Empire impossible; the third indicated a willingness on the part of the overseas dominions to grant a substantial preference to Great Britain; the fourth required a preference in Great Britain for overseas products; and the fifth promised a submission of the proposal to the various home parliaments of the representatives at the Conference.

This resolution, and no doubt the unreported discussions of which it was the fruit, unquestionably paved the way for the forward step taken by Mr. Chamberlain in his history-making speech of 15 May, 1903, when he bluntly laid the issue of

tariff reform before the British people with a very solemn warning as to the probable consequences if the opportunity were not embraced. Mr. Balfour was undoubtedly in sympathy with Mr. Chamberlain, but his position as leader of a party by no means unanimous on the subject restricted his choice of action. This is not the place to discuss British tariff reform, but briefly Mr. Chamberlain's position was that protective duties could be adopted without loss or disadvantage to British industry, and that they were essential to the development of Imperial trade, and as the material basis of that much greater end, the unification of the Empire. Very naturally, the British tariff reform agitation put an end to all overseas efforts in the direction of preferential trade, for the sufficient reason that nothing could be done until the question was settled there. The war should settle the question, and no doubt in the direction of a greater Imperial economic solidarity and consequent higher efficiency, economic and otherwise.

The Conference of 1902 left a general feeling of dissatisfaction. It appeared, I

do not say that it was, largely barren of result. This feeling was partly due to the high expectations raised that the Imperial unity and enthusiasm made visible in the South African war would be crystallized and receive some kind of institutional imprint at the hands of the representative men assembled. It was also due, however, in part to the blank indifference of Canada as represented. Twenty-three subjects were discussed; of these Canada brought up not one, while upon the vital Imperial questions, the attitude of Canada was simply non possumus, a Latin phrase for which an exact equivalent in the English vernacular has been long awaited. It means "nothing doing."

The Third Conference

There was no reference to Naval Defence in the Speech from the Throne in 1903, nor was there in 1904, nor in 1905, nor in 1906, nor in 1907, the year of the third Conference. For reasons which are sufficiently obvious the question of preferential trade as a factor in Imperial union was debarred from this Conference. The Dominions naturally stood upon the resolution of 1902. And that resolution being in harmony with the Chamberlain policy of tariff reform to which the British Government was opposed, the denaturing activities of Sir Wilfrid Laurier were not required on this occasion. The prime minister of Great Britain and Mr. Lloyd George were equally emphatic that to touch free trade for Great Britain was to lay a sacrilegious hand upon the ark of the covenant which would remain sacred forever as far as Great Britain was concerned. In these, and such like statements, they reckoned entirely without the German war, a miscalculation observable in other departments of British administration, both then and

later. This must all have been extremely satisfactory to Sir Wilfrid Laurier. A more or less sympathetic attitude on the part of the British government in 1897 had required his somewhat embarrassing Liverpool utterance to nip it in the bud. But now a convenient change in the government in Great Britain enabled him to pose as the maintainer of reciprocal preference under the resolution of 1902, while his real purpose was equally served in both instances, namely, the prevention of anything approaching a mutual understanding which would lead to joint action and unity of direction. So far as he was concerned the only difference was that in the one case he had something to do, and in the other what was necessary was done for him. He had opportunities, however, for the exercise of his peculiar functions in this Conference also. The question of Imperial trade was however placed beyond the discretion of the Conference by the unsettled status of the question in Great Britain. Hence the questions of Imperial organization and Imperial defence were the only matters left within the purview of the Conference except the

matters of arrangement such as came up at all the Conferences, but which I have neglected as lacking Imperial significance.

If the Conference of 1902 was unsatisfactory, that of 1907 was a ghastly failure, for which Sir Wilfrid Laurier was largely responsible, and which there is little doubt he intended it should be. In fact, a review of Sir Wilfrid's actions during the ten years is calculated to convince any one that he held those Conferences to be mischievous and would gladly have witnessed their painless extinction. He nosed danger in them. From his own point of view he was quite right. Whether the danger lay to his own ideas and prepossessions about Canadian policy or not, he was far too shrewd a politician not to know, even if he had not Mr. Bourassa and a few more to remind him, that, while his party was not by any means wholly composed of the "alien annexionist and independent" elements, it was closely allied with those elements and deeply impregnated with every stripe and brand of Little Canadianism. In his naval policy he surrendered completely to this body of opinion,

and in his reciprocity policy he catered to it with well-remembered results. In the Conferences, however, he could give free play to anti-Imperialism, because very few regarded their doings as more than a series of pious affirmations and negations.

What happened in Canada before the Conference was quite as important to Canada in relation to it as the Conference itself. During the early months of 1907 it began to be rumored that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had no intention of attending the Conference at all. He was promptly asked as to the truth of this by the leader of the Opposition. Here is his reply:

> "Mr. Speaker—In view of the slow progress which has been made in the House I certainly have contemplated the possibility of my being forced to abandon my trip. I would not like to do so, but I must say that the matter is under consideration now."

Sir R. L. Borden (then Mr. Borden) promptly moved the adjournment of the House to discuss the matter. He pointed out that the Opposition would do everything in its power to facilitate the presence

of the Premier at the Conference, and he drew attention to the fact that as technically the Conference was a consultation between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the overseas prime ministers, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's absence would mean the non-participation of Canada, and that "would result in practically annulling the work of the Conference and in absolutely diminishing its usefulness to the vanishing point of view." This, of course, was precisely the object Sir Wilfrid Laurier wished to accomplish, and did accomplish in a more roundabout way.

By the time Mr. Borden and Mr. Foster were finished with him, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was ready to go to London to attend the Conference. For some reason Mr. Bourassa had to intervene in the discussion. He is the leader of the extreme Little Canadianism which Sir Wilfrid Laurier either sympathised with or was afraid of, as his actions continually have shown, and Mr. Bourassa had a happy knack of bringing out in a most belligerent way the exact and true intention of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's actions stripped of the sophisms in which

he was himself accustomed to disguise them. Mr. Bourassa did not see any particular necessity for the prime minister's attendance at the Conference. Upon the trade question, the attitude of the British Government, in relation to the resolution of 1902 and all that it implied, was enough, and,

> "So far as defence is concerned, so far as the constitution of an Imperial Council is concerned, both in the official correspondence and in the attitude taken by the Canadian Government in 1902, the Canadian people have received the assurance that the Canadian representatives would not consent to any change in the status of the Empire, or to any change in the military organization of the Empire."

and again,

> "In 1902, the Rt. Hon. gentleman very properly opposed the idea of putting these Conferences upon a basis of perpetuity or on a regular basis, giving them the form of a regular institution within the Empire."

What Mr. Bourassa was not afraid to say, Sir Wilfrid Laurier could be depended upon to do.

The Conference had only convened when Mr. Deakin brought forward a resolution reciting that

> "It is desirable to establish an Imperial Council to consist of representatives of Great Britain and the self-governing colonies chosen ex officio from their existing administrations."

The resolution also proposed the establishment of a permanent secretariate, independent of the Colonial Office and attached to the office of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. What was aimed at was, first, permanence, and second, a consultative relation between the Home government and the Dominion governments, independent of the Colonial Office. In other words, Colonial affairs, so far as the self-governing colonies were concerned, were no longer to be a part of British departmental administration.

There was an immediate dispute over the word "Council" as opposed to "Conference." Sir Wilfrid Laurier threw cold

water on the change. His opinion was that the functions of the body should be defined before its name was chosen. This was ingenious, but he did not draw attention to the fact that a name frequently suggests the idea of enlarged and more important functions, and that that was his reason for opposition. Eventually " Imperial Conference" was chosen. In this matter, Sir Wilfrid Laurier found himself opposed to all the other portions of the Empire except Great Britain. He also opposed the taking the affairs of the self-governing colonies out of the hands of the Colonial Office. He preferred to remain "a valet and slave of the Colonial Office." In a speech after the Conference was over, he made it clear that the abandonment of the idea of a permanent Imperial council had been due to the action of his government. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's attitude raised a howl of amazed and indignant protest. It is whispered that this was not confined to journalists and reviewers, but received very emphatic private expression among the other delegates to the Conference. The general opinion was well expressed, as follows:

> "It seems almost incredible that he should have ranged himself with the spirit of the old bureaucracy against self-respecting ambition and Colonial Nationalism. Shall it be said of him that he stood for, if he has not actually lent his hand while the bureaucracy strangled in its cradle the Imperial offspring of Canadian Nationalism?"

His ambition can be so described, and with truth, but far from being incredible, it was exactly consistent with his political associations and the limitations of those without whose support he could not retain power. There are people so constituted that they cannot rise to a higher plane of social evolution through political organization; they have to be dragged up. These opposed Confederation, because they could not see the Dominion except through the extinction of the Province. In the same way they cannot see the Empire except in the extinction of the Dominion. Certainly Imperialism is the offspring of Canadian Nationalism realized in Confederation, but those of the type who hated the sire are hardly likely to be well disposed towards the child.

There are three positions which Canada may occupy—complete independence with its own burdens, responsibilities and weakness; Imperial partnership, with a proportionate share of Imperial burdens and responsibilities; or her present position technically, where she enjoys protection from Great Britain without responsibility or return, where Canada has the irresponsibility of a divorced wife receiving alimony, without contributing to the upkeep of the household by the discharge of appropriate duties. That is the constitutional position of Canada, but of course no self-respecting nation would occupy such a position for a moment, and Canada showed that she would not in the South African War and in this war on a vastly greater scale. But the "unconscious traitors" would have her occupy it actually, as well as technically, as was shown by the opposition to the South African contingents and by Laurier's doctrine of optional neutrality. And Canada, to her deep-felt shame, has been compelled by them to occupy this position in actual fact so far as naval defence is concerned.

On the question of defence, this Conference did nothing, but that fact was positive in its evil significance. For reasons I have already given, the dissensions over land forces possessed little or no Imperial significance then, however it may be in the future. It was most strikingly different as regards naval defence, as Great Britain discovered two years later, when she woke up. In 1907 she was still snoozing comfortably and pinching the naval estimates, because if they were too large there would be no money for social reform. This was actually the reason advanced, even in the panic of 1909, by the Labor party in Great Britain, for voting against the naval estimates, although it required a very busy six years on the part of the Admiralty to insure that there would be in 1915 any society left to be reformed. At the Conference, after much desultory talk in which different ideas and circumstances failed of any harmonious outcome, Mr. Smartt of Cape Colony moved the following resolution as representative of the spirit of the Conference:

"That this Conference, recognizing the vast importance of the service rendered by the navy to the defence of the Empire and the paramount importance of continuing to maintain the navy in the highest possible state of efficiency, considers it to be the duty of the Dominions beyond the seas to make such contribution towards the upkeep of the navy as may be determined by their local legislatures, the contribution to take the form of a grant of money, the establishment of local naval defence, or such other services in such manner as may be decided upon after consultation with the Admiralty, and as would best accord with their varying circumstances."

What happened to that resolution is best related in the verbatim report. Sir Wilfrid Laurier said:

"I am sorry to say that as far as Canada is concerned, we cannot agree to the resolution."

Dr. Smartt:—"I think it is a great pity we do not pass something. We

have done so much in the way of pious affirmation that I am anxious that we should do something of a practical character."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier:—"It can be passed if there is a majority. For my part I must vote against it."

Sir Joseph Ward:—"To do any good, we would require to be unanimous about it."

Mr. Winston Churchill:—"It is not much good to have a resolution at all if we cannot be unanimous."

That was the end of the matter. There is no doubt as to what Sir Wilfrid Laurier's objection to the resolution was. It was wide enough and general enough to cover every conceivable method of naval action which might be taken by a Dominion, but it mentioned "the" navy, presupposing an Imperial navy and one indivisible to which contribution should be made. At that moment the shadow of Mr. Bourassa tapped Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the shoulder. Nothing was done, although two years later it became sufficiently obvious that something had to be done.

As to Imperial trade, the resolution of 1902 was re-affirmed, Great Britain dissenting. This action was important in this way, that the Dominions, after five years, saw no reason to alter their position upon preferential trade, while in Great Britain the government defending the fortress of do-nothingism did not represent the country at large by any means, and was opposed by a party which could never come back to power except upon a platform of Imperial preference in trade.

The only results of this Conference were the change of name from "Colonial" to "Imperial," and the recognition that the Conferences were not confabulations between the Colonial Secretary and the heads of colonies under his department, but consultations between government and government.

Very meagre in result it must be confessed. Imperialists the world over were discouraged and exasperated. But Germany was greatly comforted and encouraged in her naval programme and economic propaganda.

The Naval Scare and Defence Conference

The stage was now being set for a much more imposing drama, involving graver issues than the internal relations of the British Empire provided. From 1909 onwards to 1914 the Empire was in actual, and it might be said hourly, danger of what came to pass in the latter year, namely, the outbreak of a general European war, in which the British Empire would be hard put to it to maintain its position and integrity. There are those who have maintained, ever since the German Emperor startled the world by his telegram to President Kruger at the time of the Jameson raid, that war between Germany and Great Britain was eventually certain. Of course, the present war may have been predestined from the beginning of time, and may be the inevitable fruit of every human action which has ever taken place. But those had pretty long sight to whom its certainty was visibly revealed so long ago as the days of the famous telegram. Still if we look back, and it is always so much easier to look back

than to look forward, it seems very clear now that to the ambitions, ideals, desires and hopes of expansion summed up in the German word "Kultur," the British Empire formed the most massive obstacle. It was not merely a geographical obstacle, limiting and binding in Germany's possibilities of territorial expansion, but an ethical obstacle, because between what Germany hoped the German Empire would become, and what the British Empire is, there is a great gulf fixed. A German world-Empire, dominated by the spirit of Teutonic "Kultur," and a British world-Empire, with its childish ideas of liberty and self-government, could not co-exist upon the same planet. Therefore, the British Empire was Germany's ultimate and irreconcilable enemy. And as a German world-Empire had been preordained by the tribal god of the Teutons, there was nothing for it but the physical elimination of the British Empire, on the plea of that necessity by which the Germans have justified the most horrible crimes against civilization. In the nature of things the British Empire was the irreconcilable enemy of the German ambition. Against

it the final blow must be struck. Whatever had to be done before, Germany destined its vast wealth and resources as the ultimate recompense for a series of dreary wars. But before any effective action could be taken against Britain, Germany had two forces to overcome, France and Russia. The crushing of France had been the making of the German Empire. It was entirely necessary to German policy that France should remain crushed. Hence, when France paid off the war indemnity two years before it was due, and started to reorganize her army in 1875, nothing appeared simpler to the Teuton than to march again upon Paris. Russia and Great Britain intervened, Russia openly, Britain secretly, and the great war was put off for forty years. This little chapter in the history of European diplomacy proves more conclusively than any books of so-called philosophy the utter indifference of Germany to all considerations of morality, decency, humanity or honor, when these are in conflict with German ambition. In fact, the books were written to explain, codify, analyze and justify the German spirit. Most admirably they do

it too. But then German devilishness must needs be a philosophically justifiable devilishness.

The other force was Russia. In 1866 and 1870 Prussia had Russia behind her as an extremely friendly neutral. The court and bureaucracy of Russia were very largely Germanized, but the Russian people, never. They hated the Germans. Hence comes the sacred character of this war to the Russians. In return, however, for the support of Russia, Germany permitted Russia to be despoiled of the fruits of the Russo-Turkish War and the Treaty of Ste. Stefano, by the Treaty of Berlin, the result of the Conference there. Germany's role as an "honest broker" on that occasion Russia has neither forgotten nor forgiven.

These two powers, flanking the German Empire on the East and on the West, formed a stupendous obstacle against any attack on Great Britain. A third obstacle was the British navy. Still fate seemed to be fighting for Germany. Russia's right arm was paralyzed at Mukden, and immediately thereafter Germany began to

bully France. France found herself compelled to take a somewhat active interest in the affairs of Morocco, then in a most anarchical condition, which was giving France endless trouble in the hinterland of Algiers. France had no ambitions with regard to Morocco, but was being gradually driven into a position of virtual suzerainty. Nobody, not even Germany, had any objection, because no power voluntarily will have anything to do with Morocco. It possesses the same immunity from wanton interference enjoyed by skunks and rattlesnakes. This was the moment chosen (1905) by the German Emperor, on his flying visit to Morocco, to make a speech in which he hailed the Sultan as an independent brother potentate, and as much as gave him to understand that he, the Emperor, personally would see to it that he remained such. It was a thoroughly Kaiser-like effusion, and very naturally put the fat in the fire in France. But France had to swallow the absolutely causeless and wanton affront, and to dismiss Delcasse virtually on the demand of Germany. The Conference of Algeciras patched up Moroccan affairs,

although they were to break out later, but without grave international complications.

Three years later (1908-1909), however, Europe was on the brink of war over Austria's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, an action which, however necessary and justifiable from Austria's point of view, was a bitter pill for Serbia to swallow. If we are to regard Austria's policy as dictated by Germany, it would certainly seem as though on this occasion Germany was inviting war. It was for some time doubtful whether Russia would submit, but she did, and then of course Serbia had to. But this incident made war an absolute and visible certainty in the near future, except perhaps to such persons as Mr. Andrew Carnegie and his like. Germany had arrived at a position where she expected to be able to crush France with one blow, drive Russia back and pin her in her own fastnesses, and then proceed at leisure to obliterate Great Britain and make a prey of the trade, territory and resources of the British Empire. In the first two of her projects Germany would almost certainly have been successful, and very probably in the third,

but for two miscalculations, one the amazing, incredible, preposterous and ridiculous, but nevertheless extremely disconcerting resistance of Belgium, the other the immediate participation of the British Empire in the war the moment the neutrality of Belgium was violated. The position of Germany was very strong logically, strategically, dynamically and Teutonically, especially Teutonically (this word I coin to indicate the power possessed by all Germans of proving by reams of unanswerable arguments that whatever they wish to believe is true, and that whatever it is their interest to do is right). Morally the German position was atrocious. But what did that matter when the interest of the State was its only code of ethics, and its power the incarnation of the Supreme Will? It is, however, worth noting in passing that the invasion of Belgium was a moral question, and that it was a moral question which had two important results, one that it nerved a rabbit to check German progress, and the other that it roused in John Bull that deep, implacable and never-ending wrath which is never stirred except

when his own security is threatened or his idea of fair play is violated, both of which casus belli were happily combined in this instance.

Another factor by which destiny seemed to be playing into the hands of Germany was the evolution of the Dreadnought. It entirely outclassed any and all war vessels built earlier. The First Lord of the Admiralty put it very clearly to the British Parliament and people when he said:

> "The war between Japan and Russia conclusively showed that the intermediate armament carried by vessels flying European flags was not effective at modern battle ranges."

The first vessel flying a European flag which had an armament which would be effective at modern battle ranges was launched by Great Britain in 1906. There was great blowing of trumpets and singing of "Rule Britannia" to celebrate the event. Why is a little mysterious, because a naval development, however inevitable, which made virtual scrap iron of the rest of the British navy was hardly a matter for

rejoicing. It was obvious that any two nations with equal money to spend and equal powers of construction were, so far as naval armament is concerned, potentially equal. It was not until 1909, however, that Great Britain awoke to the fact that Germany was attempting, by a series of forced marches as it were, to establish an at least possible superiority over Great Britain in the only ships which were "effective at modern battle ranges." Great Britain had a naval programme and Germany had a naval programme, but Germany had taken power in her law to accelerate construction and had the shops, yards and machinery to do so.

The situation was put with great clearness by Mr. McKenna in moving the increased British naval estimates in 1909:

> "The difficulty in which the Government find themselves at this moment is that we do not know—as we thought we did—the rate at which German construction is taking place. We know that the Germans have a law which, when all the ships under it have been completed, will give them a navy more powerful than any in existence."

These were the words of a government, notoriously anti-militaristic and hand in glove with the Labor party which voted against the increased estimates. There was nothing of blatancy against them therefore, and they meant in plain English that it was in Germany's power to steal a march upon Great Britain and have a more effective navy at the time she proposed to strike, if she meant to strike, and that all Great Britain had to trust to was that it was not Germany's intention to do so.

Mr. McKenna's figures gave Germany 5 ships to Britain's 10 (vessels of intermediate armament neglected) in 1910; Germany 13 to Britain's 16 in 1911; and Germany 17 to Britain's—well that was the question—in 1912. That was obviously a spurt put on to catch somebody in naval strength—probably Switzerland. Mr. Balfour's calculations differed from the government's and were much more alarming. The difference showed that nobody in Great Britain knew either what Germany was doing or what she intended to do.

The following contribution by Mr. As-

quith to the debate raises a wan smile at the present day:

> "It is fair and right to the German government that I should say that we have had a most distinct declaration from them that it is not their intention to accelerate their programme and we cannot possibly as a government, believing as we do most explicitly in the good faith of those declarations, put before the House of Commons and Parliament a programme based on the assumption that a declaration of that kind will not be carried out."

Then Prince Von Bulow a few days later had to come forward with a dose of soothing syrup:

> "The Federated Governments entertain no thoughts of entering into competition with British sea power by means of the construction of the German navy. According to the provisions of the Navy law the immovable purpose of German naval policy is founded upon the fact that we desire to create our naval armaments for the protection of our coasts and our trade."

That was a lie. Events have proved it was a lie, but it was a lie on the face of it. For what purpose could the feverish construction of Dreadnoughts be designed except to compete with British sea power, and where was any necessity for 17 Dreadnoughts to protect German coasts and trade? Von Tirpitz was also to the fore with honeyed words.

They say there is a special Providence which looks after drunkards and fools. If so, it is almost impossible to avoid the melancholy reflection that the wave of sobriety which has passed over Great Britain since the war began has removed the first bulwark of the Empire, while to strengthen that happy-go-lucky foolishness which is the second is beyond the range of human possibility.

Germany's plans were well laid. With temporary preponderance or equality of Dreadnoughts and with the auxiliary weapons of air fleets and submarines (of which more was expected than was realized) she might reasonably hope to scare the British Empire into neutrality while she dealt with France and Russia. Her preparations were

seconded by tremendous efforts to lull the British Empire into a sense of security. Freedom of the press throughout the Empire had come to mean very largely freedom to sell to the highest bidder, and Germany was prepared to bid high for organs of public opinion who would mask German designs under the lofty precepts of Pacificism. But people could talk as much as they pleased about universal peace and the vile machinations of munition manufacturers and shipbuilders. Britain's sense of security was gone, and to that fortunate fact the preparedness of the navy and the consequent safety of every portion of the Empire, as well as the inescapable ultimate outcome of the war are due.

The part played by Canada in the early scenes of this world drama is one that would be gratefully forgotten if it were not for the necessity of guarding against the future. We were humiliated and disgraced by a government whose action could not have been more effective than it was, had it been in surreptitious and treacherous alliance with Germany for the destruction and dismemberment of the British Empire. I

do not say that the treachery was conscious. It could hardly have been. Because Canada falling to Germany as a prize of war could not have been consciously contemplated. That, however, was precisely the result which the action of our government tended to render possible. If it did not know what it was doing, it was not for want of being told. It could not have known, so perhaps the exercise of the Christian virtue of forgiveness is what is called for. But that does not prevent a strict determination never to permit the country to come under such control again. So long as the Liberal party retains the theories on the subject of defence upon which its policy for sixteen years was based, it would be folly of the rankest kind to give it a second opportunity of putting them in practice.

In 1909 the burden of the naval defence of the Empire was distributed as follows:

Great Britain	**34,000,000**	**pounds**	**sterling**	
Australia	**200,000**	"	"	**annually**
New Zealand	**100,000**	"	"	"
Cape Colony	**50,000**	"	"	"
Natal	**35,000**	"	"	"
Newfoundland	**5,000**	"	"	"
Canada	**Nothing**			

In the parliamentary session of that year Hon. George E. Foster introduced a resolution in the House of Commons dealing with the subject. An amendment was offered by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which as amended by Mr. Borden was carried unanimously. It reads:

> "This House fully recognizes the duty of the people of Canada as they increase in numbers and wealth to assume in larger measure the responsibilities of national defence.
>
> "The House is of opinion that under the present constitutional relations between the mother country and the self-governing dominions, the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be the most satisfactory solution of the question of defence.
>
> "The House will cordially approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the speedy organization of a Canadian naval service in co-operation

with and in close relation to the Imperial navy along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference and in full sympathy with the view that the naval supremacy of Britain is essential to the security and commerce, the safety of the Empire and the peace of the world.

"The House expresses its firm conviction that whenever the need arises the Canadian people will be found ready and willing to make any sacrifice that is required to give to the Imperial authorities the most loyal and hearty cooperation in every movement for the maintenance of the integrity and honor of the Empire."

This resolution sounds very well, but the fundamental difference between the parties disclosed itself in the debate, although in the resolution it is glossed over for the sake of unanimity, of which, for some reason, it was considered important to preserve an appearance, although in reality it did not exist. In his resolution Mr. Foster had referred to the harbors and seaboard of

Canada, but his speech dealt with the dangers threatening the Empire at large, at any point, in any direction. Nor was Sir Wilfrid Laurier slow to take him up on this point. Sir Wilfrid's position was undoubtedly that the Empire might be threatened or attacked without Canada being threatened or attacked, and that Canada's naval power should not be developed for use in such a contingency. To him the British navy is the Imperial navy and the Canadian naval service to be, something entirely separate and distinct. How that can be, unless Great Britain is the Empire and Canada something separate and distinct, I cannot fathom. The position of Mr. Foster, in fact the general position of Imperialists, is that Canada being a part of the Empire, the defence of the Empire as a whole is as essential to Canada a part, as the defence of Canada a part is essential to the Empire as a whole. Consequently, any geographical segregation of naval force is an absurdity except for purely strategic reasons. The distinction is that between Imperialism and Separatism, and the reason why it stands out so clearly in connection

with naval defence is that the sea is the sea, one and indivisible, and operations must be organically united or have no meaning whatever towards any common purpose.

In the debate on the Foster resolution, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said:

> "If I understand him (Mr. Foster) aright he insisted that something should be done, whether by a contribution to the Imperial treasury or by the development of our own naval resources. Well, to us it is an open question, and we see no reason in anything that has taken place recently to depart from the policy that we laid down in 1902."

The policy laid down by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in 1902 was a period of contemplation. His words to the First Lord were that the Canadian Government "are contemplating the establishment of a local naval force." To no policy ever laid down by Sir Wilfrid Laurier did he adhere with such single-minded consistency as to this. The period of contemplation had now lasted for seven years, and if he had had his way it would have gradually merged into a con-

dition of perpetual Nirvana. The fact is that Sir Wilfrid Laurier scented danger in naval defence. Its necessary inherent conditions led in the direction of organically united Imperialism, of all things by him dreaded the most, because, once brought forward in a concrete issue, it was bound to wreck his party, to which, after a generation had passed, the "alien annexation and independent elements" still adhered, and in whose councils they were very strong.

In 1909, however, Great Britain was thoroughly disturbed. The situation was highly dangerous, as the debate over the naval estimates had shown. One of the first steps taken was to call the overseas dominions into council. They were invited to assume a proportionate share of the burden of Imperial defence, but first they were to be shown the why and wherefore, and have laid before them for their consideration the crisis in which the Empire was involved and its safety threatened. Surely this exactly met the supposed demand made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in 1900:

> "If you want us to help you call us to your councils; if you want us to take

part in wars, let us share not only the burdens but the responsibilities and duties as well."

But in effect, Sir Wilfrid Laurier had said a dozen times in the interval, that Canada did not desire to be called to any Imperial Council, and that joint action if any must be the result of fortuitous agreement of separate councils. If the whole Empire said "war," except Canada, which said "No war," then Canada was to have the option of abstaining from the fight. This is Sir Wilfrid Laurier's infamous doctrine of "optional neutrality," a phrase which had the power, I am glad to say, of making him extremely angry, because it too nearly describes his attitude and that of his party. It is purely and simply separatism. The first overt expression of this unconsciously treasonable attitude of separatism was shown at this Imperial Defence Conference on the question of naval defence. It is all very well to say that, except for making Canada look ridiculous, the consequences were negligible. Apart from the chagrin which being made to appear ridiculous causes in self-respecting people, the con-

sequences might have been by no means negligible. It is quite easy to suppose that more German commerce-destroying squadrons and single vessels might have escaped from the vigilance of the British fleet than actually did, and that we might have seen our ports virtually blockaded and our commerce threatened without being able to lift a finger, and have required strength drawn from the British fleet where it was most sorely needed in order to protect us. What was there to prevent a flying squadron from doing to Montreal what the British did to Washington in the war of 1812? Certainly no naval defensive preparations on Canada's part. Canada went to this Conference with apparently the deliberate intention of not doing what she was advised to do just because she was advised to do it, thus making a grand political demonstration of autonomy like a petted child. When I say Canada, I mean Canada as represented by the then government. The rage of the country was deep, but it had nothing to vent itself upon, for to many the question was remote from their immediate interests and regarded simply as an incident in party warfare.

The Conference met in London late in July. Its proceedings were not reported, as naturally much that was confidential was imparted and discussed. On the military side its deliberations were of secondary importance. They were aimed at the standardization so far as possible of the military service and equipment of the different parts of the Empire. Nobody has ever dreamed of the Dominions maintaining a permanent body of troops available for expeditionary service. And local requirements, thanks to the command of the sea, a fact which should never be forgotten, are not nor are ever likely to be exigent. The war also has only demonstrated what was fairly well known before, that, given an organized nucleus and competent teachers, regiments can be duplicated indefinitely, which lack nothing of the characteristics of the best soldiers, except those qualities which experience of actual war can alone bestow. Hence volunteering is the most economical and efficacious method of raising troops for Empire defence. Whether there should not be a certain compulsory military training at the back of voluntary active service

is of course a different question. It certainly would seem as reasonable as it is democratic that every man should know how to defend his country and the Empire if need arises.

Naval defence, however, occupies for the British Empire at least, a very different position from defence on land. The command of the sea is essential to the continuance, development and prosperity of the British Empire and of all those who live under its flag. It was with reason, therefore, that the great interest in the Imperial Defence Conference should centre round this question as of paramount importance. The British Admiralty presented a memorandum to the Conference, which for lucidity, conciseness and logical reasonableness, leaves nothing to be desired in a state paper. Not only so, but the war has demonstrated that this memorandum was drawn with accurate foresight of what actual war conditions were bound to be. It recited two alternative methods of assistance by the overseas dominions to Imperial naval defence, not only embracing everything that could be of value, but excluding everything else as valueless:

"If the problem of Imperial naval defence was considered merely as a problem of naval strategy, it would be found that the greatest output of strength for a given expenditure is obtained by the maintenance of a single navy with a concomitant unity of training and unity of command. The maximum of power would be gained if all parts of the Empire contributed according to their needs and resources to the maintenance of a British navy. It has, however, long been recognized that in defending conditions under which the naval forces of the Empire should be developed, other conditions than those of strategy alone must be taken into account. The circumstances of the various overseas dominions in respect to their population, wealth and power, and their different environment and individual and national sentiment, must all be borne in mind. A simple contribution of money or material may be to one dominion the most acceptable form in which to contribute to Imperial defence; another, while ready to provide

local naval forces and to place them at the disposal of the crown in the case of war, may wish to lay foundations upon which a future navy of its own could be raised.

"In the opinion of the Admiralty, a Dominion government desirous of creating a navy should aim at forming a distinct fleet unit, the smallest unit being one which, while manageable in time of peace, is capable of being used in its component parts in time of war."

The Admiralty scouts the idea of defence flotillas consisting of torpedo craft and submarines, because "such flotillas cannot co-operate on the high seas in the wider duties of the protection of trade and preventing attacks from hostile cruisers and squadrons." The memorandum goes on to say that the fleet unit to be aimed at should consist of at least the following:

"One armored cruiser of the new Indomitable class, three unarmored cruisers of the Bristol class, six destroyers and three submarines with necessary

auxiliary, such as depot and storeships, etc."

The Admiralty also advised with insistence that an armored cruiser of the Indomitable or Dreadnought type should be the first vessel built in commencing the formation of a fleet unit. The rest of the memorandum dealt with complement, cost, provision for ship-building and repairing and standardization. Nothing could be clearer. Either of the alternatives, contribution or a fleet unit in local waters, would be of great advantage. Nothing else would be of any advantage at all.

Earlier in the year, when the dangerous situation first disclosed itself, Australia and New Zealand each came forward with the offer of a battleship. However, upon the Conference taking place, Australia accepted the idea of a fleet unit with alacrity, while New Zealand retained her policy of contribution. But as Great Britain contributed to the Australian fleet unit, and as the New Zealand Dreadnought was designated to the China squadron, the ultimate result so far as defence was

concerned, was much the same. South Africa was indefinite for the very good reason that the delegates did not represent what would be the government of the day at the time of confirmation. Newfoundland continued her policy of contribution. Canada negatived the proposals of the Admiralty absolutely and in toto. By this action Canada (and it is bitter to have to say "Canada," when it was not really Canada at all) cut off the possibility of her being of any assistance whatever to the naval defence of the Empire, as the war has all too sadly shown. It was the Liberal government's act, but it is our shame nevertheless. Anything in the way of a Canadian navy was to be no more than a toy, a political sop to soothe the deeply loyal Imperial sentiment of the country, while the hands of unconscious traitors clawed feverishly at the cords which still bind the Empire together. I may be wrong, but I am firmly convinced just the same, that the feeling aroused by its naval policy was the beginning of the end of the Laurier administration. It certainly opened men's minds to perceive the Imperially disin-

tegrative tendency of the fiscal policy which proved the government's ruin. This was especially true of Western Canada, where the "sordid means and mercenary proffers" of reciprocity made their strongest appeal, but where also there is a perfervid enthusiasm for the new Imperial idea which is the national fruit of colonial loyalty.

It was necessary, however, for political reasons that Canada should do something, should have a navy in fact. It was equally necessary for political reasons that Canada should have a navy that would not fight. So the obvious compromise was to secure a navy, but to secure one that could not fight. With the Niobe and the Rainbow, the constitutional question of whether they ought to go out to battle with the forces of the Empire could never arise. There was no danger of their ever leaving Canadian waters, for on the open sea they possessed absolutely no means of defence against an armored cruiser. Nor could they defend a commercial trade route. Their known presence near one would only render it more dangerous.

Not only was it necessary for Canada to have a navy, but the pretence of consultation with the Admiralty must be kept up. The Admiralty had thrown up Canada as a bad job. We had refused the policy of contribution, we had declined the idea of a fleet unit or anything in the nature

of the beginning of one. The Admiralty had declared flotillas of torpedo boat destroyers and submarines useless by themselves and had also laid it down that:

> "As the armored cruiser is the essential part of the fleet unit it is important that an Indomitable of the Dreadnought type should be the first vessel to be built in commencing the formation of a fleet unit."

In dealing with the then Canadian government the Admiralty was far too candid, because it presupposed willingness. If it had been more artful, it might have trapped Canada into something useful, but by plainly indicating the most useless things that could be attempted it determined the Laurier naval policy.

In the private confabulation between the Canadian delegates and the Admiralty the refined sarcasm by which the Admiralty reduced the question from what Canada was going to do to what Canada was willing to spend, has been lost on the dull wits of most politicians:

> "It was presented on the part of the Admiralty that it would be difficult to make any suggestions or to formulate any plans without knowing approximately the amount Canada was prepared to spend."

Having discovered this, the Admiralty promptly put the money in its own pocket and handed over to Canada an equivalent amount of naval junk, leaving to the Canadian Liberal party the task of solving by itself the political conundrum of when a navy is not a navy. This was probably as good a way as any of making the best out of a bad job. The conundrum was not easy of solution, but Sir Wilfrid Laurier's best attempt was that a navy is a navy when it is at sea on the dry land of Ontario or the prairies, but is not a navy in the tidal waters of Quebec.

By 1910, or more strictly by the session of 1909-1910, the long period of meditative contemplation by the government which had begun in 1902 was over. Canada was embarked upon the acquisition or production of a navy. The matter was mentioned

in the King's Speech and came up in the Debate on the address. Sir Wilfrid Laurier began at once to develop in connection with the navy his amazing and monstrous doctrine of "optional neutrality," a phrase to which he has the strongest objection because it expresses in words what his doctrine implies in fact, namely, complete independence of the British Empire without the dignity of independence, but coupled with a connection absolutely abhorrent to any right-thinking man. What is understood by self-government is clear enough. It is autonomous representative government in all the affairs which concern us alone. But in affairs which do not concern us alone absolute autonomy is impossible. It is incompatible with union. The provinces of Canada have autonomous government in their own affairs, but they have not autonomous government in relation to national matters. The assertion of autonomy by any one province in national affairs would be absolutely incompatible with Confederation and would mean a disruption of the Dominion. Yet so far as Quebec or Manitoba is concerned,

while their government in national matters is not autonomous as regards them as provinces, it is representative, and as regards the Dominion autonomous. Now making war or peace is absolutely incompetent to any part of a consistent whole. These are functions belonging only to separate, independent and sovereign powers. Very good, but the government of Great Britain makes war and peace for the Empire, and is only representative of a part of the Empire. There is anomaly here, but it exists far more in form than in substance. Who in reality are the representatives who make war or peace? The press, the pulpit, the merchants, the bankers and often the inarticulate bellowing of an outraged people, whose will King, Lords and Commons engross and stamp with such particularity as the time gives them leisure for. This anomaly in the Imperial constitution does not affect the reality that the Empire either makes war as a whole, makes peace as a whole, and makes preparations for defence as a whole, or is not a United Empire. There are three ways of dealing with this constitutional

anomaly. One is to declare it affords a reason for independence and the disruption of the Empire, and to set those as the goal of national aspiration. Whether such an attitude be technically called treason or rebellion or what not, it is at least honorable and straightforward. Another is to modify the responsibility for the direction of the foreign policy of the Empire to the British parliament and the British people alone, and extend it to the self-governing Dominions. This is already being done in fact, and the Empire is feeling its way to a modification of relations between Great Britain and the Dominions which will give the movement in this direction a constitutional form to suit the substance. The third is to let the anomaly alone, and leave it to moulder with the other anomalous figments which ornament the British constitution without injuring its virility or destroying its usefulness, and to go ahead and fight when fighting is necessary, sending constitutional legalities to the right-about like the mists that at first obscure the rising sun. This last has been the course adopted by Canada in the war with honor to herself

and advantage to the Empire. But it is well not to permit such anomalies to remain too long, as upon secondary occasions, and with smaller men in charge, they are likely to give rise to trouble.

But what is to be thought of the attitude of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal party on this matter? In the first place they declared that the existing constitutional relations between Great Britain and the Dominions were perfect and "could not be improved" (Laurier's own words), and they strenuously resisted any efforts to change them. Then they turned round and advanced those constitutional relations as a reason for non-combatancy in time of war, lest the autonomy of Canada be infringed. If this attitude was inspired by a hankering after complete independence and severance, it was the method of attaining it of a treacherous coward and a sneak. If it had its roots in a desire to evade the responsibility of defence and its monetary burden, then it placed Canada in a position inconceivably low, making of her a harlot among the nations, ready to enjoy protection and the luxury of peace without the responsibility

of maintaining it, and equally ready to become the prize of the conqueror should her present protector become bankrupt or enfeebled, while at the same time casting sidelong glances at the "mercenary proffers" of a powerful neighbor.

In the debate on the address in the session of 1909-1910, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, answering the objection that a Canadian navy would involve participation in Imperial wars, said:

> "Need I say to my honorable friend that whether we have such a navy or not, we do not lose our right to self-government, that if we do have a navy, that navy will go to no war unless the parliament of Canada, including the honorable gentleman, choose to send it."

The declaration that the "right to self-government" bestows a choice as to whether Canada shall or shall not participate in the burden of Imperial defence, to be exercised in the case of actual war, is a declaration of independence and withdrawal from the Empire, and of dishonorable withdrawal at that. The overt action of "cutting the

painter" is to come when the Empire is in danger, and as Sir Wilfrid Laurier made quite clear afterwards, is to be governed by whether Canada is threatened by the danger or not. When the Naval Bill was brought down the Governor-General-in-Council was substituted for parliament with provision for the immediate summons of parliament to endorse or repudiate the government's action.

This is Sir Wilfrid Laurier's famous doctrine of "optional neutrality." He objected very strongly to the use of the word "neutrality" in this connection. He was quite right. Neutrality is a position which may be occupied only by a free, independent and sovereign state in the exercise of its prerogative as such. The word is too honorable for Canada's proposed position. If Canada were to have an option of remaining neutral in an Imperial war, then the only way compatible with self-respect would be to place Canada here and now in the position of a free, independent and sovereign state, and not assert a right to do so when the Empire is in danger.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier waxed very wroth at any one's considering him so lacking in knowledge of constitutional law as even to hint at "optional neutrality." It was simply a question of law that when the Empire was at war Canada was at war. And then he expounded the exquisite simplicity of his real doctrine. It may be called "optional" or "conditional" "non-combatancy," and all that can be said about it is that if "optional neutrality" is bad, it is a thousand times worse. By a declaration of neutrality we would at once sever connection with the British Empire, choosing the appropriate moment when it was in distress and danger. But this "non-combatancy," according to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was an option inherent in the right of self-government, and the condition of its exercise was to be whether the territories or lives of Canadians were threatened. He illustrates by the case of a war between the Empire and Japan. Canada would be compelled to participate to the extent of protecting her Pacific Coast. But if the war were made between the Empire and Russia the question of Canadian

participation would be very doubtful. This appalling doctrine means in simple language that self-government gives us the right to take leave of absence from the Empire when it is in difficulty and danger, so far as sharing these is concerned, returning to it of course when the danger is over. Or if there is no Empire left to which to return, either taking shelter under the protection of the United States or becoming the prize of the victor in the fight. I make no attempt to point out the infamy of such a position because to adequately characterize it would require the invention of a new language. English is too feeble.

If this work were not already dropsical with citation I would quote largely from the debates on the Naval Bill that I might not be accused of over-statement. But in one passage the doctrine of "optional non-combatancy" is very clearly and succinctly laid down. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is dealing with the question of constitutional law involved in the conception of neutrality, and admits that when the Empire is at war Canada is constitutionally at war. He then goes on:

> "It does not follow however that because England is at war we should necessarily take part in the war. . . . If England is at war we are at war, and liable to attack. I do not say that we shall always be attacked, neither do I say that we would take part in all the wars of England. That is a matter which must be determined by circumstances upon which the Canadian parliament will have to pronounce, and will have to decide in its own best judgment."

I am perfectly well aware that the great bulk of the Liberal party had no adequate conception of the depths of humiliation and disgrace unto which both itself and the country were being inveigled, and regarded the whole matter as part of the casuistry of politics. To them the naval question seemed more or less academic. Therefore for any bitterness of language I am willing to apologize to their hearts, with a strong reservation in respect of their heads. It is by this sort of unconscious treachery most states have been undone.

The Imperial Conference of 1911

I am tempted to pursue the naval question to its fatal close in 1913, when the Liberal party gained a party triumph in the Senate, rendering abortive the frenzied efforts of the Borden government to repair damages, and closing the door finally against any participation by Canada in the naval defence of the Empire in the war. But this last act of treachery may be better left perhaps to its own time, because I have often noticed that when the guiding star of chronology is lost sight of, the result is apt to leave the impression of an intellectual jumble.

Two out of three of the main heads of discussion were eliminated from the 1911 Conference. Imperial defence had been forestalled by the Conference of 1909, and the difference between the British government and the governments of the Dominions on the trade question still remained. The war has, however, awakened Great Britain to the realization that commerce is not an end in itself, to be pursued irrespectively

of its bearing upon national integrity and self-defence. That Great Britain's traditional commercial policy of free trade acted powerfully as a nerve tonic and stimulant to Germany, has not increased its attractiveness in British eyes.

The chief matter which occupied the Conference was the constitutional relations existing between Great Britain and the Dominions, which became subject of discussion through a motion made by Sir Joseph Ward. This motion contemplated the foundation of an Imperial Council of State and an Imperial Parliament of Defence representative of all the self-governing portions of the Empire, Great Britain included. The spirit and intention of Sir Joseph Ward were right, for unless a beginning is made in the discussion of definite plans there can never be the evolution of the best practicable. It is fortunate, however, that nothing specific was done or attempted. No governing machinery of the kind could have been installed and in working order before the war broke out, and it would only have had the effect of making the confusion which attended the earlier stages of the war

worse confounded, although such a thing is hardly conceivable. If it may be said that the spirit and intention of Sir Joseph Ward were right and had a true Imperial ring, the same cannot be said of the way in which the proposal was received by Mr. Asquith and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Mr. Asquith said that it "was opposed to the fundamental principles on which the Empire had been built up and carried on." Now if Mr. Asquith knows of any fundamental principle on which the British Empire has been built up and carried on, it is something which he has kept very carefully to himself, and, in common justice to the profound ignorance of any such thing on the part of all his fellow-citizens, he should not have done so. Sir Wilfrid Laurier remarked that "it would reduce the governments of the different parts of the Empire to the condition of dumb agents in providing the revenues apportioned by the proposed parliament." It may be pointed out to Sir Wilfrid Laurier that to reduce any known government or member thereof to the condition of "a dumb agent" is an absolute impossibility, except by a surgical operation, and that if he

desired, as he did, to throw cold water upon Sir Joseph Ward's proposals, he should have been careful to avoid an expression apt to be regarded by many as an inducement in their favor. However, on the action of two such ponderous extinguishers, the little candle lighted by New Zealand was soon put out, and nothing was done to modify relations of which Sir Wilfrid Laurier had said that they "could not be improved," because they provided him with a plausible excuse for actions which were hostile and treacherous to any real conception of an Empire.

At the Conference, however, one step of prime importance was taken. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, presented to its members in secret a survey of the foreign policy of the Empire, thus constituting in effect a cabinet of the Empire, and greatly enhancing the consultative position of the Conference. As it was put by Mr. Fisher:

> "Hitherto we have been negotiating with the Government of the United Kingdom at the portals of the household.

> You have thought it wise, sir, to take the representatives of the Dominions into the inner councils of the nation and discuss the affairs of the Empire as they affect each and all of us."

It is a matter of speculation, of course, to what extent the imminence of the German menace was present in Sir Edward Grey's mind and words, but it could hardly have been absent. Yet, unless it was, the delegates to that Conference carried home with them a responsibility of which the loss of office by no means divested them. The bearing of this possibility, nay almost certainty, on the conduct of Sir Wilfrid Laurier will appear later.

In 1915 no Conference was summoned "on account of the war." The phrase "on account of the war" is like charity, it covers a multitude of sins. Except indirectly, the war was not the true cause why there was no Conference held. The plain truth is that the front drawing-room of the United Kingdom was not fit for the reception of visitors, even near relatives, and so the Conference was postponed.

If we look back over the twenty years of conferring, the results of it all seem meagre enough, and they are more meagre than they should have been. For this, one great reason is that Canada, as represented by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his party, was never at one in spirit with the representatives of the other Dominions and with the Imperial receptivity in Great Britain. Why? Because, for reasons peculiar to the maintenance of his domestic power in Canada, he sympathized with, feared and catered to the "alien annexationist and independent elements" in Canada herself.

It must be remembered, however, that twenty years is hardly a day in the history of an Empire, if it is an organic growth and not a product manufactured by the sword, and in those years it is easy to discern that the Imperial idea has grown more definite and distinct.

The Conferences and the range of study they compelled did much to develop, if they did not inspire, the sane and lofty Imperialism of Joseph Chamberlain. They also did much to define and measure the obstacles to be overcome before organic

unity would be realized, and they indicated, if they did not measure (because it is immeasurable), the dynamic force in the river of destiny only waiting to be controlled to remove those obstacles. If more had been done, if the Empire had not presented externally such a spectacle of disunion and lack of harmony, the apparent paralysis of dead tissue without a principle of growth, there might have been no war. But the war came, bursting the chrysalis under which the great organism was slowly maturing, and revealing the British Empire as it is in truth, united in spirit, aim and power, "mewing her mighty youth and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam."

Reciprocity and Laurier's Fall

In 1911 Canada was nearly startled out of her wits by the sudden adoption by the government of a policy of reciprocity in natural products with the United States. When we look back upon the reciprocity campaign in Canada, which led to the downfall of the Laurier government, our only feeling is one of astonishment. It is reminiscent of one of those peculiar popular crazes, like the South Sea Bubble or the Tulip mania, which occasionally affect whole peoples, otherwise quite sane and sensible. The storm was fortunately soon over, and it had one good effect, it showed to the people of Canada, in a way they could firmly grasp, the complete indifference of the government and the Liberal party to all national and Imperial considerations.

The policy of reciprocity seems to have had its origin in the United States (I am speaking of 1911). The people there were seeking, with a good deal more eagerness than intelligence, to diagnose the cause of and find a remedy for the high cost of living. The idea of permitting Canadian natural

products to enter the country free presented the possibility of a palliative, which might be popular, even if it were not ultimately effective. As a matter of fact, on account of land speculation and the vast absorption of labor and capital in railway construction and building, the prices of most of the commodities concerned were inflated in Canada, and she was, temporarily perhaps, a large importer, instead of exporter. But facts are of small importance when the mind is delivered bound to a fixed idea.

In the United States also the idea of getting a cheap and abundant supply of raw material was very attractive to manufacturers, particularly when they could calculate, with reasonable certainty, upon selling the manufactured articles back to the Canadian consumer. It is here that economic considerations, never wholly distinct, began to merge into those more usually called political. It has always appeared to me as strange that its professors should have called a science "political" economy, while apparently eager to demonstrate that political action had nothing to do with the matters with which it

dealt except to leave them alone, and that these matters have properly no connection with politics. In Canada, the purely economic arguments in favor of reciprocity in natural products were self-contradictory. They were that by free imports the cost of living in the cities was to be reduced, and that by free exports the price to the producer of exactly the same commodities going to the same market in which the imports were to be purchased, was to be increased.

It may be of interest to those who have to deal with the occasional aberrations of democracies to know that it required the expenditure of much money, ink and lung power to combat such rubbish as that. The economic argument in Canada, however, narrowed down to the advocacy of a free interchange in wheat, which meant, so far as Canada was concerned, a so-called wider market for wheat. That two countries each with an exportable surplus of wheat which must be sold in the same market, could benefit each other by a free interchange of the commodity between themselves is, of course, an unthinkable

idea in the abstract. But alas, there remained the fact that wheat was often at a higher price in Minneapolis than in Winnipeg. The "spread" frequently existed for long periods, and often was very considerable. Some of the resultant confusion of ideas was due to the fact of wheat's being graded down in Winnipeg and sold on sample in Minneapolis. That is to say, in Winnipeg wheat that was almost No. 1 would be graded No. 2 and sold on the grade quotation whereas on the other market it would bring the price of No. 1 less a fraction. This certainly provided variations of which a none too scrupulous orator could make effective use. But at the same time I am satisfied that there is often a "spread" in price varying in duration and amount between Winnipeg and Minneapolis in wheat of the same value in favor of Minneapolis (in both markets wheat is quoted at equivalent shipping points at the head of the Lakes). The reason for this apparent anomaly is that there is frequently a demand for hard spring wheat by the Eastern millers in the United States for mixing purposes,

which the Northwest, the only place it is grown, is unable to promptly satisfy. But this occasional excess of demand for this particular kind of wheat bears about the same relation to the Canadian supply of it as zero to infinity. So that if the Eastern miller could get it free of duty from Canada the price would immediately fall to the export price and no more, while for every bushel thus absorbed by the American market, a bushel would be released from the American market (not as good wheat, perhaps, but quantitatively the same) to compete with Canadian wheat on the export market.

The question of reciprocity, however, was not to be decided in Canada upon the point whether under it the Canadian farmer would get a few cents a bushel more for his wheat or not. It is fortunate that this was so. Because if there is a widespread idea that the three angles of a triangle taken together make two right angles and a half, and if price quotations buttressed by political animus and acrimony can be cited to support the idea, only time and experience can abolish the illusion. No

patriots deserve better of a grateful country than the band of anti-reciprocity crusaders in the wheat regions of Canada. It causes a smile now to think of the dumb despair to which an argument of this kind would reduce one: "If I could sell my wheat in Minneapolis I would get so much more, but I cannot because of the American duty. Well, if that duty were removed I could get their price," and the apparent impossibility of driving home except with an axe the somewhat obvious conclusion that if a duty caused a premium over the world price on a certain kind of wheat, upon the removal of that duty the premium would vanish.

What the Americans were after in reciprocity is easily recognizable. They wanted Canadian raw material of all kinds, and Canadian wheat to revive their export flour-milling industry, and the Canadian market for their trade in manufactured goods of all kinds. They wanted the business of Canada—to be the banker, broker, merchant and manufacturer for Canada. And if the reciprocity pact had been carried they would have got what they wanted. Avenues of business would

have been opened up north and south (quite a good thing in itself provided they did not supplant and prevent avenues of business from being maintained and developed east and west from Vancouver to Liverpool). The process of reciprocity could not have been arrested at natural products. The producers of Canada who were selling raw material would sooner or later have demanded that they should get what they took in exchange free of Canadian duty. Nor could the demand have been refused, because so many people and communities would have become dependent upon the reciprocal commerce established, that its gradual extension could not have been arrested. So would have been developed a race of hewers of wood and drawers of water for a civilization alien to Canada, and opposed to all the possibilities resident in the idea of the Empire, developed upon the ruins of the National policy, the essential line of defence of Canada's independent existence.

The situation was put with great clearness by President Taft:

> "I have said that this was a critical time in the solution of the question of

> reciprocity. It is critical, because unless it is now decided favorably to reciprocity, it is exceedingly probable that no such opportunity will ever again come to the United States. The forces that are at work in England and in Canada to separate her by a Chinese Wall from the United States, and make her part of an Imperial commercial band reaching from England around the world to England again by a system of preferential tariffs, will derive an impetus from the rejection of this treaty, and if we would have reciprocity with all the advantages that I have described, and that I earnestly and sincerely believe will follow its adoption, we must take it now or give it up forever."

The political or, it might be better to say, dynastic motive does not lurk very far behind language of that description. But in the language of Mr. Champ Clark, at that time what we would call parliamentary leader of the Democratic party in the United States, this motive is placed in the forefront of his advocacy of the reciprocity pact. He says:

> "I am for it. I hope to see the day when the American flag will float over every square foot of the British North American possessions clear to the North Pole. They are people of our blood. They speak our language. Their institutions are much like ours. They are trained in the arts of self-government. My judgment is that if the treaty of 1854 had never been abrogated the chances of a consolidation of these two countries would have been much greater than they are now."

It may be noticed in passing that in so far as the American language is exclusively American we try not to speak it as much as possible. All languages must change in time and place. But they need not degenerate, they may be enriched and improved. But the American language is quite visibly becoming a degenerate variant of English. As to Canadian and American institutions, in so far as they resemble each other, they are a common inheritance from Great Britain. Those invented in the United States appear to be singularly defective and are hardly endurable to the people of the

country themselves. It is a pleasant compliment to be told that we are trained in the arts of self-government, but it is doubtful on the facts whether the training is not as yet very imperfect, and the compliment is entirely vitiated by its source, for one of the main objections which Canadians have to closer political affiliations with the United States is that Americans appeal to us as absolutely untrained in the arts of self-government, and not only so, but to have set up the political doctrine that such discipline is not merely unnecessary, but a derogation of freedom. But whatever may be said of the naivete of his conceptions, there can be no doubt as to what Mr. Champ Clark both desired and expected of the reciprocity pact.

The Congressional record also contains a delightful conversation between this gentleman and a witness before a committee, which is ingenuous to the last degree:

"Mr. Clark—Nearly all those who are raising wheat in the Northwest British possessions are Americans who have gone over there, are they not?

Mr. Henry—A great many of them are; yes, sir.

Mr. Clark—Nearly the whole outfit?

Mr. Henry—Yes, sir.

Mr. Clark—Fixing to bring that country into the United States, are they not?

Mr. Henry—I cannot speak for them.

The Chairman—I do not think you ought to give it away if they are.

Mr. Clark—That is exactly what they will do; exactly what they did with Texas."

There were no evidences of any conspiracy among American farmers in the Canadian Northwest, possibly because they had come from the United States, and were of that type of farmer whose chief enthusiasm is for his acres and his bank account. No, the men who were endeavoring to force Canada into a compact which could have no other than the effect desired and anticipated by Mr. Clark, in not only his and Mr. Taft's opinion, but in that of every American who gave the matter a thought, were Canadians, at whose head were Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the leaders of the Liberal party. The press of the United States was almost unanimous. The newspapers were not unanimous in supporting reciprocity.

Some opposed and some supported it, but among those who deigned to lift their heads from the consideration of the private interests from which they derived their sustenance, there was little or no difference of opinion as to its result. How could there be, with American experience of the cohesive effects of free trade within a highly protected area? I content myself with one quotation from the New York American, which puts most succinctly the method and end of the policy:

> "The reciprocity agreement will check the east and west development of Canada and make that country a business part of the United States, with the lines of traffic running more to the north and south. Reciprocity will really cut Canada into two countries. The section east of Lake Superior will merge with the New England States and the west will become part of the west of the United States."

I confess to having a fixed idea that the reciprocity propaganda in the United States was, if not inspired by, at least fomented

by German intrigue and subsidized by German gold, and a strong suspicion that German influence was visible in the Canadian campaign, and that German money was siphoned into Canadian politics in the mysterious way in which such campaign philanthropies are carried out. This idea is not susceptible of proof, and the mental attitude of the Canadian soldier who attributed the loss of his big toe from the effects of an ingrowing toe nail, to the fact that the surgeon who first operated in the attempt to save his toe had a German name, may be belligerently effective, but is otherwise undesirable and unscientific. Yet my suspicion, while not susceptible of proof, is not wholly unreasonable.

In the first place, it is extremely unlikely that the Germans would overlook an opportunity of helping home any such disruptive wedge in the British Empire. They are tremendously patriotic Irish Home Rulers, in fact the Irish-Americans of the fast-dying flatulent type and the German-Americans are in close political alliance. They have also taken a vast interest in Mexico, which they have rather skilfully

used as a hysteria absorbent in the case of the United States. That the reciprocity pact would detach Canada from Great Britain was quite clear to the Teutonic mind, which constituted a strong inducement to Germany to give it a helping hand. In the second place, the most enthusiastic advocates of reciprocity in the United States have proved themselves neutral to the point of pro-German sympathy. In the third place, whether the Germans were taking a hand in this game or not, it certainly showed in the way the cards were played that mixture of ingenuity and simplicity which is especially characteristic of such German manœuvres. To a German the dallying by any portion of the British Empire with a policy of that kind could only be the result of hidden disaffection and rancorous enmity to Great Britain and the British connection. That it should be openly pressed forward could only mean to him that the majority of the Canadian people detested the British Empire, because to the German mind such a campaign could only be conducted by bullets, unless its opponents were actually cowed into sub-

mission and acquiescence. He is Teutonically incapable of thinking otherwise. Therein lies the great weakness of the German in dealing with other peoples. He thinks that German modes of thought are the best, like every other nation. But he insists upon applying his modes of thought to the mental processes of other peoples, and when they do not act in accordance with his deductions, he angrily declares them insane barbarians, incapable of Kultur, and therefore removable. So that the German is apt to create out of his own brain the stone wall against which he subsequently runs his head with praiseworthy devotion. Nor could the German mind grasp the notion of Great Britain's permitting Canada to declare for commercial continentalism, except on the ground that she felt herself too weak to prevent it. Consequently there was little need to help in persuading Canada. Her consent might be taken for granted, if the United States took action. The fact that what carried reciprocity in the United States, its inevitable political result, was exactly what defeated it in Canada, would be Germanically explained

by a temporary victory for Canada's jealousy of the United States over her enmity to Great Britain, for if there is anything more remarkable than the methods by which the German mind arrives at a prepossession, it is the tenacity with which it maintains it in the face of facts.

Germany went into this war with the mental picture of a Great Britain torn by internal dissensions, and Canada standing sullen and detached, ready for a neutrality which would be a declaration of independence. And it must be confessed that, so far as Canada is concerned, the language and actions of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the leaders of the Liberal party gave great color to this view. In fact, if their language and actions had been deliberately calculated to deceive and delude Germany they could not have been better adapted to the purpose. But they were not so calculated. Therefore, from the rejection of the Chamberlain overtures, through the attempted neutrality in the Boer war, the sustained attitude of recusancy in the Imperial Conferences, the refusal to participate in Imperial naval defence, the declared doc-

trine of optional neutrality or non-combatancy, up to the adoption of commercial continentalism, they were, objectively considered and apart from the motives and intention of the actors, treason, and double-barrelled treason at that. They were treason to the fabric of Confederation which had given Canada national unity and integrity, and in whose method lay the secret birth of a United Empire; they were treason to the national policy of Canada, which by vast labor and sacrifice had overcome geographical disabilities and bound the commercial life of Canada fast in national and Imperial channels; they were treason to the great conception of the Empire which is elevating the character of British subjects, not only in Great Britain and Canada, but the world over, and bestowing upon them that lofty vision of what is to be, which is the grand incentive to effort and sacrifice, with their commensurate achievement.

The Borden Naval Policy

In September of 1911 the reciprocity pact was indignantly rejected by the Canadian people, and the Laurier government went out of power. The naval question was not prominent in the campaign, but the thorough disgust and contempt which had been stirred up by the naval policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier had loosened his hold upon vast numbers of the adherents of the Liberal party, and rendered them apt to suspect a similar betrayal of Canadian honor in the sphere of economics. There is no doubt in my mind that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's shocking doctrine of "optional non-combatancy" lost him thousands of votes and saved the situation in the West, where the "mercenary proffers" of reciprocity, however delusive, made their strongest appeal.

This election had abolished reciprocity. What was opposed to it was not an alternative policy, but the economic status quo.

It therefore ceased to occupy the minds of the government and people of Canada with the same suddenness with which it

had first disturbed them. This left Imperial naval defence and Canada's participation therein in the forefront of political issues. In the campaign address of Sir R. L. Borden, his position, and that of the party he led, was very clearly laid down. The following language cannot be misunderstood:

> "I hold that the plan of the government contemplates the creation of a naval force that will be absolutely useless in time of war and therefore of no practical benefit to Canada or the Empire. The more it is considered, the more does it become evident that the whole naval plan of the government is an unfortunate blunder."

The position, then, of Sir R. L. Borden was entirely negative, nor could it well be otherwise. The true relations between the Laurier government and the British Admiralty, on whose shoulders the burden of defending the Empire on the sea in case of war would fall, were not public, in deference to the necessity of preserving outwardly the domestic amenity of the British Empire.

But they were pretty well guessed at, and until some better understanding was reached between the Canadian government and the Admiralty, no definite plan of action could well be adopted. Unlike the question of reciprocity, it was not enough to condemn the naval policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and abolish the tinpot navy which had been its result. Definite substantive action must be put in its stead. But what action could not reasonably be decided without intimate consultation with the Admiralty, however congruous it might be with the common process of human nature to attempt the repair of one blunder by perpetrating another, and with the peculiar Laurier idea of autonomy, which always summoned the world to admire the independence of its attitude by the simple expedient of standing upon its head.

In March of 1912 Sir R. L. Borden went to England for the purpose of securing such advice as would aid him and his government in determining their action in Imperial naval defence. The result was that at the next session of parliament it was proposed to supply three capital ships

to the Imperial navy, at a cost of $35,000,000. The bill was based on the ground that the Empire confronted a naval emergency, in which immediate action of the most effective kind was advisable. It was supported by one memorandum from the Admiralty, which was brought down in the House, and by another which contained secret information as to the state of Europe and the extreme danger of war presumably, which was communicated by consent to Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the members of his late cabinet.

The Admiralty memorandum, which was brought down and thus published, is a long and very carefully-drawn document, but the effective clause upon which the action of the Borden government was taken is as follows:

> "The Prime Minister of the Dominion, having inquired in what form any immediate aid that Canada might give would be most effective, we have no hesitation in answering, after a prolonged consideration of all the circumstances, that it is desirable that such

> aid should include the provision of a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war which science can build or money supply."

The bill was not brought down as embodying the permanent naval policy of Canada, but to meet the crisis in which Canada and the Empire found themselves at the time. It is easily visible, through the discussion which followed, that Sir R. L. Borden contemplated a permanent naval policy for Canada which would develop the local naval resources of the country. Nor was there anything inconsistent in this with the proposed emergency action. With regard to the provision of a fleet unit in the Atlantic and Pacific, quite obviously the ultimate aim of Canadian policy, the Admiralty had laid down in 1909 that the armored cruiser, being the essential part of the fleet unit, it was important that an Indomitable of the Dreadnought type should be the first vessel to be built. Well, then, Canada would have the basis of two fleet units, even if one boat were sunk by the enemy. Nor was it open to anyone to question the very

great Imperial value of the development of shipbuilding facilities in Canada. As to a permanent naval policy of Canada, the situation was simply this, that, as regards Canadian construction, the building of Dreadnoughts could only be the fruit of a long period of constructional development, while as regards naval effectiveness, it was the first prime necessity. Therefore, with a storm cloud hanging over the Empire, gravid with the menace of its disruption, and, as events proved, about to burst in a short year and a half, we had to have the Dreadnoughts, and we had to have them quickly; nor did it matter where they were built so long as we could get them and pay for them. We had no hundred years of peace to rely upon in order to develop a navy built in our own yards. That constituted the emergency. As I have pointed out before, the possibility of an emergency came into existence with the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War and the launching of the first Dreadnought in 1906. It became patent in 1909, when Germany was engaged in naval competition with the Empire, designed to force it into neutrality through

fear of subordination on the sea. In 1912 it had become painfully acute, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier must have known when he committed his party to opposition to the government's proposed action, and suggested a new naval policy of his own of two naval units built in Canada, manned in Canada and maintained by Canada. This was all very well, if it had been possible for Canada to build navies with the same ease as he could produce sonorous phrases and irridescent word pictures. But it was a physical impossibility for Canada to carry out any such policy in time for effective participation in any war in the near future, or for moral aid to the Empire in the crisis through which it was passing. This is possibly why it appealed to the Liberal party as so attractive. In fact, the Emergency Bill provided the only possible physical foundation for the gradual development of the policy so grandiosely outlined by the Liberals, while at the same time it met the immediate necessity, so that it fitted the situation as the glove fits a hand, and might well have given Canada honor upon the sea in war, instead of the defeat of the

bill compelling her to drink the cup of humiliation to the dregs.

Had this bill been destroyed, as destroyed it was by the Liberal majority in control of the Senate, through the virulence of party animus alone, it would have been bad enough, but there was something far darker and more sinister in its taking off than that. The two grounds put forward against the proposal were that there was no emergency, and that it made a contribution to the British navy of ships supplied by Canada, but under the control and orders of the Admiralty responsible to the British parliament alone. As to the question of the existence of an emergency, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said:

> "Sir, in other respects there is cause for rejoicing. This document shows that there is no emergency, that England is in no danger, whether imminent or prospective."

Now Sir Wilfrid Laurier made use of that language after he had been placed en rapport with the secrets of the British Foreign Office in 1911, and after the secret

information supplied to Sir R. L. Borden had been divulged to him. Very well, then, knowing that there was an emergency, knowing that there was danger, but knowing that the invincible truth of it could not be used against him, he either gambled the fate of the Empire and the safety of Canada against some real or fancied advantage over his opponents in domestic politics—and that is treason, deliberate and conscious treason—or he rejoiced that Great Britain was strong enough in herself to face the emergency and meet the danger and protect Canada without our lifting a little finger to help ourselves—and that is to barter honor for security, and so shamefully that the pen is arrested in description by a sudden turning of the stomach.

The ships contemplated by the Emergency Bill were most emphatically to be a part of the Imperial navy, and to be under entire control of the Admiralty, but, upon the adoption of a permanent naval policy to be at Canada's order as the nuclei of fleet units. And here was to be found the essential difference between the Liberals and the government. Sir Wilfrid Laurier de-

manded for Canada the prerogative of declaring war or peace when Great Britain had made war. What else does optional non-combatancy mean? We are long past the time of mincing words. Where is the sense of splitting hairs when facts are splitting heads? Sir Wilfrid Laurier maintained that the autonomy of Canada required the prerogative of declaring war or peace when Great Britain had declared war, which is the prerogative of a free, sovereign and independent state. The only manly and honest way to go about that would be to declare Canada a free, sovereign and independent state in the first place, and assume the burden of self-protection. But to claim the right to refuse aid when we were not ourselves threatened but other portions of the Empire were, and at the same time to claim aid should we be threatened—Ugh ! That this is not an over statement of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's position his own words show. In the debate on the Emergency Bill, he said:

> "As to the contention of my honorable friend from Kingston, that in case of war our navy would be neutral,

I have only this to observe—I said a moment ago that I hoped I have not lived in vain, and I hope I am to be given credit for some common sense and some knowledge, and my answer to that contention is: when England is at war, we are at war, and the thought of being neutral would be like the command of King Canute to the sea to recede from his feet. No action of ours could bring that about. When England is at war, we are at war, but it does not follow that because we are at war, we are actually in the fight. (Some members: 'Oh, Oh.') We can be in the conflict through two things, namely actual invasion of our soil or the action of the parliament of Canada. That seems to arouse the hilarity of gentlemen on the other side."

There seems to be something hilarious about the phrase "actual invasion of our soil" (and to tell the truth, it is a curious occasion for the active participation of a navy), for this was not the first time it has roused hilarity in a House of Commons. Pitt was endeavoring to put through a bill

impounding certain yeomanry regiments for foreign service and a worthy colonel of yeomanry, a member, argued that such a course was unconstitutional as the yeomanry could not be called upon for active service "except in case of actual invasion," and could not be called upon for foreign service at all. "Except, of course, in case of actual invasion," growled Pitt.

A flood of light is thrown upon Sir Wilfrid Laurier's position by an interlude which occurred in the naval debate of 1910:

> "Mr. R. L. Borden: Would the right honorable gentleman permit me to ask him a question? Suppose a Canadian ship meets a ship of similar armament and power belonging to an enemy, meets her on the high seas, what is she to do? I do not ask now what she will do if attacked, but will she attack, will she fight?"
>
> "Sir Wilfrid Laurier: I do not know that she would ('should'? With deference to Hansard, the next sentence shows 'should' was intended) fight. I do not know that she would fight either.

She should not fight until the government by which she is commissioned have determined whether she would go into the war. That is the position we take."

That is very much the kind of logic by which the doctrine of infant damnation is deduced from the doctrine of predestination. Of course, the tocsin of actual war drowned the sibilant hissings of such political casuistry. But the action of the Liberal party under the control of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in defeating the Emergency Bill in the Senate, prevented Canada from doing anything in regard to naval defense in the war. It is painfully true that for two anxious years all our liberties and our very national existence have depended upon the efficiency of the British fleet operating in the North Sea. Had the British fleet been unable to keep command of the sea, Canada would be German, or, if the United States had intervened, the shuttlecock of German and American rivalry, with the pleasing alternative of remaining German or of becoming absorbed in the

United States. It is quite certain that Great Britain would have been compelled to abandon the defence of Canada upon sea had she ever received a check in the North Sea sufficient to open a sea lane for Germany to the Atlantic. "Britannia rules the waves" is a most excellent saying, but it should be a Britannia compounded of Great Britain and the Dominions, not Great Britain alone for the Dominions.

There is nobody, with even a most elementary knowledge of constitutional law and history, but will admit that there is an institutional irregularity in Canadian ships of war forming part of a navy under orders of an Admiralty responsible only to a part of the Empire in which Canada is not included. This irregularity Great Britain has studiously endeavored to minimize by conferences and the confidential interchange of advice. This is a thoroughly British device, still visible in the fact that the Prime Minister is still technically the adviser of the King and that only. Not only so, but Great Britain has shown every disposition to remove this irregularity when facts necessitated and permitted its removal.

The crowning glory of the British method of constitutional procedure is that it permits facts to govern institutions. It never allows institutions to dominate, control or thwart facts. The facts bring forth the institutions as their proper embodiment and garb. It never first devises institutions and then attempts to force facts to fit them. It tinkers, trims, mends, enlarges, renovates and sometimes replaces institutions altogether to make them fit the facts. Whenever a social organism ceases to do this it is dead, in the same sense that Greek and Latin are dead languages. Its institutions are simply the corpse of a dead civilization ripe for dissolution, and possibly destined to rot for centuries in the soil of anarchy before there is a renaissance. The facts are here. The Empire has long outgrown its clothes and is clamoring for a refit and renovation.

Precisely the same institutional anomaly exists in having Canadian troops at the front in a land campaign under the control of the Minister of War who is responsible only to the British parliament, as in having Canadian ships on the sea under the control

of the Admiralty; only, on account of the oneness of the sea, the anomaly became visible in time of peace, and was concealed in the case of land forces until war broke out. Yet Canada is an armed camp, has over 200,000 men at the front and has 500,000 prepared for when they are called upon by the War Office of Great Britain. And it may be noticed that Canada is not in the conflict, because this war is a war for freedom, for civilization and for the cause of honor in international relations, except in so far as the Empire is in the war by reason of these things. Canada is in the war because it is a fight made by the Empire and for the Empire, and Canada, as part of the Empire, could not but be in it. The facts had swept the institutional anomaly out of sight and destroyed its practical effect.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier knew this anomaly existed. He put the matter with perfect clearness in 1900 when he said that if we were to contribute to the military expenditure of the Empire we "should have the right to say to Great Britain: 'If you want us to help you, call us to

your councils'." Nor was Chamberlain less explicit when he replied: "Whenever you make the request to us be very sure we shall hasten gladly to call you to our councils."

Why was that request never made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal party? Why was every tentative proposal for the solution of the difficulty frowned upon and negatived by Sir Wilfrid Laurier?

The situation was perfectly clear to the mind of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He said in Edinburgh in 1897:

> "The relations of the colonies to the Motherland today are satisfactory, but they are not permanent, they are temporary. The time will come when the present relations will not be satisfactory, and when that time comes, relations must become one of two things—either they must break altogether or they must become closer."

Why then did he say in Ottawa, in 1903, after having thus admitted that the continuance of the present relations meant a drift to separation:

> "As to the political relations which

> exist between Canada and the colonies generally and the Motherland, they are perfectly satisfactory; they could not be improved, and any attempt which has been made with a view of improving them has only led to Utopia."

Continuance led to separation, change to a fanciful Utopia. These quotations make no insinuation of treason against the vision of a United Empire. They are the very words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and prove the treason. Why did he plead those relations against participation in the Boer War, and try "to chloroform the feeling which was setting towards the goal which it ultimately attained in spite of him?" Why did he draw Canada apart from the other Dominions in the question of naval defence in 1902?

Why did he fight against the regular summons of the Conferences in 1902 so as to be thus approvingly congratulated by Mr. Bourassa?

> "In 1902 the Right Honourable gentleman very properly opposed the idea of putting these Conferences on a basis

of perpetuity, or on a regular basis giving them the form of a regular institution within the Empire."

Why did he attempt to abort the Conference of 1907 by non-attendance? Why when there did he strangle everything that suggested unity of direction in Imperial affairs and send his co-delegates home, disheartened and wondering what manner of people Canadians were? Why did he "range himself on the side of the old bureaucracy against self-respecting ambition and colonial nationalism?" Why did he take credit to his government for the abandonment of the idea of a permanent Imperial Council? Why did he oppose the idea of the Secretariate of the Conferences being removed from the Colonial Office and brought into more direct relation with the Crown through the Prime Minister's office?

Why did he reject the memorandum of the Admiralty as to naval defence in 1909, and make provision for a navy that was absolutely useless in the time of war? Why did he formulate that elusive mental will-o'-the-wisp, the doctrine of optional non-combatancy? Why did his party with his

consent deal that coward's blow at the Empire in 1913? For it was a coward's blow. The Admiralty memorandum said:

> "Any action on the part of Canada to increase the power and mobility of the Imperial navy, and thus widen the margin of our common safety, would be recognized everywhere as a most significant witness to the united strength of the Empire, and to the renewed resolve of the overseas Dominions to take their part in maintaining its integrity."

If that is true, it must be equally true that if the matter was brought up at all, "No action on the part of Canada to increase the power and mobility of the Imperial navy, and thus widen the margin of our common safety, would be recognized everywhere as a most significant witness to the disunited weakness of the Empire." The action of the Senate was so recognized by Germany as an evidence that Canada would not fight, and, together with the equally misinterpreted disturbances in Ireland, was one of the contributory causes of the war.

Why, in short, this continual pleading of the constitutional relations existing between Canada and Great Britain as an excuse for disaffection in matters of prime Imperial concern, and at the same time grim determination to prevent any modification in these relations, unless Sir Wilfrid Laurier still saw them as they are, the germ of disruption he discerned in 1897, and of the total severance he anticipated at the day when Canada had either become too strong to longer require or Great Britain too weak to afford protection.

Conclusion

The time has not yet come for writing a history or even a review of the war, or of Canada's share in it. The action is too close. War descended upon Canada with startling suddenness, and no country has ever, in the history of the world, been in a condition of such complete unpreparedness. As to naval defence, our capacity was zero, in fact it was a minus quantity, for the protection of our coasts, ports and trade routes detracted from the necessarily concentrated power of Great Britain, and must have been a grave added anxiety to her. Had Canada been flying a neutral flag, as she could not, would not and never will, British command of the sea would have been more certain and more easily maintained than it was. As for self-defence upon the sea, its possibility had no existence. Suppose the British navy had been allowed to degenerate as the French land forces were allowed to degenerate, as the American navy has been allowed to degenerate, and as the pacificists and disarmament lunatics in Great Britain wished to be allowed to

degenerate from 1906 onwards, that is to say, to remain formidable in tonnage on paper, but to become completely defective in striking power; and suppose Germany had launched a blow against Great Britain on the sea similar to the blow she launched against France on land, in the first month or two of the war, before the vast constructive enginery of Great Britain could have been moved; why, the Christian era would even now be at an end, and the Teutonic era inaugurated with appropriate dedications to the German God. Extravagant language, perhaps, but nobody realizes a sudden unforeseen and deadly peril until some time after it is over. There is merely at first a confusion of movement and sound and some instinctive action. What is called presence of mind is as often due to tardy mental action as to anything else. Canada had neither military tradition, military training, nor military experience. Our militia organization was almost, if not altogether, negligible. Whether this was wholly a disadvantage is doubtful. General Hughes had at least a clear field and was without the handicap of the British War

Office to contend with. Except, perhaps, the North and the South in the Civil War in the United States, no combatant country ever entered war more hopelessly unprepared than Canada, not even China.

The difficulty of recruiting and mobilizing an army in Canada was stupendous. Canada is a very large country, how large nobody even dimly realizes till he has seen the west swallowing up people by the hundreds of thousands, and still presenting the same appearance of an unpeopled wilderness as before. The case may be mentioned of a man with a fine record in the police and South Africa, who was slightly delayed in enlisting, because the war was fourteen months old before he heard of it. What this difficulty looked like was expressed by a member of parliament in 1903, discussing the South African contingents, when he said that a Canadian quota of ten thousand men "would be, in busy Canada, entirely impossible." Canada was quite as busy or busier ten years later, but it evidently depended a good deal on what Canada was required, at the moment, to be busy about.

In another respect, Canada was even

more unfortunately situated. For more than a decade she had been engaged in turning huge amounts of borrowed money into fixed capital, some of it directly productive; but none of it immediately productive. To illustrate: A city puts in a power plant. That is directly productive, but not immediately productive as a rule; in fact it should not be, but rather built for the future, if wisely built. The same city provides a huge park and fine boulevards. These are indirectly productive in increased health, happiness and therefore increased efficiency, but they are not directly productive. This necessary process in the growth of any country is always accompanied by a large amount of extravagance. The expenditure of capital provides a temporarily inflated income for nearly all. In the period of reconstruction following the war, the temporary character of income derived from capital expenditure will assuredly come home to us in another way. From war expenditure there are no dividends even in the future, except in honor and self-restraint, and a standard of values redeemed from the taint of money.

Canada's economic position was reflected in the enormous excess of imports over exports. These imports were paid for by borrowed money, and the credits brought in by immigrants. The condition of the country was perfectly sound, how sound events have proved. But a period of readjustment there had to be. No debtor country can forever go on paying interest on its loans, and for a big excess of imports over exports besides. The time must come when its production must meet its interest on foreign loans, and pay for what it buys, or it will go bankrupt. This readjustment should be gradual if it is not to cause a very serious dislocation of trade and industry. The war brought it on Canada in, figuratively speaking, a week. It would have surprised nobody if our banks and exchequer had simply heaved a weary sigh, lain down and given up the ghost. That they did not shows how sound the country's finances were. I am satisfied that Canada was, in spite of huge borrowings, not only meeting interest out of production, but providing a very substantial amount of fluid capital, to be

turned into fixed productive capital, out of her own resources every year. I have always been of opinion that this was so, and I do not see how a most appalling crash could have been avoided if it were not. The readjustment compelled by the war necessarily showed immediately in the relation between exports and imports. But it did so without the ghastly internal consequences which might excusably have been expected. In fact, by restriction of constructive work, and by a virtuous if probably assumed preference for water instead of wine, and by other methods of which the latter is a type, Canadian finance met and overcame the situation caused by the sudden outbreak of war. Canada was highly fortunate to discover and develop to meet the crisis in those two respects a great war minister and a great minister of finance.

It has been said of Sir Sam Hughes that he is a man who never said a wise thing or did a foolish one, and that, like most witty sayings, contains a small grain of truth. But a good deal depends upon what is considered wisdom in a statesman.

Critical times are apt to cause a revision of ideas as to that. However, the Minister of Militia is essentially a man of action, and very highly-geared action at that. He had a tremendous amount of raw material to work upon, inspired by a national enthusiasm equally raw. In an incredibly short time he produced an army, and more, an army system capable of renewing the forces of Canada indefinitely. He did more even than that. He contrived to put some of his own spirit of indomitable determination to arrive into every man who donned uniform, and into a good many who did not. Therefore, Sir Samuel Hughes is a great man.

There is a dictum of Hallam's, "There is only one cause for the want of great men in any period; nature does not see fit to produce them. They are no creatures of education and circumstances," which greatly impressed me by its owlish solemnity at a period of youthful study, when I half suspected nature of serious intentions in that respect with regard to myself. I believe nature to produce great men in every period. Nature produced Sir Sam Hughes.

Except however for the circumstances of the war, while he could not have been mute, he must have remained comparatively inglorious. He might indeed, like too frail a boiler, have burst under the pressure of his own steam. But it was Canadian history, training and environment, with its neglect of precedent, and necessity for quick judgment and action upon new facts, which produced him to reap a harvest of honor from service which his great qualities had fitted him to render.

Canada appears to be a natural soil for the breeding of great financiers. I do not mean great money grubbers who spawn a-plenty in every country, but men who apply wisdom to the regulation of money, and its application to the purposes for which it is designed. The banking system of the country attests this, as do the solidity of our financial institutions and the soundness financially of most of our industrial and other corporations. As finance minister, Sir Thomas White has had the benefit of the combined financial wisdom and experience of the country. But to have focussed those, purged them from the dross

of corporate self-seeking, and applied them to the use and service of the state, is a proof of greatness in no mean degree. He has also, by remaining calm and mostly silent, imbued the people of Canada with the most implicit confidence in himself, and in the financial stability of the country. That confidence is more than half the battle, and that victory he has won for the country. To produce and maintain confidence is an achievement, if not so spectacular as some others, requiring real greatness of intellect and character.

Upon the shoulders of one man in particular the composite burden of all the others has been laid—the Premier. He has carried that terrible load with dignity and self-possession. In nothing has he shown his strength more than in this, that he has never permitted the tactics of an opposition, whose one idea of a truce appears to be to remain on its own side of the fence it has been agreed not to cross, and throw stones at those who are doing the work of the country, to draw from him any intemperate or impatient language, which, however natural and jus-

tifiable, might, while tending to strengthen himself, weaken the country in its struggle. Over and over again he has been tempted into partisan bickering, but in vain. As is perhaps the case in most aged and decaying governments, the rank and file of what is now the opposition, seem to have been chosen by the constituencies for their qualities as government pap-extractors and acquiesced in by the late government for their dumb subservience to the inner clique. In opposition they have turned to petty but exasperating methods as the appropriate expression of their nature in time of war. It would be greatly for the benefit of the country if those constituencies which must, for some invisible reason lying deep in the psychology of human nature, return Liberals to parliament, would at least return better men. Certainly the Premier has been sustained by a capable and united Cabinet and by a parliamentary following inspired by one thought and living and breathing as one man in their fixed determination in which the rivalries and wire-pulling of individual ambition have been, if not extinguished, for the time being at

least suppressed. Behind them has been a party which has once again been called upon to prove itself the repository and expression of the true spirit of Canada and has responded to the call with loyal enthusiasm and devotion. And at the foundation of all is Canada, whose great heart has been stirred to its depths, and who is nerved by her reverence for the past and her glorious vision of the future to fearlessly confront the dangers and difficulties of the times.

In Sir Robert Borden Canada possesses most emphatically a leader to be trusted, and one who is likely to acquire great and enduring Imperial fame in the reconstruction which it is now universally admitted must follow the war. He is a great constitutional statesman. There is none living who can project a legislative idea upon the plane of experience with a greater nicety of measurement as to its ultimate and farthest-reaching effects and its relations with existing laws and institutions. Most people have ideas upon Imperial reconstruction ranging from vague sympathy to plans of reorganization definitely out-

lined on paper. This is a kind of mental exercise which is easy and may be interesting and helpful, but it is absolutely beyond the powers of any individual mind to plan a complete constitutional machine for the Empire which will work. Unless we have a natural outgrowth of things as they are, no reorganization will ever realize the Imperial idea. What ought to be must be the evolution of what has been and what is. The thing worthy to be desired is elasticity. The Empire requires to be fitted for a suit of clothes which will give its muscles full play, not to be immured in a box from which it will burst if it is alive and in which it will be buried if it is ripe for dissolution. But for the many delicate matters of constitutional adjustment which must emerge in the fitting process, Canada has, in Sir Robert Borden, a matchless instrument ready to her hand.

It is now tolerably evident that the labor of reconstituting the Empire will fall into the three parts into which the discussions of the Imperial Conferences naturally divided themselves, constitutional relations, defence and commerce.

As to the first there appears to be only a choice of two roads to the end desired, one that the British parliament should cease to be the British parliament by the devolution of purely British affairs upon assemblies of British people. There is no objection in principle to the most extreme subdivision of this autonomy. It might be extended to English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, Episcopalians, Nonconformists, Presbyterians, red-headed persons, anti-vivisectionists and vegetarians, provided machinery were devised so that their activities did not clash and overlap to the injury of the whole. No objection ever lay against the right of the tailors of Tooley Street to complete autonomy. It was their regarding themselves as the people of England that was objectionable. The present British parliament would then become a real Imperial parliament, reconstituted so as to be representative of the Empire as a whole. The other road is for an Imperial Council, to deal with designated Imperial matters, to be constituted. The latter road looks easier at the outset, but to my untutored mind the former heads straighter to the

goal. Whatever is not devolved is retained, and in the second alternative we would have a body dealing with the affairs of the whole limited by powers granted from a body or bodies which dealt only with parts and were representative only of parts. Besides, the katabolic process in local and sectional affairs is so plainly inevitable, and the anabolic process in Imperial affairs so necessary, that, if the British parliament is not reconstituted as an Imperial parliament, it, an ancient and at intervals in its history respectable institution, would be likely to fall into a condition of innocuous desuetude neither dignified nor useful.

In the science of defence the war has taught us much, if the lesson has been rude. It has at least shown the enormous difference between developed striking power and the mere existence of power as a potentiality. If the defence power of the British Empire had been properly co-ordinated and organized this war could never have occurred, or, upon the participation of the Empire, would have been brought to a very rapid and satisfactory conclusion, to a great saving of lives and

happiness and, to what is to a great many people more important if they would only say what they really think, money. The British Empire is like a huge river blundering down to the sea by the law of gravitation, the German Empire like a smaller river dammed and turned into races and canals so that every ounce of energy is conserved and transformed into power. Let us by all means admire the picturesque features of the great untrained watercourse, but if there is work to be done, the harnessed stream, though smaller, is the more efficient. The cult of laissez faire, with its corollaries of free trade, dislike of specialized training by the state, military unpreparedness, and the consequent intellectual absorption in horse-racing, football, and other divagations into lagoons, eddies, muskegs and swamps, some of them pestiferous, is the religion of many of our people. It depends upon the original doctrine that to attempt to direct and control natural forces is to interfere with the providence of God. But the example of Germany has fairly well hammered home the need of co-ordinated effort. Our danger will lie far

more in the recrudescence of the doctrine that defence has become no longer necessary, that the last war has taken place, and that war has been destroyed by war. This silly fallacy crops up in every considerable interval of peace, and the longer the interval, the greater growth it attains. So far, in the world's history, these intervals have been caused purely by exhaustion. If this war has taught civilization that there is only one method of extinguishing war, namely that of placing upon the selfish and rapacious a disability to make war successfully, and that this can only be done by organized force inspired by love of justice and liberty, it will have accomplished much in the evolution of mankind. But how long will civilization, resting in wealth, security and peace, keep its muscles in training and its brain clear against the insidious calling of its baser appetites for the wine and food of luxurious living? War is a rude discipline, but perhaps, after all, it destroys what should be destroyed, to preserve from the canker of degeneration what is worth while preserving.

If the preference of intra-Imperial commerce only stirs acrimony to a less degree than it does questions of real difficulty of adjustment, it will be well. The ideas that the state does not exist to develop trade, but that trade exists to strengthen and enrich the state, and that the end of fiscal protection is to protect men, not to add to wealth, are slowly progressing with that almost imperceptible movement which always attends the acceptance of the obvious. There is nothing which so stimulates population as industry and its concomitant foreign trade. The manufacturing and foreign trade of Germany have nearly doubled its population in half a century. That commerce has been very largely dependent on the demand from countries under the British flag. Therefore, we have been breeding people in millions whose main idea at present is to murder our children. We have literally been making our children pass through the fire in order to appease the crave of our sacred stomachs for things a little cheaper, perhaps a little better, than we can make them for ourselves. There are only two

conditions in life in which free trade is a workable plan, universal peace and anarchy. And these two are really the same. Scientific anarchy, which is merely individual autonomy carried out to its logical end, would only be possible in a world of universal pacificism. In this world, any attempt at it leads only to the social condition popularly associated with the word. Something in the way of Imperial protection will have to come about, and it looks as though action would follow the lines of policy which the Dominions, if we except Laurier's weird outburst in 1897, have always been in favor. And he did not object to protection nor to preference so long as preference was not reciprocal. To that he objected, because of the tendency toward organic solidarity it betrayed. He even went so far as to be willing to strengthen such ties between Canada and the United States for the hardly concealed purpose of weakening them between Canada and Great Britain.

I have not attempted the discussion of these necessities of reconstruction in detail, but have merely indicated them in order to enforce the conclusion that it would be

national insanity, with the party we have now in power, and with the men at its head whom the crisis of war has brought to view, for Canada to entrust her government into other hands. And of all hands those of the Liberal party, which has never possessed the inspiration of a national idea as its guardian angel, and fell a ready prey to sordid ambitions and the pursuit of petty aims, till its government became a wild and reckless scramble for the material fruits of power. It would be idle to assert, nor would anyone believe the assertion if made, that the Conservative party has not been affected by the spirit of the era of materialism. But it remained sound at the core as the National party of Canada, and the long and strict exclusion of its members from a share in the eleemosynary dispensations of the public treasury left little inducement for adherence to its banner except belief in its principles. But it would be unfair to themselves, unfair to their party, unfair to Canada, to set Sir Robert Borden and his colleagues to the tremendous task which lies in front of them, without the reinvigoration of fresh contact

of the people and a demonstration by the country that it is united in heart and purpose and seeks only men to adequately express its will. The recent experience of Great Britain with political truces, an aged government, extended parliaments, coalitions and such-like hollow expedients to mask dissension and divided councils, serves rather as a warning than as an example. Let Canada show where the centre of gravity of her national will lies, and the demonstration to be effective should be overwhelming. History shows many instances, it is true, especially in democracies, where sectional and local and partizan differences have obscured the plain purpose of the people and cast the nation's course among shallows and quicksands. But surely remembering the agony of Confederation, the grim struggle against the indifference of Great Britain and the economic hostility of the United States, by which the thews and sinews of the Dominion of Canada were exercised and trained, we may rise now through the expression of a united national purpose to the achievement of the Imperial ideals to which we strain.

CONCLUSION

It has often been said that the war would cause a revolution in Germany, and it may, but it also must cause changes in the British Empire which might be described as revolutionary. This broad distinction may be made, however, that the change in Germany will be in the end for which an Empire exists, in the British Empire, in the methods by which its ends are to be gained. Its ends are liberty, equality and honor among nations, individual prosperity and the development of character among its various peoples, and peace, but first purity, then peace. These ends have been pursued in a blundering and haphazard way. Many departments of our governmental, social and economic system have broken down under the stress of war, which raises the question whether they may not be equally defective though more insidiously so, in time of peace. Great advantages have been reaped at the expense of the general good, where they should not have been obtained, and great sacrifices have been made where they should not have been required. Nor has the least searching part of it been that it has all been nobody's

fault. In fact, the problems that have arisen are innumerable, insistent and difficult. They billow upon the mind as the clouds upon the horizon against the eye, and are as far beyond the grasp of an individual intelligence as their solution is probably beyond the power of a single generation of men. All that we can do is to carefully test the immediate step that the footing be sound, keeping our gaze ever fixed upon the shining goal, in faith, conscious loyalty and service, that our course be straight.

[THE END]

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