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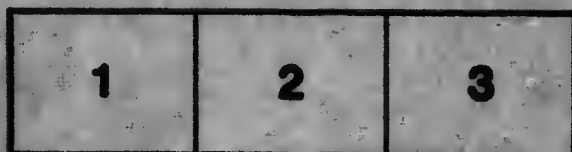
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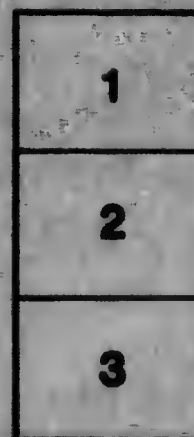
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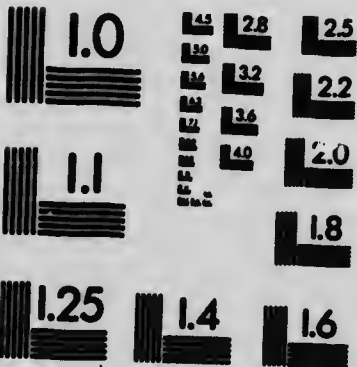
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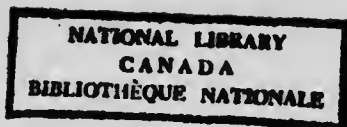
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WHAT THE

British Preference and

Imperial Federation

(As Proposed by the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain)

MEAN FOR

Canada and Canadians.



—BY—

JAMES YOUNG,

Late Member of the Dominion and Ontario Parliaments,
Author of "Public Men and Public Life in Canada,"
the "History of Galt and Dumfries," etc., etc.

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The British Preference and Imperial Federation

PART I—THE PREFERENCE.

That the agitation now going on in Great Britain on the relations of the colonies to the Empire has a loud message for Canada and Canadians is a fact we cannot too quickly and earnestly realize.

Most people regard it as a mere fiscal question—the adoption or non-adoption of preferential tariffs. Were this all that is involved there would be no need for much concern. But below and behind its fiscal features, the agitation is primarily and essentially the first step in a proposed new political and Imperial policy, pregnant with radical changes in the fabric of the Monarchy and far-reaching consequences to the colonies.

This is openly avowed on all sides, and that we may have clearly before us the principal and real aims of its advocates, let us take the exposition thereof by one of its foremost exponents, C. A. Vince, M.A. His statement may be considered official as he is secretary of the Imperial Tariff Committee, and the Rt. Hon. Mr. Chamberlain expressly endorsed his book by writing its preface. His words are as follows:

"Our progress towards Federation has now reached a point when legal assistance is wanted. We have encountered a difficulty which cannot be overcome by the means at our disposal. . . . Let it be laid down at the outset, that unless we are prepared to agree upon commercial union with the colonies, at a cost, it may be, of some economic sacrifice, we must abandon the project of federating and consolidating the Empire."

These words go to show that the proposed British Preference is only a secondary point—a minor issue—in the movement. To the Motherland it would be "an economic sacrifice," but one to be endured as a means to an end. To the colonies it is to be offered to induce us to accept the larger scheme, which avowedly aims at changing the grand old British Monarchy under which we have been so prosperous and happy, into some sort of Imperial federation, which means we know not what, as after a quarter of a century of agitation none of its advocates has ever been able to produce a practicable plan.

That this question is one of the utmost importance, and even of danger, to Great Britain and its colonies, especially must be apparent to every intelligent inquirer. The danger, increased by the utter uncertainty as to what these grave constitutional

**Alarming
Constitutional
Changes.**

changes will lead, and the erroneous views being circulated as to their effects upon our present happy colonial relations.

The first point which naturally suggests itself is: Why all this agitation to change the Constitution and commercial policy of the Empire at the present time? The Monarchy has been immensely successful. Under its motto of "Free Trade and Colonial Freedom," its ships, colonies, and commerce have grown with a rapidity previously unexampled. The volume of its commerce for 1903, \$4,896,259,708, is without a parallel in the world's history. No other power, not even the United States, has ever approached near it. So wealthy has the nation become, that over £211,156,000 (according to Hasell's), were spent on the Boer war without scarcely being felt, and the history of that sanguinary struggle proved the strength of the Empire and the loyalty of the colonies in the most striking and effective manner.

So far as Canada is concerned, it was never more attached to Great Britain than now. This is not inconsistent with the fact that no true Canadian places the Empire first and the Dominion second. He naturally considers that his foremost obligations of duty and affection are due to his own magnificent land, Canada, and that it is the highest and truest patriotism to give its interests and welfare the first consideration. Next to our own land, however, it is true that Canadians were never more attached than at present to Great Britain, with its noble record on behalf of Christianity, civilisation and liberty, and so general are these feelings of loyalty among all classes that the annexationist has become nearly as extinct as the dodo.

It is at such a time as this, when under free trade and colonial freedom, the Motherland and the colonies have become the greatest of modern nations—when the Boer War has proven their solidarity by ties stronger than any legislative bonds—that it is seriously proposed to rush into constitutional and commercial changes at once radical and uncertain. It is safe to say, that at no previous period in its history was the Empire stronger and more united, and it is simply amazing that any leading British statesman could be found to light the fires of agitation to overthrow the very political system and fiscal policy under which such grand national results have been achieved.

At the great meeting held in London on November 24 last, the Duke of Devonshire said that these proposals "emanated from the brain of one eminent statesman." This is undoubtedly true. The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain is the head and front of the whole agitation, and it is impossible to withhold our admiration of the great ability, the daring courage, and the unrivalled energy and tact which he has devoted to his task.

His political opponents assail his motives. Some profess to see in his movement proof of Gladstone's jibe that he is a British statesman with American methods: others that he left the Balfour Ministry in order to escape the sinking ship; and still others that he seeks to create an Imperialistic wave upon which he may float to the pinnacle of his ambition—the Premiership of Great Britain—and thus put a brilliant finish to a notable career.

Mr. Chamberlain's Crusade Dangerous.

All such questions as these may be safely left for the British combatants to settle. What concerns us is not Mr. Chamberlain's motives, but that he has begun an active crusade to impose on the colonies, under cover of, or in exchange for, commercial gains, some of the most retrograde political changes proposed by any Colonial Minister of modern times. They are essentially antagonistic to the great future which her most devoted sons have heretofore mapped out for Canada, and I quite agree with the learned Professor Dicey, himself one of the foremost Unionists and Imperialists, whose very able article in *The Contemporary Review* for last September clearly demonstrates that, if fully carried out, Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would be fatal to the Unionist party, against Imperialism, and lead to the Empire's disturbance, and possibly disintegration.

Before proceeding farther, a few words in regard to preferential tariffs may clear the way for what is to follow. That the Motherland and the colonies might give a preference in their markets to each other's productions appears not only reasonable, but taking. Whenever the advantage is mutual, our commercial intercourse cannot be too free and easy. Unfortunately, the interests of Great Britain and Canada do not always harmonise. Commercially, they are often diametrically opposed, and in such cases neither should be asked nor expected to act contrary to its own interests. The Canadian preference on British goods has been a success. Sir Wilfrid Laurier wisely asked nothing in return, and if Great Britain can give our productions a preference in her markets, on the same terms—that is, without imposing new burdens on her own people or ourselves—all Canadians would be glad to accept it. But, as we shall see later on, that is precisely what it is proposed not to do.

This brings us to the crux of the question: Mr. Chamberlain's contentions. Without repeating particulars, they may be fairly abridged as follows: (1) British commerce is standing still or decaying; (2) Free trade must be partially or wholly abandoned, and protective duties enacted; (3) the Empire is in danger of dismemberment; (4) this danger can only be averted by giving the colonies certain commercial advantages over foreign countries in the British markets; and (5) thus bring about an Imperial Federation which will make all the (now) self-governing colonies as much a part of the Empire for certain purposes of legislation and taxation as Yorkshire or any other English county.

The first answer to this is, Mr. Chamberlain's premises are essentially incorrect. Statistics do not sustain his declarations of British commercial stagnation and decay. In trying to prove this he has had to go back to the year 1872—over thirty years—to find a basis for his calculations. This was a period of unprecedented inflation, arising from the Franco-German war. So immensely did British exports increase to France and Germany and all parts of Europe at war or in commotion, that 1872 became known as the "freak year," and the British Board of Trade gave warning that any comparisons based on its returns would be quite misleading. Nevertheless, Mr. Chamberlain chose

the exports of that very year to compare with those of 1902, in seeking to prove that British commerce is decaying, a course which the British press very generally repudiated at the time as unfair and misleading.

The true way to test this matter is to take from the official blue-books the returns of British exports for each decade since free trade was adopted, and they tell a very different tale. They were as follows:

1850	.....	£ 71,868,000
1860	.....	135,891,000
1870	.....	199,587,000
1880	.....	223,060,000
1890	.....	263,531,000
1900	.....	282,604,000

These statistics do not show that Great Britain has suddenly changed from prosperity to decay. On the contrary, they prove that her exports have steadily grown from \$356,840,000 in 1850 to the immense aggregate of \$1,413,020,000 in 1900, an increase of no less than 400 per cent. in half a century! This is admittedly one, if not the most wonderful record of commercial expansion in the world's history, and yet Mr. Chamberlain has been so bent on agitation as to describe British exports as stagnant, and to seek to alarm the nation with gloomy suggestions about the decay of the glory of Venice and the fall of its famous Campanile.

Wonderful Results of Free Trade.

Mr. Chamberlain's comparison to prove that there has been a serious falling off in Britain's export trade, per head, is equally unreliable. It is also based on the original fallacy of taking 1872 as a normal year, and, in addition, as this comparison depends on the increase of population, as well as of exports, it is of little value. That British exports, per capita, have remained almost stationary for several decades proves nothing. The same thing is true of France, Germany, and even the United States, and no one pretends it is a sign of decay in these nations. The British fiscal blue-book of 1902 corroborates this, as the following extract shows:

"The exports per head in the United Kingdom are far in excess of what they are in either France or Germany, and are still more in excess of what they are in the United States. Since 1875, also, the exports per head have been nearly stationary in all the countries named, so that no one is getting ahead of the others in this respect."

The value of the exports per head of each of these great nations is given as follows: Those of Great Britain at £5 19s 5d, those of France at £3 14s 8d, those of Germany at £3 7s 2d, and those of the United States at £2 18s 4d. These figures do not sustain Mr. Chamberlain's doleful pictures of stagnation and decay, but prove the gratifying fact that old John Bull still maintains a very respectable lead of all other competitors.

The proposal to abandon free trade and go back to protection and taxation of the nation's food, is at once distracting and dangerous. When announced, it immediately shattered the Balfour Ministry, broke up the

Unionist party and plunged the country into agitation. Nearly all the foremost British statesmen—Liberals, Conservatives, Unionists and Radicals—except Mr. Chamberlain and possibly Mr. Balfour, have arrayed themselves against it. This might easily have been foreseen. Britain occupies a different position from any other country. She is essentially the great trading nation of the world. She has practically no natural products to export, except iron and coal, but she imports immense quantities of foodstuffs and raw materials, the latter of which she converts into manufactures and exports abroad. Her ships, consequently, are on every sea. She trades with all parts of the globe. She buys from them natural products, and they buy from her manufactured goods. Under free trade, as we have seen, her commerce with them has increased by leaps and bounds, until it has quadrupled, and how any intelligent person who has read Smith, or Baghot, or Gladstone, or knows how rapidly Britain has grown great and wealthy under fiscal freedom, can fail to see that a return to the restrictive system of protection would give a staggering blow to her shipping, manufactures and financial interests, passes my comprehension.

Dangers of Protection to Britain.

The day in which Great Britain adopts protection, taxes foreign productions, and sets colonial in free, she will light the fires of a tariff war. She has a perfect right to do so, and I also agree that she has little to thank most other nations for. Our first duty, too, is to look after ourselves. But assuming this very point of view, is it not certain that her exceptional position as the great trading nation, absolutely dependent on other countries for her raw materials and even her food, would render a tariff struggle more injurious to her than to any other of the combatants? That she would suffer more or less is certain. If the conflict were prolonged and carried to extremes, it might prove seriously disastrous.

According to the official returns for 1903, the total commerce (imports and domestic exports only) of the United Kingdom with foreign powers amounted to \$2,963,517,733, and with her colonies to \$1,094,281,066. Is it reasonable—is it right—is it unselfish, for Canadians to expect her to diminish and endanger these vast commercial exchanges with foreign nations in order to try the experiment of a small protective stimulus to colonial trade? Her imports of breadstuffs, meats, dairy produce, fruits, etc., amounted to no less than \$1,111,195,356 in 1903, could it be otherwise than injurious to her people to tax about three-fourths of these foodstuffs in order to give us a trifling advantage on about one-fourth, which we colonists supply? This tax would largely fall on the working classes of the Motherland, and as 40 per cent. of them are already living below the standard of food necessary for health and happiness, is it any wonder that a policy which would certainly make food dearer and scarcer should arouse the fiercest opposition? Lord Salisbury said it might provoke revolution, and it would if the tax were made high enough to be effective.

Mr. Chamberlain's next point, "the Empire in danger," is a famous

old political cry, which has done duty for centuries, and was never raised with less reason than now. The Empire is at present absolutely solid. You may visit all the British possessions circling the globe, and in Egypt, the Soudan, India, South Africa, Australasia and Canada, not a sign of the dismemberment of the Empire is in sight. On the contrary, none of these countries were ever more loyal and devoted to Great Britain than now, complete proof of which, as already stated, is furnished by their spontaneous and gallant action during the South African war. The Dominion is the farthest advanced of any of the colonies, and the people were never more decided for the continuance of British connection. The only bits of cloud to be seen in our entire national sky are the revolutionary changes in the constitution of the Monarchy and the position of the colonies, which our over-sealous Imperialists are agitating, the dangerous results of which, if ever seriously pressed, would not be long in appearing.

This brings us to the proposed remedy, the Preferential Tariff and Imperial Federation.

So far as Canada is concerned, if the proposed British preference were offered unconditionally, as our preference was, it would undoubtedly be of considerable advantage. Nothing like the advantage, however, which its advocates have pictured. Their arguments are, in fact, rather contradictory on this point. On the one hand, they declare it would greatly stimulate Canadian agricultural production, especially of our North-west wheat lands, and, on the other, that the price of foodstuffs in Britain would not be increased. This is almost a contradiction in terms for if our farmers do not get better prices in the British markets, where would the immense stimulus to Canadian production come in? The truth seems to be this: the preference proposed is too small to produce very large results, but it would give a moderate stimulus to Canadian development, and a corresponding increase in the price of food in the Motherland, which the consumer would undoubtedly have to pay.

But this modest preference is not to be unconditional. We cannot take it alone. It is to be conditioned on certain sacrifices on our part, sacrifices which, when fully explained and understood, it is believed that Canadians generally will consider too reactionary and dangerous to the prosperity and future of this great Dominion, to ever give their consent to.

The Preference Means Canadian Sacrifices.

Before leaving this point, let me protest against the way in which we are being misrepresented and John Bull humbugged on this question. Ambitious politicians and Canadians touring in England, but after British titles or carried away by festive honors, have of late systematically played to the Imperial Federation galleries, and in some cases even assumed in the name of Canada to warn our British fellow-countrymen that unless they grant us commercial advantages in their markets, this Dominion will turn towards the United States—"there will be only one flag in America"—the Empire will go to pieces, etc., etc. All such statements, and they are the chief stock-in-trade of the agitators, are at once found-

WHAT THEY MEAN FOR CANADA AND CANADIANS

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ditionless, misleading to our British fellow-citizens and downright libels on the people of this country.

Canadian loyalty is not so weak, nor our attachment to Great Britain so slender, that they depend on whether we receive a British preference or not. And to represent us in such a selfish, sordid, odious light, is not only a calumny on our good name as Canadians, but a reprehensible illustration of the misleading nonsense so freely indulged in by ambitious Canadians touring in England, who, like the famous Tooley street tailors, represent nobody but themselves.



PART II—IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

What the new departure—"the new Imperialism"—means for Canada, we have incidentally learned something in the course of this article. Further light is thrown upon it by what Mr. Chamberlain and his friends declare to be the advantages the Mother Country would gain. The principal of these may be stated as follows: That it will strengthen Britain's hold on the colonies and prevent disintegration; that the colonies will be required to share the cost of maintaining the Imperial army and navy; that it will be made obligatory on the colonies to take part in the wars of the Empire throughout the world; that it will secure "free trade within the Empire," and an "open door" in the colonies for British manufactures; that, in short, it will make the colonies more serviceable to the Empire for political, military and commercial purposes. And it is to obtain these great Imperial advantages that the colonies are to be attracted by a preference in the British markets, and the existing Monarchy changed into an Imperial federal Empire, which admittedly means a revolution in nearly all departments of the State, and especially in the relations of the colonies to the Motherland.

This is truly "a leap in the dark" for the British nation, and it is impossible to forecast, in the absence of details, all that it means for this Dominion. There are some vitally important changes, however, which any scheme of Imperial federation certainly involves for us, and the sooner every Canadian looks them squarely in the face the better will it be for all concerned.

The proposed federation would, in the first place, involve the break-up of our present happy colonial relations. Whatever may be its character, it must restrict the political and fiscal freedom we have heretofore enjoyed, and which has been and is justly regarded as the foundation stone of the unequalled success of the British colonial system. This would be a backward step for Canada, and the warm national sentiment now prevailing—the precious fruit of colonial freedom—which has so long and so strongly bound the Empire together, would be weakened, possibly destroyed, by the introduction of new constitutional enactments and legislative restraints as a sort of clamp to hold it together.

Our military position would be completely changed, and our burdens heavily increased. Both of our political parties recognize Canada's duty in this important matter, and notwithstanding the jibes and taunts of military jingoes like General Hutton, we have done for defensive purposes all that could reasonably be expected from a country of small population under like circumstances.

Our ordinary military expenditure has rapidly increased of late years, and is now nearly \$4,000,000 per annum, and it is incorrect to represent

**Military Bur-
dens Would be
Increased.**

Canada as doing nothing for the Empire's defence. The Dominion comprises in area one-third of the whole possessions of the British Crown, and we have been warned again and again that its defence on land must rest mainly on ourselves. Our annual military expenditures are, therefore, for the defence of one-third of the whole Empire, as well as for ourselves, besides which we have spent \$150,000,000 on the Intercolonial and Pacific Railways, thus making an Imperial highway across the entire continent, which British statesmen have frequently admitted to be of the highest military importance to the Empire as well as ourselves.

One-third of the British Empire is certainly field enough, and more than enough, under ordinary circumstances, for all Canada's defensive efforts. In a great struggle, involving the integrity of the Empire, the case would be different. The Boer war proved that in such a case Canadians will voluntarily hasten to its assistance. But that is a very different thing from legally binding ourselves, like some vassal Province, to take part in British wars all over the world, and to contribute men and money to the Imperial army and navy in addition to the cost of our own defence.

The Conservative and Liberal parties of Canada alike have always been opposed to this. At the time of the Nile expedition to relieve General Gordon at Khartoum, Sir John Macdonald declined to send a Canadian corps, taking the ground that our forces should not be taken out of our own country. As recently as 1900, Sir Charles Tupper, speaking at Quebec and elsewhere as the Conservative leader, made notable references to this question. After drawing a dismal picture of the enormous taxes which would follow the Federation of the Empire, he declared that under it Canada's share of the cost of the British army and navy, according to population, would be one-seventh of the whole, and one-seventh would make our share \$46,000,000 annually! He further declared that "to compel the colonies and outlying portions of the Empire to make direct contributions to the army and navy" would break up the Empire.

Commercially, the change means "Free Trade within the Empire," thus admitting British manufactures into free competition with our own Canadian manufactures. Mr. Chamberlain has again and again declared this. At the Colonial Conference of 1902, he said that "our first object, then, is Free Trade within the Empire," and when the Colonial Premiers afterwards met him in London, he flatly told them "he would not touch with a tongue the subject of a Preferential Tariff on any other basis than absolute Free Trade between Great Britain and her colonies." At Glasgow he went even farther, and expressed the hope that the colonists would not commence new branches of manufactures which would interfere with those of the Motherland! Imperial Federation once settled, British manufactures would undoubtedly go into every part of the Empire untaxed. This would immensely benefit the Motherland, but what would its effects be on our rising Canadian manufactures, and the prosperity and future of this country?

This brings us to the cross-roads again. The interests of Britain

and Canada are strongly opposed to this question. They want free trade; we want protection, more or less. You might as well try to square a circle as to reconcile them. I believe the great majority of Canadians prefer a moderate tariff to a trust and monopoly breeder like that of the United States, which Mr. Chamberlain on one occasion justly called "an abomination." But I also believe that all parties and classes are practically a unit against lowering our duties on foreign manufactures, including British goods, to a point which would sacrifice our existing Canadian manufactures, or in any way retard their legitimate growth and success.

Both of our political parties may be said to be agreed on this, but instead of frankly declaring it, they have been manoeuvring to get the start of each other by trying who could shout the loudest for the Chamberlain preference. Boards of Trade have been passing grandiloquent resolutions to the same effect, and the Manufacturers' Association rather capped the climax by passing resolutions for the preference and Imperial unity on the one hand, and for protective duties against British goods on the other! All of these bodies are, at heart, utterly hostile to Mr. Chamberlain's quid pro quo, "Free Trade within the Empire," but by their published declarations, they have enabled that gentleman to declare, and a large part of the British people have been led to believe, that Canadians are eager to give them free admission for their manufactures into the Dominion, if they will only grant us a small preference for our agricultural products in return! Every intelligent person in Canada knows this is not correct, but it is, nevertheless, the chief argument—the principal ground—on which the Chamberlain agitation is being conducted in Britain.

The proposed Imperial Federation would also lower the status and independence of Canada. The Duke of Devonshire has publicly avowed this. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour have admitted it would modify our present colonial liberties. It is manifest on the surface that it would relegate this Dominion back to something analogous to the Downing street rule we had in the days

of Sir Francis Bond Head and Sir Charles Metcalfe, and which some of our forefathers had to shed their blood to escape from. Such a step backwards would be intolerable, and when Sir Wilfrid Laurier declared, at the Chambers of Commerce banquet in Montreal, that Canada would never consent to be dragged into European militarism, nor sacrifice any of our hard-won constitutional liberties, he voiced the sentiments of nine-tenths of our fellow-countrymen.

Imperial Federation could only be made a reality by colonial representation of some kind in the present Lords and Commons, or by the creation of a new Federal body. The city of London would naturally be its meeting place. It would have control over such questions as peace and war, the management and support of the army and navy, ships and navigation, treaties with other nations, and, what necessarily follows, some control over tariffs and taxation.

Canada's Status and Liberties Lowered.

What would Canada's position be in this body? Not very long ago an eminent M. P. and K. C. thought the colonies might have their three judicial Privy Councillors admitted to the House of Lords to speak on their behalf, and a jolly Admiral, with still greater liberality, considered the right thing would be to give us adequate representation among the Lords of the Crimson Chamber! But even if our representation were based on population, it would probably not exceed one in ten in the popular Chamber, whilst the British members would be so superior in numbers, that, when desired, they could easily control all Federal questions. Our representatives might prove too limited even to protect us from what we might consider unjust taxation, should we ever be so infatuated as to hand over our purse-strings to the English, Irish and Scotch electors instead of keeping them safely in our own hands.

Besides this strong objection, already possessing and supporting, as we do, nine Local Legislatures and a Senate and House of Commons, Canada has no more need for such an Imperial Parliament than a coach has for a fifth wheel. It would be decidedly *de trop*. With municipal councils possessing power to tax our townships, cities, towns, and villages, District Councils to tax our counties, Local Legislatures to tax our Provinces, and a Federal Parliament to tax the whole Dominion, to create and overtop them all with a new Imperial Parliament, also with power to tax us, would be nothing short of a constitutional absurdity.

The Dominion could not stand such ponderous and costly Parliamentary machinery. Something would have to go, and Sir Charles Tupper has solemnly warned us, that with the introduction of Imperial Federation, "Government at Ottawa would disappear, and the functions discharged there would be exercised at St. Stephen's." Sir Charles is logically correct. To take from our Parliament and Government at Ottawa important powers of legislation and administration, including certain powers of taxation, and transfer them to an Imperial Parliament sitting in London—3,000 miles away—could hardly fail, sooner or later, to wipe out the former. Two large Parliaments to do the work of one, besides the certainty of clashing, would be too expensive and too absurd to last.

I deem it useless, however, to discuss this point further, as I am persuaded that no true Canadian, who loves this great Dominion, and realizes its immense future possibilities, would ever consent to the curtailment and degradation of our present powers of self-government, much less to sacrifice the Parliament and Government of Canada on the altar of Empire, or for any other consideration whatsoever.

"But," I fancy I hear some of my readers say, "that's not what we supposed Imperial Federation would be."

**Imperial Fed-
erationists'
Real Aim.**

Quite likely, for in Canada it means one thing, in Britain quite another.

"But you don't mean to say," my interlocutors continue, "that Mr. Chamberlain's policy means for Canada what you have outlined above?"

That's just the impressive fact which I am trying to arouse my fel-

low-Canadians to, and if you are not convinced by the late Colonial Secretary's numerous statements to that effect, let me quote his exact words as given in his London speech of March 25th, 1896, which clearly sets forth the principal objects the Imperial Federationists have in view:

"I think we may at all events learn from the experience of the Imperial Federation League, that the complete realisation of our hopes, if they are in the direction of a federation of the Empire, is a matter of such vast magnitude and such great complication that it cannot be accomplished immediately. This is only a proof that we must approach the goal in a different way, that we must not try to do everything at once, that we must seek the line of least resistance. To create a new Government for the British Empire—a new Government with large powers of taxation and legislation over countries separated by thousands of miles of sea, in conditions as various as prevail in our several dependencies and colonies—that, indeed, would be a duty which the boldest statesman might shrink from appalled. We may, however, approach this desirable consummation by a process of gradual development, etc., etc."

According to Mr. Chamberlain, then, the great object the Imperial Federationists have in view, the "goal" to be gradually approached, the "desirable consummation" ever to be kept in view, is to create "a new Government for the British Empire, with large powers of taxation and legislation over countries separated by thousands of miles of sea."

As a matter of fact, without such a Government there could be no real Imperial Federation. And with such a body, what further use would there be for our Dominion Parliament and Government? As we would then be largely governed from London their occupation and usefulness would practically be gone, although I suppose our noble Parliamentary buildings, at whose Gothic beauty so many Canadians have gazed with growing feelings of national pride, might be utilized as a great lunatic asylum or home for incurables! If the people of Canada ever consented to a policy so fatuous, we would certainly need such an institution.

From the foregoing and many other considerations, most British statesmen have heretofore regarded Imperial Federation as an "idle dream," and irrespective of party, nearly all leading Canadians have been united against it. Sir John Macdonald frequently declared it to be "utterly impracticable." Sir Oliver Mowat had never seen any scheme which appeared to him practicable. Speaking in the House of Commons the Hon. Edward Blake told his hearers "they had passed the turn, if, indeed, there had ever been a road to Imperial Federation." In his Toronto speech, May 24th, 1900, Sir Charles Tupper described it as "utterably impracticable and utterly impossible." Sir Wilfrid Laurier is strongly opposed to it, and I am not aware that the Conservative leader, Mr. R. L. Borden, has ever declared himself in its favor.

During the period of the Commercial Union agitation, The New York Herald asked for publication the opinions of Sir John Macdonald, Sir Oli-

ver Mowat, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and other prominent Canadians, on the future destiny of Canada. Sir John's reply contained the following:

**Sir John Macdonald on
Federation.**

"We are told that we want an Imperial Federation. I will not trouble you with a disquisition on that subject just now, but I will tell you Imperial Federation is utterly impracticable. We would never agree to send a number of men over to England to sit in Parliament there and vote away our rights and principles. I am, as far as the question goes, up to the handle a Home Ruler. We will govern our own country. We will put on the taxes ourselves. If we choose to misgovern ourselves we will do so, and we do not desire England, Ireland or Scotland to tell us we are fools. We will say: 'If we are fools we will keep our folly to ourselves. You will not be the worse for it, and we will not be the worse for any folly of yours.'"

This statement of Sir John Macdonald, who was conspicuously British during his whole career, is exceedingly characteristic and jaunty. His seemingly off-hand words, however, are pregnant with meaning, and very cleverly express the feelings of Canadians generally on Imperial Federation. He evidently would tolerate no interference with our rights to govern ourselves as we pleased, and that, too, whether we did it wisely or unwisely. I like the manly, independent ring of Canadianism which permeates this statement of the great Conservative leader, and if ever Imperial Federationists get their hobby beyond the nebulous stage, I am persuaded that the stirring words of Sir John on this question will be re-echoed by the great body of the Canadian people of every party and of every class.

In closing my remarks I cannot but agree with the Conservative and Liberal British statesmen—comprising four-fifths of all the most eminent Parliamentary leaders—who consider Mr. Chamberlain's policy daring and dangerous alike to the Motherland and the colonies. His whole agitation, too, is decidedly un-British. This is true both of his methods and his measures. John Bull prides himself on broadening his liberties slowly, "from precedent to precedent." Mr. Chamberlain proposes a political and commercial revolution. This is certainly true of Imperial Federation, and, commercially, he asks the nation to set aside its historic British policy of "free trade and colonial freedom," and to don partly or wholly the tattered garments of American protectionism, which millions of Americans are now earnestly trying to throw off.

Mr. Chamberlain has proclaimed himself "the Missionary of Empire," but the Imperialist Professor Dicey gives warning that his policy would have the very opposite effect. Lord Hugh Cecil, M.P., and many others go still further; they say it would "smash the Empire." I entertain great respect for, and have much faith in, the stability of the grand old

**Dangerous
Alike to Empire
and Colonies.**

Monarchy. But that Great Britain, the great trading nation of the world, could restrict its commerce and shipping by tariff obstructions, make still harder the hard lot of its toiling millions by taxing the very food they eat, and impose Imperial Federation on the colonies, with its heavy military burdens and the loss of important powers of self-government, without gravely imperiling the British Empire, I am quite unable to believe. Indeed, it is my firm conviction that such retrograde and revolutionary changes, if ever adopted, would speedily reproduce the national troubles and calamities which marked the early days of George III. and Lord North, and the loss of the American colonies in the eighteenth century be repeated before the twentieth closes.

A few words in regard to Imperialism and I have done. We are all Imperialists in Canada. so far as loyalty to Britain and British connection are concerned. But I feel safe in saying that not one Canadian in ten is of the jingo class of Imperialists, who seem to regard this great Dominion—comprising one-half of the entire North American continent—as a mere outlying “dependency” of the Empire, which ought to be made a mammoth emporium for British manufactures, and a recruiting ground for its army and navy.

He is the truer Imperialist and truer Canadian, who, whilst proud to continue to march side by side with Great Britain in national progress and prosperity, would never consent to subvert our independent Canadian Government, and instead of a peaceful, prosperous North American power, as our natural destiny seems to be, would make this great Dominion as directly connected with the politics, the military armaments, the heavy taxation and the wars and bloodshed of the Old World, as if no three thousand miles of ocean rolled between us.



