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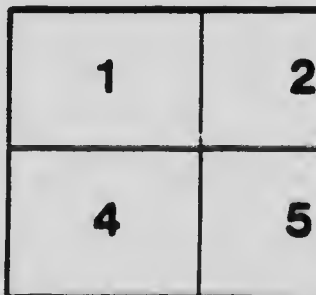
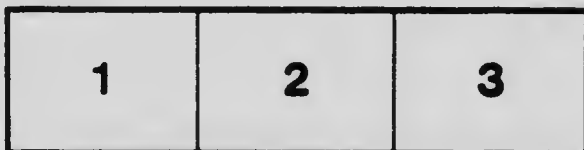
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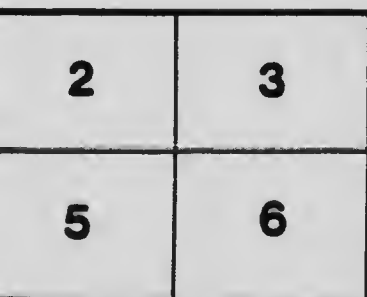
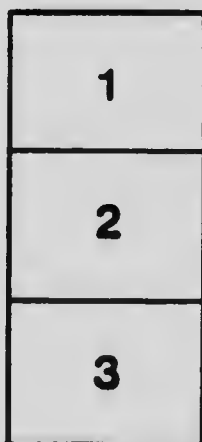
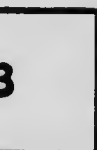
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THE  
RELATIONS OF COLONIAL BRITAIN  
TO THE EMPIRE.

A. T. DRUMMOND.



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## THE RELATIONS OF COLONIAL BRITAIN TO THE EMPIRE.

THE close sympathetic interest with which the proceedings of the Intercolonial Conference have been followed in Great Britain, indicates the completeness of the change which has taken place in public opinion there in regard to the political and commercial importance of the colonies. The incidents which marked this change will form a chapter in colonial history. A quarter of a century ago the tendency towards a protective policy on the part of some of the colonies had the effect of reviving amongst the commercial community of Great Britain the old-time impression that the colonies had been planted and fostered solely for the extension of British commerce. Self government had been conceded to these colonies and under it they had exercised their rights by imposing customs dues on British as well as foreign products—at first to raise revenue, but afterwards, in the case of some, to encourage local production as well. Political sympathy in Great Britain inclined towards the British merchant whose market was being seriously curtailed, particularly in Canada, where the competition of the American manufacturer was tending still further to diminish imports from the mother country. As discussion increased, feeling in political circles in England more especially among the Liberals became intensified, and during the regime of the Gladstone ministry of 1868-74, Canada at least, among the Colonies, was given to understand that if friendly separation were desired, the government of Great Britain would not place difficulties in the way.

Such a serious statement from an Imperial source could not fail to produce an impression on the Dominion Government of the day and on the people of Canada. The Minister of Finance in his budget speech in 1874, openly spoke of the struggle for the possibility of carrying out a distinct national existence. His utterances had with them the air of authority, but they failed to bring out any sympathetic response on the part of the Canadian people. Rebuffs and reverses generally force to the surface the



true mettle of men. The undercurrent of feeling in both Great Britain and the different Colonies was found to be distinctly Imperialistic in tone. Men of broad views like Lord Salisbury, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Roseberry, Lord Derby, Hon. E. Stanhope and Hon. W. E. Forster, in England, Sir Henry Parkes in Australia, and Sir J. A. Macdonald in Canada, strongly combated the idea of a dismantled kingdom, and pleaded for a more united and stronger empire. Eventually they awakened the popular feeling. Their views, already frequently before the public, attracted wide attention in the autumn of 1884, on the occasion, both of the dinner given in London to the Canadian Premier then on a visit to England, and of the very influential meeting held also in London, at which an association for the promotion of Imperial Federation was established: To the efforts of this Imperial Federation League and of the previously formed Colonial Institute, as well as of the various commissioners and agents general who have represented the Colonies in London during the last two decades, has been due not a little of the information about the Colonies and of the improved feeling towards them now so prevalent in Great Britain.

The immediate practical outcome of this increased interest in colonial affairs was three fold:—the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886, which through the great assemblage of industrial products brought thus together showed to the two to three millions of its visitors the immense resources of the empire, the founding of the Imperial Institute, to which so many sections of the empire contributed; and the Intercolonial Conference of 1887, convened in London by Hon. E. Stanhope, the Secretary of State, for the discussion of questions of military defence and postal and telegraphic communications.

But other forces were also at work to conciliate even the commercial community. When Belgian iron appeared in Staffordshire and German cutlery in Sheffield, though there was not much weakening of free trade theories, there was more sympathy with the Canadian manufacturer, who had to battle with the overproduction of the American market.

The Intercolonial Conference held at Ottawa in July last is the latest outcome of the desire for a closer bond of union, and taking place at a time when the Imperialistic sentiment was

stronger, it attracted wider attention and is destined to secure more practical results than the London Conference of 1887. Convened by one of the colonies, it had also a greater official importance because it met the strong view expressed by Lord Salisbury, when premier, that the colonies themselves must take the next step towards closer union. Preferential trade and quicker direct communications by cable and steam were the themes of the Conference. These, carried into effect, will form the basis of a present quasi-union, and will, through riper intercourse and a better appreciation by the different sections of each other's sources, develop a closer bond. Time will smooth over difficulties which now appear formidable and will afford the opportunity for moulding men's thoughts to suit the coming change.

And now that the occasion has been so widely given for discussing the conclusions of the Conference, what may be considered as the view of the people of Great Britain in regard to them, and what the view of the Colonists themselves? Federation in the wider sense of an empire with a common tariff, and of Colonies with a full representation in the Imperial Parliament, has long since been considered, under present conditions, impracticable. Discussion has, however, now shown, on the one hand, that the Imperial Government would be supported by public opinion if it aided the cable and steamship proposals, and, on the other, that probably all of the colonies would be disposed to differentiate in trade matters in favour of one another and of the mother country. From all sides comes also the belief that quicker and more direct communication and better trade relations, if they can be arranged between the different parts of the empire, will lead to the intensifying of the national sentiment; to the drawing closer of the bonds which tend to make the people of the Colonies feel that they form part of the empire and not a mere adjunct; and, ultimately, perhaps, to all parts of the empire acting more in concert with each other in dealing in the questions of diplomacy and defence.

These are the anticipated results, but other indirect effects must follow. Hitherto the trend of emigration from the United Kingdom has been strongly towards the United States, and not altogether to the advantage of the empire. The leading elements in the current have been the Irish, who too often had had feel-

ings of unrest intensified in the new world into open dislike for the empire which they had left behind. Those of the same race emigrating to the Colonies have made good and loyal citizens. Seeing, then, that sending to the Colonies those who will prove friends is better than planting possible enemies in a friendly foreign state, what is the great influence the Colonies under more closely knit bonds can exert in attracting immigration? Are not a brighter future and a home, if possible, among friends, the goals of the emigrant? Quite apart, then, from the effect of alien labor laws in the United States, must not the current to some extent be diverted to the colonies under the influence of expanding trade, greater demand for labor, better information about the Colonies, and increased interest in the empire?

Still another effect of closer relations will be the diversion to the colonies of a share of the surplus capital of the United Kingdom, which has hitherto so freely gone to foreign countries. Improved relations mean more opportunities for trade, and expanded trade means more numerous and more remunerative outlets for capital. Here, if we afford a measure of safety, lie the attractions to British capital. Great Britain's investments in foreign countries have been vast. It is difficult to even approximate their amount, but a partial guide is the London Stock Exchange Daily List. From it we learn that the foreign government securities, payable in London, England, aggregate nearly \$3,600,000,000, and if to this be added an estimate of the amount held in the country of the same securities quoted on the Stock Exchange, but payable in foreign capitals, a sum of not less than \$5,000,000,000, and it may be much more, represents British investments at their par value in foreign government securities alone. Unfortunately most of these obligations stand at a heavy discount. Colonial governments, on the other hand, are represented in the same lists by a sum slightly exceeding \$1,300,000,000, and it is to the credit of these Colonies that, probably without an exception, their obligations stand at a premium—in some a large premium—on the price at which they were issued. Again, the quoted stocks and bonds of foreign railways floated in London—excluding those of the United States—aggregate a sum of over \$760,000,000, and if to this be added—what must be mere conjecture—an amount equal to one-third of the railway stocks

and railway bonds of the United States quoted on the list, as representing the British share in the investments, we have towards \$2,200,000,000 as Great Britain's contribution to the building of foreign railways. Its contribution to Indian and Colonial railways together, amounts to only \$800,000,000. Without touching upon other industrial enterprises, or upon municipal loans, these somewhat conjectural figures sufficiently show the extent to which British capital has flowed into foreign channels in the past.

These are results which may be termed internal to the empire. There are results which may be termed external. One is the greater moral effect which an empire dominated by people chiefly of the same race and united for defence as well as in commercial interest, must have upon the nations. Such an assemblage of states, colonies and dependencies with their vigorous and increasing populations, occupying sections in every quarter of the globe and under every climate and producing or able to produce almost every known industrial product, must have an importance as a diplomatic and moral influence in the world outside. This influence will arise not only from the strength and unity of a great empire, the command of the vast resources which it possesses, and the courage and energy of its people, but also from the spirit of justice, which, in these later days, more and more inspires its dealings with other empires and states. This influence can only be for good in the councils of nations, and in the public opinion of their people.

Preferential trade is the proposal from the Conference, which presents the greatest difficulty to the English mind. It involves questions of markets, of treaties and, perhaps above all, of principle. Of Great Britain's imports, 77 per cent. is to foreign countries and only 28 per cent. to the British possessions. A preferential tax would considerably affect the proportions and help, it is true, the British possessions, but it might raise prices, and that is what Englishmen fear. The artisan dreads a tax, however light, on food products, the manufacturer fears lest a duty on his raw material may increase the cost of the finished product and hamper him in competition both at home and abroad, whilst the politician and manufacturer alike are apprehensive of retaliation in duties, which might result in foreign markets.

Again, Great Britain derives certain trade advantages from the continuance of the German and Belgian treaties. How far would these be counter-balanced by corresponding advantages were the treaties abrogated at the request of the Colonies? Differential trade, however, disturbs the principle of free trade, and the average Englishmen who, born and brought up in the atmosphere of free trade, and relegating arguments to Peel, Cobden and Bright, knows only that the island has prospered since the budgets of 1842-5 and the repeal of the Corn laws, has come to believe that a great principle is involved almost sacred to the nation.

We can sympathize with the drift of thought in the English mind. Just at this juncture however, is there not a nobler principle involved, worthy of even some sacrifice to maintain? There is the evolution of the nation as well as the evolution of man and of mind. The Colonies are reaching political manhood. Are the people of Great Britain conscious of the opportunity offered them of taking the leading part in building up and consolidating a greater empire? "Great economic and social forces," says the biographer of Cobden, "flow with a tidal sweep over communities that are only half conscious of that which is befalling them. Wise statesmen are those who fore-see what time is thus bringing, and endeavour to shape institutions, and to mould men's thought and purpose in accordance with the change that is silently surrounding them." The tide of Imperialism is on the flow, and he is the wise statesmen who will take advantage of this tide in earnest effort to consolidate the empire even though some sacrifice is involved.

And after all, is the sacrifice great? At the extraordinary low prices of food products now, and through the enlarged production of the world, no prospect of a return to former high prices, the effect of the slight preferential duty which the Colonies would expect, need hardly disturb the minds of the English statesman and the English artisan. The vast surplus of food supplies in the United States must find a sale, and so long as Britain remains the market which controls the range of prices, there are thousands who will argue that on the producer the duty must necessarily fall.

Again, whilst the trade of the United Kingdom with the British possessions is only, presently, one-third of that with foreign

countries, Australia, Cape Colony and Canada export and import per head of population vastly more than any foreign country, and as these great colonies continue to increase in population and wealth, their aggregate trade with the United Kingdom must increase in a greater ratio as compared with that of foreign countries. Especially must this be the case with Canada if a differential duty diverts to any considerable extent to the United Kingdom its present trade with the United States. And, besides, it would not be the first time that Great Britain had legislation in favour of Colonial products. A differential advantage given to Colonial sugars and cottons was a feature of the tariff before the repeal of the Corn laws.

And with their world-wide experience in diplomacy, do English statesmen suppose that the small preferential duty which would be imposed on a certain few products would revoke retaliation? If a McKinley tariff and the taxation of a large range of products were in view, the subject would be worthy of very serious thought. In the case of food supplies, wherever the British market controls prices, there may be distinct advantages to continental nations in buying, for instance, in the United States at the lower prices which the British duty may entail.

The further considerations which must soon arise in the process of the unification of the empire, are the share which the Colonies are to assume in the cost of diplomacy and defence, and the representation which these Colonies are to have in the councils of the empire. With the desire so prevalent for a closer union, these are considerations which time cannot fail to solve.

Assuming that probably all of the wealthy Colonies will be ready to aid in maintaining diplomatic relations with foreign courts, and in bearing the burdens of defence, a suggestive course in providing for the cost would be by the imposition of a small tax on the registered shipping and on the total imports, of each colony. This would not only reach those who directly received the advantage of protection from the navy, but would spread the cost over the people of the Colony generally, and would be so light that it would hardly be felt.

Representation of the Colonies at Westminster has always presented a difficult problem, but, even there, the quasi-ambassa-

dorial powers which we have given to our Commissioners and Agents-General suggest that if these representatives were made ex-officio members of the Imperial Parliament with the right to discuss and vote on foreign and Colonial questions it might afford a present temporary solution of the question. The general spirit of fairness which now pervades Parliament in considering Colonial questions would be a sufficient assurance to these representatives of the support they would receive. In the course of time, as the Colonies increased in population and importance, the interests involved would demand a larger and more effective representation, and especially might this be the case if a Home Rule bill gave seats at Westminster to a separated Ireland.

Whilst the Colonies are thus aspiring to the status of empire, how far are we, the inhabitants of these Colonies educating ourselves into a high standard of citizenship. There is still a better development needed in our national character—still great room for improvement in the moral force of our people. We in the Dominion want a greater infusion of a national sentiment which will find expression in a deeper love of our country, in a more healthy pride in our institutions and a more earnest determination to improve them. We want freedom of thought and action, untrammelled by prejudices of party, race or religion. We want our public offices filled by men who can show the recommendation of ability and honour and not by those whose chief claim is that they can establish their nationality or religious belief or that they have faithfully served their party. We want our civic affairs managed with intelligence and economy, and not made the sources of bribery and peculation. We want our politics freed from that phase of party which sees no virtue in an opponent and, because it is out of power, takes pride in depreciating its country, and equally from that phase of party which maintains power at the expense of a record which should be above reproach. Finally, we want each man to feel that he has a country to live for as well as a country to live in, and that, whatever his position in life, he can exercise some influence, however small, in giving the shape to the course of his country's future and force to its current.

A scheme more worthy of a statesman's efforts than even an Imperial union is a close permanent alliance between the two great English speaking nations, under which all their own differ-

ences arising from time to time would be referred to arbitration, and each would afford to the other aid in case of aggression by other powers—the great purposes being the promotion of peace and prosperity, not merely among themselves, but among other nations as well. The world knows no more noble effort among nations than the promotion of peace and the suppression of the horrors of war. Why should not two such nations as Great Britain and the United States form a friendly, permanent alliance with these noble aims in view? The intelligence, education, enterprise and wealth of their people—all sources of power—have made these nations great; they are akin in blood and Christian sympathy; they have colossal business interests with each other which it would be folly to interrupt; and whilst the one has vast proprietary interests in every quarter of the globe and commercial interests with every nation, the other with its vigorous, energetic people, controls the more important part of a whole continent. Such an alliance would have an influence for good reaching far beyond the mere parties to it. Whilst it would ensure peace and encourage trade between these two nations themselves, it would tend largely to bring about peace throughout the civilized world. On the one hand, the alliance being defensive, not aggressive, would prevent either nation from lightly undertaking useless or preventable wars in which it might not have the sympathy of the other; on the other hand, the moral and diplomatic influence of the alliance on foreign powers would necessarily be most marked. What Bismarck, however confident of the strength and resources of his people, could hope to cope with the vigorous manhood and wealth of resource of Great Britain and the United States? And with the business interests of these two nations extending themselves to every part of importance in the six continents, what foreign powers entering into war with each other, and placing thus a barrier to the commerce of their ports, could afford to altogether disregard the diplomatic representation of the alliance, if made in the interests of peace and commerce?

Such an alliance would have other lasting effects on the people themselves. It means more friendly relations; a better recognition of the common parentage; more disposition to trade freely with each other; fewer strained constructions of acts of Parlia-



ment and Congress to suit jealous competitors in trade; and fewer difficulties hitherto often purposely placed in the way of the settlement of international disputes.

With the large restless foreign element now so prominent a feature in the American population there is no hope that the War of Independence will ever be forgotten or regretted, no hope that Great Britain and the United States will ever assimilate their tariffs or become, both of them, converts to free trade, no hope that they will in the future be other than close commercial competitors in every foreign port, as well as at home, but there is a hope that with the intelligence, education and Christian principle which so eminently characterize their people, these two great nations can, in friendly alliance, be made the instruments for the promotion of peace and good will throughout the world.

A. T. DRUMMOND.





