

to make these views known. Equally impressed by a sense of public duty, I have the honour to submit explanations on a subject which at the present moment occupies the thoughts of many persons throughout the King's dominions. These explanations will be found to relate to the gradual evolution of the Empire.

More than a hundred and thirty years ago the great and gifted Irishman, Edmund Burke, and the illustrious U.E. loyalist Joseph Galloway, on opposite sides of the ocean, each had visions of a mighty Empire; more than fifty years ago its organization was a dream of the great Canadian, Joseph Howe; since then it has been the dream of other great men of various races, in various British communities, and in yearly increasing numbers.

For a generation back Imperial Federation Leagues, British Empire Leagues, and other associations have been formed with the avowed purpose of converting the dream into a reality. The goal has not been reached; but if the desired results have not followed, these several agencies have done much to awaken the spirit of union which now to so large an extent prevails.

The First Necessity.

The organization of the Empire was brought specially to the attention of the Canadian people in October last by three envoys from England—Sir Frederick Pollock, Mr. Geoffrey Drage, and Mr. Pitt Kennedy. These gentlemen travelled throughout the Dominion and addressed public meetings in several cities. It will be my purpose to refer to some of the chief proposals they submitted, and furnish the views of many eminent Canadians respecting them. From such evidence I think it will be apparent that the time is not yet ripe for the adoption of the proposals—at least, in the order in which they were presented. Moreover, the evidence will show that no scheme of organization is likely to be readily and generally acceptable unless and until some effective means be taken by and through which the people of every portion of the Empire are made better acquainted than at present with each other, and with all matters concerning their mutual well-being.

This points directly to the first step which the circumstances of the case appear to demand—the establishment of an adequate service for disseminating useful knowledge throughout the Empire for the mutual advantage of all. I am satisfied that such a service, established under Imperial authority, and properly organized to accomplish the desired ends, would prove a powerful and effective educating influence. I believe there is nothing which would more speedily tend to bring about the harmonious union of all British communities.

At present we have, it is true, the Imperial postal service; but, owing to distance and the time taken up in transit, this service is entirely inadequate. No satisfactory exchange of thought or general discussion can be carried on when it requires two or three months to get a reply to any kind of postal communication.

It may be said that delegates could be sent from one country to another to make speeches and deliver lectures; but the audiences in all such cases would be limited. The circumstances require not simply that lectures or *post-prandial* speeches be heard by a few on special occasions, but that the millions be reached frequently. This, I am satisfied, is the first problem to be solved, unless the consolidation of the Empire is to be indefinitely postponed. That it can be solved, and most effectively, I have no doubt whatever, by utilising the electric telegraph, and by combining its use with the daily and other journals in each British community. Through the co-operation of cables and the Press we would come into possession of the very best medium for conveying selected intelligence to the millions who read the newspapers, and whose children attend school. Immense good can be done through the schools in the British world in giving direction to our political destiny; but I cannot now dwell on this branch of the subject.

A Great Circle of Empire Cables.

There is no novelty in the proposal about to be referred to. It was foreshadowed in the proceedings of the Colonial Conferences of 1887 and 1894. It has since these dates been advocated from time to time. It was put into concrete form in a communication addressed to the then Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 28th October, 1898.

In this document it was proposed that all the self-governing British communities in both hemispheres be brought into direct electric touch with each other, and all with the Mother-country. It was designed that cable-telegraphs should connect each adjacent or proximate community in such a manner as to constitute, with the connecting land-lines, a continuous chain of telegraph around the globe, and thus admit of messages being sent in either direction, as circumstances or convenience might call for, from any one British State to any other British State.

The globe-encircling chain of telegraph cables would extend from England to Canada, and thence to New Zealand, Australia, India, South Africa, and the West Indies, returning to England by way of Bermuda, with a branch to Nova Scotia or Newfoundland. That this system of connecting-lines may be of the highest Imperial advantage, it is essential that it be wholly State-owned and State-controlled.

This globe-encircling chain has been designated the "Empire cables," for the reason that it would telegraphically unite all the great self-governing units of the Empire without traversing, or even touching, any foreign soil. Its establishment as a State undertaking would greatly reduce charges for transmitting oversea messages. There is evidence which makes plain that the revenue would be ample to pay working-expenses, and the working-policy advised would be to reduce charges progressively as the volume of traffic increased.

The letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, when made public in 1898, attracted much attention in the Press. Two years thereafter a great impulse was given to the project by an agreement, entered into on the 31st December, 1900, between the Home Government and the Governments of Canada, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and New Zealand. By this agreement a unique partnership was formed between six British Governments for the purpose of