

III.

From the Reverend Robert A. Falconer, Litt.D., Principal of the Presbyterian College, Halifax:—

I have read your letters addressed to the Canadian Club with much interest, and they seem to me to be thoroughly reasonable.

I think there can be no doubt that, while we hope strongly for a larger Imperial unity in the not-very-distant future, at present the only safe and really effective method of promoting it is so to increase our knowledge of and friendship for one another throughout the Empire, that it will ere long be seen by the various parts of His Majesty's Dominion that a closer union of some sort is supremely reasonable. We may allow time, perhaps almost unconsciously, to work out the comprehensive plan.

IV.

From the Very Reverend Daniel M. Gordon, D.D., Principal of Queen's University, Kingston:—

Imperial Federation has been talked of by some for generations, and by many more for the past decade, but your own repeated suggestion regarding the telegraphic supply of intelligence throughout the scattered members of the Empire, so that the various portions may thus get acquainted with each other, is the most immediately practicable proposal I have seen in connection with it. We cannot begin to move with any confidence towards the formation of an Imperial Council, or even, it seems to me, towards helpful tariffs, until we get more general information. If the newspapers throughout the British Empire could give their readers as full information of the ongoings in the different parts of the Empire as the papers of the United States give regarding the several States, it would help more than anything else I can think of to promote such an intelligent sympathy between the Mother-country and outer Britain, and between the several parts of outer Britain, as would facilitate a safe and early tightening of the bonds of Imperial federation. By such means we would be building on clear knowledge and ascertained facts, instead of, as at present, upon fancy and individual opinion.

V.

From Ian C. Hannah, Esq., D.C.L., President of King's College, Windsor:—

I am enthusiastically in agreement with the views you express. In South Africa, Canada, and other parts of the Empire where I have resided, I have been much impressed by the purely local character of most of the contents of the newspapers. Newspaper-men are unanimous in telling me it is a question of money; it costs so much more to get distant telegrams than to publish local gossip. On all grounds I feel the value of the suggestion of free Press news within the limits of the Empire and devoutly hope the scheme may be realised in no distant future.

VI.

From the Reverend T. C. P. Macklem, D.D., Provost, Trinity University, Toronto:—

I find myself in complete agreement with your views that the time is not yet ripe for the establishment of anything of the nature of an Imperial Council. We are still in the stage of slow and gradual formation of public opinion in regard to Imperial relations, and any attempt to crystallize such opinion at the present time in the concrete form of a Council, or to legislate in respect of it, would, in my judgment, be more likely to retard than to foster the growth of true and enduring unity.

I find myself in agreement with you also as to the desirability of doing something to bring all the different portions of the Empire into closer, constant, and easy communication with each other. I do not, however, feel so confident as you appear to, that this aim would be effected by increased cable facilities.

What seems to me to be quite as necessary as such facilities is the establishment of something of the nature of a Board of Correspondents, having at least one correspondent of high standing and good judgment in each colony, so as to insure the wise selection and editing of the news to be sent throughout the Empire day by day. A Central Executive Committee of such a Board could gradually educate these correspondents by carefully directed criticism as well as by positive instructions from time to time in respect of the kind of news considered suitable for transmission. In this way the great body of public opinion of a homogeneous character might gradually be built up throughout the Empire. If it is something of this kind that is meant by an "Imperial Intelligence Department" I should heartily approve of it.

VII.

From the Very Reverend William MacLaren, D.D., Principal of Knox College, Toronto:—

I am glad to find myself largely in accord with the views set forth in your letter. The Imperial question is forcing itself on the attention of all thoughtful subjects of the British Crown. Not very long ago the attempt to unite more closely by political bonds the scattered portions of the British Empire seemed scarcely within the range of practical statesmanship. But the modern applications of steam and electricity are drawing the distant parts of the earth so closely together that what was formerly impracticable seems daily to grow more feasible. In matters of this kind, however, it is especially necessary not to outrun public opinion. To bring all parts of the Empire into intelligent and sympathetic touch with each other should certainly be the first step towards closer political relations, and your proposal for an Imperial Intelligence Department and a free Press cable service seems eminently fitted to prepare the way for those closer political relations to which we should look.