

ENGLAND OR EMPIRE

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FOR an inhabitant of the Western World it is doubtful whether any spectacle on this planet equals in interest the latter-day complacent attitude of the British public in damning Imperial questions which urgently demand an answer; unless it be the corresponding vision of the Hindu Gandhi disarming the Government of India with a spinning-wheel and a pinch of salt! In Great Britain it does not seem to be fully realised that the British Empire—excepting India and the Crown Colonies—is now composed of distinct entities, which to all practical intents and purposes are sovereign states. Learned lawyers may dispute the meaning of this word “sovereignty”; but, though we all recognize a more or less common origin and a King-Emperor, over-much word spinning is sterile in this twentieth century, and results only in a Mahatmatic vision of the universe.

This stupendous heritage is rather in the nature of an Imperial Dreadnought, divided into watertight compartments. If any single one of these compartments is hit by a torpedo, the whole fabric will speedily become the abode of deep-sea barnacles; and, despite all the peace-mongering and vote-mongering which goes on in so-called civilised countries, there are deadly torpedos in this world only waiting to be launched. Our simple forefathers bought off the pirates of the North Sea by allowing Hengist and Horsa to settle in the Isle of Thanet, and we all know the sequel; but the parliament of the British Isles allows the descendants of another line of Scythians to set up a centre of poisonous gas in the city of London, and not one policeman holds up his hand in protest. What are we to make of a battleship whose engineers in one watertight compartment act independently of the stokers in another, and whose personnel lack a directing force to apply the observations of the navigating officers? That is exactly the position of the British Empire, and no amount of argument can convince any Imperialist otherwise than that such a derelict vessel is not only a grave danger to all shipping in the fairway, but contains in itself all the elements of dissolution. Whether we regard foreign policy, defence, communication, education, migration, trade, or any other essential element of British Imperial interest,

we find an entire lack of Imperial objective, and an absence of directive force.

In foreign policy it cannot be maintained that the recognition of the U. S. S. R. by one Imperial entity and its non-recognition by any other is evidence of Imperial union. That Egypt or India should be wholly administered by the local Government of the British Isles without reference to Australia, South Africa or Canada, save through observers sitting on the fence, is not conducive to Imperial union. That the British Isles should assume responsibility for a Jewish state of sovereignty in Palestine or a League of Nations mandate in some other world sphere may be legitimate as far as the British public is concerned, but it is hardly fair that Australians or Canadians should be invited at a future date to embark in a crusade against the Moslem world for the sake of some returned exiles to the Promised Land. That the British Government should apparently antagonize France and favour Italian interests in the Mediterranean may suit the voting population of the British Isles, but it is hardly likely to be acceptable to the inhabitants of Quebec or the King's Dominions who yet have vivid memories of *Deutschland uber alles*, and do not favour any Italian variant. Egypt is one of the most vital spots on the mental horizon of any British Imperialist, and it needs to be remembered that the Great Circle—the shortest possible route—from New Zealand to Newfoundland, passes through Cairo; whilst the Suez isthmus, through which commerce deviates from the mathematical Great Circle, is not only the link to bind millions of souls and acres for which the British Empire is responsible, in Asia and Africa, but also the point on which the various nations of the Empire can converge most easily in peace or war.

The mere assumption that Canada or Australia should have to vote with France or Poland against the Irish Free State, Peru, or Great Britain in the councils of a so-called League of Nations may be a cheap method of amusement for the gallery; but the cost of the scenery and electric lighting—not to mention the production—assuredly comes expensive to the cause of Imperial unity. The British Empire would seem to cringe before every other earthly sovereignty because it has no foreign policy, the present foreign policy is conducted entirely with a view to the supposed immediate interests of the British Isles. In regard to defence, it is fairly common knowledge that if it had not been for the protestations of British Overseas representatives at the late Naval Conference, the British Imperial Navy would have been reduced to impotence as far as any struggle with the United States of America or any combination of first-class powers was concerned.

In Canada we do not believe in "secret diplomacy", and consider ourselves free to regard the British Empire as a greater unity than any other conglomeration of states in the universe. In that case we fail to understand how our defence can be secured locally through mere Imperial parity in warships with the country to the south, and, as Canadian Imperialists and descendants of United Empire Loyalists we consider our defences are more worthy of consideration than those of the United States of America. If we are to remain masters in our own country and an entity of the British Imperial hegemony, we must be able to defend ourselves in war as in peace. Incidentally, the preservation of the West Indian Islands and Honduras is vital to the defence of Canada and the Empire, and any local British Government which forces the inhabitants of these British possessions, by economic or other means, into the arms of the United States cannot be said to be an Imperial Government. That statement is not to be taken with a pinch of Mahatmatic salt; it ought to be swallowed with a few thousand tons of sugar by British advocates of what they are pleased to term "open air" diplomacy.

In Australasia no Imperial naval co-operation can possibly be adequate which abandons the strategical development of the isle of Singapore. The Dominions of the Empire have contributed to the promotion of a naval base at Singapore; and, though on any day of the year the value of British merchant ships and cargoes in Far Eastern and Australian waters and in the Indian Ocean is over £150,000,000, the Government of the British Isles considers that our Imperial Navy can operate in that part of the world without docking facilities. Further, this same Government, acting in the name of a great Empire, has recently asked British Mercantile Marine Companies in eastern seas to pay for their own defence against Chinese or other pirates! The British army has steadily been reduced to its lowest skeleton limits, and, what is much worse, nothing but discouragement is given by the local British Government to any reserves of half trained troops or embryo officers, such as Territorials or Cadet Corps, who might be drawn on in time of need. The same discouragement is noticeable in some of the overseas Dominions.

With the present inclination for peace at any price, there is a steadfast weakening of the dignity and moral fibre of the Empire inherent in this diminution of armaments, and petty huckstering with other world powers does not lead to world peace; it produces only motion pictures for children. Virtually the Government of the British Isles, instead of maintaining and developing the defensive

powers of the British Empire,—not to mention offensive powers—is busily engaged in reducing Imperial armaments to a scale which may be commensurate with the defence of the British Isles, but which is in no way equal to the security of the Imperial domain.

Fundamentally, Imperial defence is a question of the organization of supplies of food and raw material, manufacturing ability, and population in each of the separate entities of the Empire. The late war proved these principles to the hilt of a bayonet; yet not the slightest attention is paid by the Government of the British Isles to the lessons of 1914-1918. As long as the Briton prefers his wheat from foreign countries instead of Kent, Alberta, or West Australia; as long as he continues to drive British capital and manufacturing ability to regions outside the orbit of the Empire, and neglects agricultural development at home and in the outer Empire; as long as population and manufacturing power are confined to the British Isles, and the overseas entities considered by the British public merely as deposits of natural wealth and their inhabitants hewers of wood and drawers of water; so long will the cause of British Imperialism remain in a precarious state. These anomalies can be removed only by Imperial governance.

In regard to the question of Imperial communication, one does not find that much importance is attached to the cultivation and formation of a healthy Imperial sentiment, in the British Isles, the King's Dominions, or the Crown Colonies, and there is a singular lack of Imperial co-operation. For instance, much fuss is made over the trip of *R100* across the Atlantic. Yet any person of experience knows that aeroplane communication by Greenland to Montreal or Winnipeg from England would be much more satisfactory for Imperial needs. The aeroplanes are in existence, and need no spectacular trial trips, but the Government of Great Britain has not even surveyed possible landing stages. Is this the duty of the Canadian Government? Every year one reads of joy rides to Australia, but we leave it to the Dutch to link up communication between India and the Southern Continent. Was it the duty of the Australian Government? Though civil aviation is developing rapidly in the Dominions as well as in the British Isles, one finds that, for purposes of defence, neither the natural resources nor the manufacturing capacities of the Dominions are exploited under any sense of Imperial direction, whilst various strategical and tactical points are left entirely unguarded and neglected.

The Australian, the Canadian, the New Zealander, or the average inhabitant of the British Empire knows more about the

mentality of the State of California than he does about the British Empire. No use whatsoever is made of the cinema as an educational Imperial force in the life of British Imperial entities, or as propaganda in foreign countries. Instead, the more backward races of the Empire are presented with films of modern civilization which can do nothing save promote sedition and disintegration. As a means of Imperial propaganda, the cinema can never be an active force throughout the Empire or in foreign countries unless under the supervision of a British Imperial Government. The Government of the British Isles, strong in its divine principles of Free Trade, cannot protect its own citizens against the teachings of alien entities. Throughout the extent of the Empire one meets with cheap foreign magazines and literature, which, day by day and week by week, expound their fiery American or other civilization to the inhabitants of the British Empire. But similar Imperial literature is apparently only for local consumption. Nobody objects to foreign literature, films, or art in moderation, but Imperial literature and Imperial art are as necessary to the Imperial unity as—"Empire goods".

In the schools of Canada one sees text books of United States origin which would lead the young Imperialist to understand that the United States of America won the late war of 1914-18, whilst our Imperial armies and navies presumably played poker and smashed rum jars as duly related by Imperial mugwumps. In the British Isles no proper presentation of the Imperial hegemony—its history, its geography, its life, its spirit—is conveyed to the youthful mind. To read the average English school geography, one would imagine Canada was a land of icicles and Montreal a mere trading post on the Saint Lawrence, whilst in history the exploits of William the Conqueror and Bonnie Prince Charlie are seemingly more of an Imperial necessity than the story of a philanthropic Earl of Selkirk or the life and trials of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. If we wish the younger generation to imbibe some of the spirit of Empire, they must needs realise in Britain that Montreal is quite comparable to Liverpool, as in Canada it requires to be remembered that the city of Westminster is every whit as important as the city of New Westminster or the city of Washington.

In the outer Dominions of the Empire we may cultivate the sciences more than the humanities, but we may have a notion that our children are in this way better equipped to develop and enjoy their heritage. The ordinary English state school education and university curriculum are designed apparently for the production of learned philosophers, but how many shoemakers do we need and

how many philosophers? The majority of British school children, animated by a worthy Imperial sentiment, would prefer to milk cows, rear chickens, shoot coyotes, sail aeroplanes, or build bridges out by the Peace river. Such commendable natural instincts are sterilised by education as conceived by the local educational authorities of the British Isles.

We have bitter need of the humanities in Canada and the overseas Dominions; but it does not seem to be realised in Great Britain that if the Dominions are to be considered as only entrepôts of natural resources, it is certain that we have a long way to travel before we shall ever have much use for the purely refining influences embodied in older civilizations. One of the chief objections to British migrants in the Dominions is precisely that we already have enough decorative citizens, and prefer ordinary labour and technical ability. How can we be otherwise when no Imperial effort is made to distribute Imperial needs? In a word, when the genii of Imperialism remain uselessly bottled up in a few square miles of the city of London, wherein we have had recently H. M. Commissioner of Works solemnly declaring that "Work is a curse—None of us wants to go to manual labour. I ran away from it myself at the earliest possible moment. None of us wants to go back to it; I certainly do not", which looks like blasphemy in a gentleman who is apparently a representative of British Labour.

In the year 1930 neither Australia nor Canada was prepared to accept British migrants in any number. Why should they, when they cannot find profitable markets for the productions of their own people, and they are resolutely hindered from any preference in the local markets of the British Isles? In strict accordance with the theory of watertight compartments, each Imperial entity fences its inhabitants from contamination by the inhabitants of another Imperial entity. Practically the Imperial entities have a perfect right to safeguard their own populations; at the same time it is not justifiable in any view of Imperial Law that subjects of the King-Emperor should be debarred from entering any of the King's Dominions. Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of Imperialism than that citizens of the Empire should have to submit to vexatious mental, moral, or physical inspection in order to enter any part of their heritage. Further deportation of a citizen from one part of the Empire into another part of the Empire is no recognition of Imperial citizenship, whatever one may think of Imperial sovereignty. The remedy for this dangerous state of things does not lie in fruitless consultation between the different Imperial entities; it lies in the establishment of an Imperial govern-

ance empowered with executive authority in communication and Imperial affairs.

To expect that representatives of the different Imperial entities, meeting in a temporary conference in London, can usefully inaugurate some agreement on Imperial economic union is not to go quite beyond the bounds of probability; but it is fairly evident that without some form of permanent Imperial governance no continuous policy can be developed. If all the Imperial tariffs and economic expedients were arranged satisfactorily to-morrow, action by foreign nations in the next week could render such an arrangement null, and even worse than useless. With the present machinery of Imperial government—dependence on Divine Providence and our King Emperor—it is clearly impossible to obtain Imperial harmony and continuity in commerce, any more than in foreign policy, defence, communication, education, migration, or any Imperialism worthy of the name. The present Government of the British Isles seems to consider foreign agricultural produce more desirable than that of the King's Dominions; and the welfare of Denmark, Spain, Greece, Geneva, Argentine, the U. S. S. R., or the U. S. A. is manifestly of more importance than that of Canada, Australia, or the British Empire.

The leader of the English Conservative Opposition party declares that he is opposed to taxes on food, unless by referendum the inhabitants of Great Britain signify their consent. If every Imperial entity were to proceed on the same basis and demand a referendum as to whether eggs, nickel, or opals should be subject to local tariffs, how can any reasonable person contemplate such a method of promoting Imperial economic unity? Each entity has it in its power to do as it pleases in fiscal matters, but no individual entity has the right to sacrifice the interests of the Empire to its voting population. No British tariff which fails to protect Australian or Canadian natural or agricultural produce against that of the foreigner is of the slightest benefit to these countries.

Having faith in the British Empire, and no compunction about the efficiency of tariffs in Canada, we defend our markets against the United States, and offer reductions in our tariff to the inhabitants of the British Isles. But the British people, lacking faith in the British Empire, cannot even favour the wheat growers of our western provinces. The British political parties yearly devote much time to the question of unemployment in the British Isles. As a matter of cold hard fact, there never was a greater need for labour in this world than in the development of the King's Dominions. The unemployed question turns endlessly in the

British political mangle because the British, as the Canadians or the Australians, work in watertight compartments, and inhabit a ship without a captain. It is not an Imperial Economic conference, Defence conference, Foreign Policy conference, Air conference, Education conference, Migration conference, or any other kind of conference which is needed to-day for the British Empire; it is an Imperial Conference which can lay the foundations for Imperial governance. Emigration from the British Isles to the Dominions is absolutely dependent on the marketing power of these Dominions. The British Isles cannot expect any quantitative migration if they refuse to recognize potential, protected Canadian, Australian, and other markets. These outer Dominions must have tariffs, otherwise they cannot preserve their economic unity, and, if they are to support adequate population, their manufacturing ability and power to work up their raw material and provide employment must be increased. Their welfare depends on increased population to promote larger local markets, and such increase is not justifiable if they can find no favoured Imperial markets.

To enable the Empire to stand four-square, it is absolutely necessary that its unpopulated areas should be populated. Each entity should be self supporting and self sufficient. There is an entire lack of organization in the present system, and any narrow ideal of Imperialism which neglects the interests of the British Empire for those of the British Isles is not British Imperialism. The Roman Empire decayed through the centralization of power, lungs, and heart in the city of Rome, and the British hegemony will decay if the city of London is allowed to take the part of the city of Rome. The greatest principle we have gained since the time of Imperial Rome is the scientific principle, and full use must be made of science in any scheme of Imperial government. Science tends to annihilate space, and the British Empire exists throughout the globe. A nation may have only one capital and one heart, but a modern Empire should have as many capitals as it has entities within its frontiers, and each capital should have a heart throb in unison. The Roman genius attained to that noble but unostentatious conception of "equality before the laws" which forms its great and enduring contribution to the conception of modern democracy. It was, however, the Roman Empire, not the Roman Republic, that left this heritage to the world, in a mould so enduring that it remained intact throughout the centuries of feudalism of the Middle Ages.

It was in the British Isles that there grew to maturity the vitally important principle of representative government, which,

with its machinery of election, voting of majorities, and popular control of the executive, has made democracy possible as a working system of government. Representation is thus the great contribution made by the British genius for practical affairs in the progress of the human race. When faults of distance and of numbers made it impossible for all subjects of one state to meet together to debate new laws and national policy, or to vote the sums required for the work of government, the expedient was devised that the men of each town or county should meet together locally and appoint representatives armed with full powers, to attend a central parliament and bind their constituents to concur in what might be there determined. Without this invention modern democracy, fraught with its immense possibilities for good and evil, could never have been born.

It is for the inhabitants of the British Empire to adopt the methods and material provided by science, the latest increment in government, and ensure further the continuance of the British Imperial genius. With the present means of communication it ought to be possible to have the Imperial Council of a perambulating nature; in no way fixed in London, any more than in Ottawa, Canberra, Delhi, or Capetown. The King-Emperor should be as prominent in Winnipeg or Auckland as in London or Edinburgh. There should be exchange of military, naval, or air defence units between the different Imperial entities, and the Rotarian methods of business and scientific circles should apply also to the necessities of Imperialism, including sport, wireless, music, sculpture, painting, dramatic art, dancing, poesy, philosophy, etc. All the pageantry and courts of Empire should be as substantial in Australia or elsewhere as on the Horse Guards Parade at Whitehall.

The interests of the British Empire are more vital than the interests of any of the British Imperial entities, and no system of government on a purely federalistic basis is remotely conceivable for immediate requirements. Fundamentally all government subsists on the faith of the governed, and manifestly Imperial governance can rest only on Imperial faith, that is to say that instead of having an Imperial Council elected by British or Dominion parliaments or assemblies, which are to-day on an equality with the British parliament, it would seem that the choice of members of such an Imperial Council were better left to the King-Emperor, and formed somewhat on the lines of an Imperial Privy Council. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council already forms the supreme legal tribunal of the Empire, and it should be possible to endow the Privy Council with Imperial executive and adminis-

trative powers. If our King-Emperor at present has the power to choose a prime minister of Great Britain from the predominating party leaders in British politics, why should he not have the power of selecting a Privy or other Imperial Council, on the recommendations of British and Dominion Governments and senates? If the Governments of the outer Dominions are to be considered on an equality of status with the British Government, the representation of these entities on the Imperial Council should conform to their status.

Devolution in the British Empire has proceeded hitherto on the principle of delegating political power to overseas entities; the time has now arrived wherein it is expedient to consider the delegation of social power, economical or otherwise. To further this principle, wherein no part of the Empire is more exposed to disintegration than any other, and wherein there is an equality of citizenship throughout the Imperial domain, needs Imperial governance. The limit of political devolution having now been reached throughout the Empire, the next logical step is to provide an Imperial Council which would relieve the British Isles of its unwieldy responsibility in Imperial affairs, and ensure the unity of all the Imperial entities and dependencies and the continuity of an Imperial policy.

The Treaty of Versailles in 1783 marked the end of the first British Colonial Empire wherein colonies were understood to be nothing other than commercial adjuncts to the British Isles, and absolutely subsidiary to the whims of the Government of these isles. The Treaty of Versailles in 1919 marked the end of the second British Colonial Empire, wherein the colonies, "knowing their mighty youth", gained their recognition as distinct entities in a world empire. Though we have developed science as a power in governance, nothing can prevent a local Government from taking a local view of the Imperial area. Imperial governance can be obtained only if the governance is not subject to local influence, and this is one of the reasons why I advocate a migratory form of governance, quite conceivable with the aid of science. Further, the conception of democracy as the rule of a mob, held in many entities of the British Dominions, is not only entirely opposed to any principle of Imperialism, but contrary to the traditions of the British Empire.