

**PROBLEMS OF
EMPIRE; PAPERS
AND ADDRESSES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649371525

Problems of empire; papers and addresses by T. A. Brassey

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

T. A. BRASSEY

**PROBLEMS OF
EMPIRE; PAPERS
AND ADDRESSES**

PROBLEMS OF EMPIRE.

PROBLEMS
OF EMPIRE

PAPERS AND ADDRESSES
BY THE HON. T. A. BRASSEY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LIBRARY
410 S. BURNBANK
LOS ANGELES
CALIF.

LONDON

ARTHUR L. HUMPHREYS, 187 PICCADILLY, W

1904

PREFACE

BY GEORGE R. PARKIN.

THE Imperial Federation League, founded in 1884 under the Presidency of that distinguished Liberal Statesman, the late Mr. W. E. Forster, carried on during the succeeding years a vigorous propaganda of education on National questions both at home and in the great Colonies. In 1886 Mr. Forster was succeeded in the Presidency by Lord Rosebery. During the years in which Lord Rosebery guided the work of the League, and largely under his inspiration, a profound impression, pregnant with the results of the greatest national consequence, was unquestionably made on British opinion throughout the world. It was my privilege during those years to come closely in touch with popular feeling both in Britain and in the Colonies, and I have always thought that the gradual change from indifference to keen interest, from an attitude of critical questioning to one of accepted conviction in regard to the main principles which the League put forward, furnishes one of the most singular and encouraging instances in our history of a decisive evolution of political opinion without the aid of party conflict. Those years saw many of our

PREFACE

most important journals become ardent advocates of a national ideal which they had at first looked upon with distrust ; they saw prominent men, who had long held aloof, gradually led to put themselves at the head of a movement which was profoundly influencing the national mind ; above all, they witnessed the formation of a sound body of public opinion which accepted the central idea that the continued unity of the Empire is a question which rises far above most of the issues which divide our party politics ; and that the attainment of a completer unity than at present exists ought to be the supreme object of our national policy.

When the responsibilities of office compelled Lord Rosebery (in 1892) to resign the direction of the League, his place was filled by the late Mr. Edward Stanhope, under whose Presidency the League was dissolved. With the policy of dissolution I never agreed. It gave offence to Members of the League in Canada, was rejected by those of Australia, and only made way for organizations on somewhat narrower lines in England. In my judgment, the League might have continued to furnish a middle ground upon which men of all parties could study and discuss the problems of Empire without the acrimony which usually attends party debate. But in the absence of such an arena for discussion, it was inevitable that sooner or later, under our system of politics, some of these problems would furnish watchwords for party fight.

That time has now apparently arrived.

The early advocates of Imperial Federation were inclined to treat Protection and Free Trade as questions which might fairly be left open for solution in the light of changing circumstances. Whether the principle

PREFACE

of Free Imports, which had so long controlled the policy of the Motherland, or the Protectionist system, which was manifestly gaining ground in the great Colonies, would gain the ascendancy for the nation as a whole, was still uncertain. But whether developed by Free Trade or Protection, the vast and rapidly increasing commerce of the Empire, demanded adequate security from attack; the interests of the different lands under the flag claimed due representation; the policy of the Empire required coherent and consistent direction; the methods by which these great ends should be secured must of necessity be sought for and established.

In seeking such methods, in striving to make the British Empire an effective national unit among the vast aggregations of force growing up around it, there might well be room, I think, for studying dispassionately even questions of Trade.

But the battle has now been joined on closer lines. We are passing through a period of active transition. The conditions of the world are changing; the outlook of national life becomes different every year; in many cases the principles which have seemed adequate for the guidance of national conduct are questioned as they have not been for half a century. We seem to be upon the verge of a time when theoretical discussions, which have long occupied the minds of earnest men, must either be carried forward to practical conclusions or must be abandoned as unpractical and useless. It is inevitable that at such a period, in the midst of strongly conflicting opinions, and a complex array of facts and figures, individuals must make grave decisions in reliance upon their own judgment.

The present volume illustrates the process by which

PREFACE

such decisions are made. The cause of National Unity has had no more sincere, earnest, or strenuous advocate than Mr. Brassey. To this great idea he has consecrated no small portion of his time and thought for many years. The knowledge gained in wide travel throughout the Empire has been laid under constant contribution to this end. During the years in which we have worked together, I have constantly admired the way in which he subordinated his own interest and his feelings as a Party politician to the broad principle and purpose of a United Empire.

It is natural that a candidate for Parliamentary honours in this country should wish the constituents whose support he seeks, to have a full opportunity to know the conclusions at which he has arrived on public questions, and the path along which his mind has travelled in arriving at these conclusions. This is especially true in a time of political upheaval, such as that through which this country is now passing, when new lines of cleavage have been introduced into public life, and numbers of sincere thinkers on both sides of politics have been compelled with anxious thought to reconsider the ground of their party allegiance. These essays and addresses mark the movement of a sincere mind, earnestly seeking, under the varying phases of political development, after truth in regard to the conduct of national affairs. The author would himself probably be the last to say that between his first utterances upon the question and the last, there is absolute fixedness and consistency of statement. Not only do conditions change, but the range of vision widens. Experience alone sometimes teaches the lines of least resistance. Some of the speeches or articles

PREFACE

contained in this volume are valuable contributions to the study of those national problems which we must solve on our way to a really United Empire. Others present a personal view of the present national outlook, which deserves the careful consideration of voters, anxious to exercise the franchise wisely on great public issues.

On one of the most vexed and difficult problems connected with the Federation of the Empire, Mr. Brassey has taken the lead in laying down and advocating a definite policy of reconstruction. It has long been apparent that the Imperial Parliament, as at present constituted, is unequal to the double task of managing the affairs of a world-wide Empire while also performing the minor functions which in Federated States are assigned to the individual communities of the Federation. The attempt to do this double work has ended in an almost hopeless congestion of Parliamentary business, which at once weakens general policy and paralyzes local improvement. Mr. Brassey has not hesitated to point out that some devolution of local and municipal legislation, on lines similar to what has been carried out so successfully in Canada, must take place within the United Kingdom before a place can be found for Colonial representatives in a Parliament competent to deal with the affairs of a world-wide Empire. He has claimed that Federal Government for the United Kingdom is not merely the best corrective for partial and inadmissible Home Rule demands, but is a necessary step in the process of further national evolution. There is strong reason to believe that time will prove the truth of this contention.

It will be seen that in the great debate concerning