

**A SCHEME FOR IMPERIAL FEDERATION:
A SENATE FOR THE EMPIRE: THREE
ARTICLES REPRINTED WITH ADDITIONS
FROM THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW OF
APRIL, JULY, AND OCTOBER, 1876**

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GRANVILLE C. CUNINGHAM & SIR. FREDERICK YOUNG

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IMPERIAL FEDERATION

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A SENATE FOR THE EMPIRE

THREE ARTICLES REPRINTED
WITH ADDITIONS FROM 'THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW'
OF APRIL, JULY, AND OCTOBER, 1879

BY
GRANVILLE C. CUNNINGHAM
OF MONTREAL, CANADA

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
SIR FREDERICK YOUNG, K.C.M.G.

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN viewed from the national standpoint of the inestimable benefit of binding the Empire together in permanent union, no political subject is probably of greater and more supreme importance, and of wider interest to the whole British people, than the one which has received the comprehensive and expressive designation of 'Imperial Federation.' To the inquiry of what it is, I reply by answering in a sentence that it is the government of the Empire by the Empire for the Empire. The idea is not new. A hundred years ago Burke dreamed of its accomplishment, which in his own day appeared to be impracticable, owing to the physical impediments of distance, and the consequent impossibility of obtaining the necessary means of

personal communication between the delegates of a Parliament which should comprise representatives of the Mother Country, and of our 'kith and kin' beyond the seas.

Since Burke's day, however, all the conditions which seemed to him to offer insuperable difficulties in this respect have been entirely changed. The great and glorious inventions of steam and telegraphy have annihilated distance, and brought the whole world into practical touch and instantaneous communication. In the latter decades of the nineteenth century we have no longer to encounter the objections which, in spite of his ardent advocacy of the advantages of the theory, seemed to the great orator of the past to frustrate any prospect of its being fulfilled.

Deeply imbued with the same patriotic sentiments as his own, realising the immense issues connected with this grand and noble conception, profoundly convinced of the vast benefit which would accrue to the British people if the principle, of Imperial Federation could be fairly and thoroughly carried

out, a few enthusiastic spirits among (us) have laboured earnestly for a quarter of a century in advocating it, and endeavouring to enlist the national sympathies, and to win in its favour the popular support.

My late lamented friend Mr. de Labilliere (all his life a warm and able advocate of Imperial Federation) published recently a book entitled 'Federal Britain.' In it he has given a very complete history of the rise and progress of the movement in favour of this great question from the year 1873 to the present time.

In the year 1876 I myself published a volume entitled 'Imperial Federation,' which contained a summary of my own views, by broadly advocating the 'principle' to be followed in dealing with it. From these views, I may say, I have never swerved. Time has only accentuated and confirmed in my own mind the opinion that they were based on a sound and correct conviction of the lines to be followed in developing the principle I then endeavoured to lay down.

Three years afterwards, in the year 1879, I received from a Canadian correspondent, Mr. Granville Cuninghame, a series of most ably written articles, warmly supporting my own ideas on the subject, and developing in most full and comprehensive detail the plan by which, when once the principle of Imperial Federation, as already laid down by myself, was fully accepted, it could be successfully carried into effect. These articles I was able to get inserted in the 'Westminster Review,' through the favour of the then editor, the late Dr. Chapman. They were read with much interest, as indeed they deserved to be, by a limited circle of readers at the time.

Four years afterwards, in the year 1883, the Imperial Federation League was founded under the able leadership of its first president, the late Right Hon. W. E. Forster, M.P., who continued up to his death a most warm and energetic supporter of Imperial Federation, and by his wise counsel rendered invaluable help to a cause which he had so much at heart. He was succeeded by the Right Hon.

Edward Stanhope, M.P., in the presidential chair; and by Lord Rosebery: both showing an equally earnest interest in, and devoting much time and attention to, the question on behalf of which the League was founded.

For ten years the League lived and flourished, and succeeded in winning the adhesion of an increasing number of members, who showed their sympathy with its general objects by consenting to join it. But there is an old and trite saying, 'Many men, many minds.' While it is true, therefore, that, for a long while, harmonious action was maintained by the strenuous advocacy by its leaders, of the advantages of 'Imperial Federation,' *as a name*, whenever any question came to be touched upon, or discussed, as to the way in which it was to be carried into effect, great differences of opinion were developed among its members. Hence it became impossible to put forward publicly any plan with the seal and approval of the League as being its actual and definite programme of policy in detail for adoption. Of course, all