

**FOREIGN & COLONIAL
SPEECHES**

BY

THE RIGHT HON. J. CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.





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Speeches

By the Right Hon.
Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.

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Preface

WHEN Lord Salisbury was called upon to form a Government in the summer of 1895, and when it was known that it was to be strengthened by the inclusion of the Liberal Unionist leaders, there was much speculation as to the office which Mr. Chamberlain would be invited to occupy. To his own immediate friends it was well understood that he had a decided preference for the Colonial Office, but to "the man in the street" the appointment came as a surprise.

By a curious but common misapprehension, this great Department, charged with so many interests vitally affecting the future of the British Empire, had come to be regarded as an office of secondary importance; and it was a surprise to many that the post should be deliberately chosen by a statesman of the reputation and energy of the member for West Birmingham. Those, however, who had more closely

watched the political career of Mr. Chamberlain recognised the fitness of the choice, which gave him an opportunity of carrying into practical effect the ideas and the policy which had long been present to his mind.

There is an undefined impression that in his earlier days Mr. Chamberlain was dominated in regard to foreign policy by the views of the "Manchester school" and the "peace-at-any-price" party. Never was there a greater mistake. Although he has never shown any sympathy with the noisy "jingoism" of the music-halls, he has always been an Imperialist in his conceptions. As President of the Board of Trade, from 1880 to 1885, he was precluded from taking any very active part in foreign and colonial affairs; but, even at this time, Mr. Bright is reported to have said that "the junior member for Birmingham was the only 'Jingo' in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet"; and it is certainly true that in all his public speeches, whether as a youth in the Birmingham and Edgbaston Debating Society, in Parliament, or outside, Mr. Chamberlain has given evidence of his strong sense both of the advantages and the obligations of empire.

Between "Little Englandism" and Imperialism it seems to us that there is, no half-way house, and

no room for the *laissez faire* policy which too long regulated the attitude of this country towards her colonies and dependencies. Either we must relinquish our possessions abroad, and leave the colonies to themselves, in order that the mother country may avoid all causes of complication with foreign Powers; or we must boldly recognise our responsibilities to our kinsmen beyond the seas and to the native races who own the sway of Her Majesty.

This is the text which has been the subject of so many of Mr. Chamberlain's addresses. This is the lesson which he has been enforcing upon his fellow-countrymen—that the democracy of the British Empire have the greatest possible interest in the conduct of its foreign and colonial affairs—that their comfort, happiness, and very existence, depend upon a wise, a far-sighted, and spirited policy.

Recognising, as he has long done, the gravity of the problem with which the United Kingdom is confronted, with its limited area and ever-increasing population, Mr. Chamberlain has constantly insisted, as no other statesman has insisted before, upon the supreme importance of maintaining the integrity of the Empire, of developing the "Imperial estate," of extending the dominions of the Queen, and of pre-

serving and extending friendly relations between the mother-country and all her colonies and dependencies.

This policy, and the methods by which it may be carried into effect, are fully set forth in the following speeches, and are now presented for the consideration of those who share Mr. Chamberlain's belief in the destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race and the future of the British Empire.

THE EDITOR.

LONDON, *June 1, 1897.*

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A Mission to the United
States and Canada

The Mild Sovereignty of the Queen

TORONTO, DECEMBER 30, 1887

In the autumn of 1887, Mr. Chamberlain went to the United States as Chief British Commissioner and Plenipotentiary to arrange a settlement of a long-standing controversy as to the respective rights and obligations of the fishermen of the United States and Canada.

The negotiations resulted in the conclusion of a treaty, which was afterwards rejected by a party vote of the Senate of the United States. The Commissioners had, however, arranged a modus vivendi to be in operation until the treaty was ratified; and this instrument has since been renewed from time to time, and still regulates the relations of the two countries in regard to the fisheries.

During his visit to America, Mr. Chamberlain made several public speeches in the United States and Canada on the relations between the English-speaking peoples. The following address was

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delivered on December 30, 1887, in responding to the toast of "The Commercial Interests of the Empire," at the annual dinner of the Toronto Board of Trade:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—I thank you most sincerely for the kindness with which you have received me and for the assurance which this kindness gives me of your sympathy and support. I am very glad to be here among you, and to have the honour of meeting so many of the prominent representatives of the activity and enterprise which have done so much for the prosperity of the Dominion, and which have made of the Queen City of Canada a great centre of commercial life and enterprise.

Mr. President, you said truly that the subject to which you have called me to respond is a far-reaching one. It is the commercial interests of the empire—not of any part alone. (Applause.) I am glad that the Board of Trade of Toronto think me worthy of responding to so large a toast. It proves to me that you, at all events, have not been prejudiced by anything that you may have heard to my disadvantage. (Hear, hear.) I read this morning, in one of your most influential journals, that I had declared that the interests of Canada must be subordinated to those of Manchester; and in another article in the same paper I have seen it stated that I came over here to represent British exporters. That is a most unfortunate misrepresentation. I am here as a representative of Great Britain in behalf of her colony of

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Canada, whose interests Great Britain is bound in honour to maintain and defend. If I had used any language like that imputed to me I should have been unworthy of the position that I hold.

I regret these mistakes on the part of an influential organ of public opinion, not so much on personal grounds as because they tend to discredit and embarrass the negotiators who are engaged in your defence, and to that extent they damage your cause. But I have referred to this matter for another reason—because I want to point out to you that we hear a little too much about antagonism of interests. (Applause.) Our interests are your interests and those of the mother country, and I will go further and say that those of the United States also lie in the same direction—(applause)—and that what the plenipotentiaries have to do is to show that there is no divergence of interests; or that, if a divergence exists, we have to deal with it in such a spirit as shall show that we desire to reach a friendly agreement which will be mutually beneficial and satisfactory.

Now, I am speaking to-night under considerable difficulty, and I confess that at first I hesitated to accept your hospitable invitation, because I was afraid that it was not possible for me to make an adequate response to your kindness. As you are well aware, the mission I have undertaken imposes restrictions upon me that I am compelled to observe. I am not able to discuss as I would like some of those questions which have probably the greatest

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interest for all of you. But I was assured that you would make every necessary allowance for me, and that you would not expect from me any premature disclosure of confidential negotiations, or any full and complete discussion of matters of controversial policy.

Although I am afraid that I cannot promise you the communication of any State secrets, yet I think there are some general considerations which affect my mission, and which I may perhaps, with your permission, lay before you.

In the first place let me refer to the spirit in which a mission of this kind ought to be undertaken. As I passed through England on my way to the United States, and again when I crossed the boundaries of the Dominion, there was one idea impressing itself on my mind at every step, an idea which is indelibly written on the face of this vast country. That idea is the greatness and the importance of the destiny which is reserved for the Anglo-Saxon race—(Cheers)—for that proud, persistent, self-asserting, and resolute stock, that no change of climate or condition can alter, and which is infallibly destined to be the predominating force in the future history and civilisation of the world. (Renewed cheering.) It is said that patriotism begins at home. I am an Englishman. I am proud of the old country from which I am come. I am not unmindful of its glorious traditions or of the value of institutions, moulded, as they have been, by centuries of noble endeavour. (Applause.)

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But I should think our patriotism was dwarfed and stunted indeed if it did not embrace the Greater Britain beyond the seas—(loud cheers)—if it did not include the young and vigorous nations carrying throughout the globe the knowledge of the English tongue and the English love of liberty and law; and gentlemen, with those feelings I refuse to think or to speak of the United States of America as a foreign nation. (Applause.) We are all of the same race and blood. I refuse to make any distinction between the interests of Englishmen in England, in Canada, and in the United States. We can say with regard to all these peoples, the older and younger nations: Our past is theirs—their future is ours. You cannot, if you would, break the invisible bonds that bind us together. Your forefathers worshipped at our shrines. They sleep in our churchyards. They helped to make our institutions, our literature and our laws. These things are your heritage as much as they are ours. If you stood up to deny us, your speech, your countenances, your manner of life, would all combine to avow us. (Loud cheers.) Gentlemen, I urge upon you our common origin, our relationship, because while these things confer privileges, they also entail obligations. We are branches of one family. It behoves us to do all that is in our power to promote the good-feeling and affection that ought to characterise intercourse between kinsfolk. Differences there must arise—petty conflicts of interests and of right. If we approach them in a proper spirit of

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forbearance and kindness, I do not believe that any controversy will or can arise between any members of the English-speaking race that will not be capable of favourable and satisfactory adjustment. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, I am glad to tell you that this spirit has animated one and all of the plenipotentiaries who have recently been engaged in the conference at Washington; and it is upon the existence of that spirit that I base my hope and belief that we shall find an arrangement of this difficulty and controversy that will be satisfactory to every man who desires sincerely to promote the amity of the English-speaking people. (Applause.)

I do not think it necessary that I should urge upon you your special interest in good neighbourhood with that great republic that for thousands of miles is separated from you only by an invisible line. (Hear, hear.) The great interests with which we are entrusted, important as they are, are really insignificant beside the importance of maintaining those good relations, and to secure those good relations; and all that is necessary to maintain and confirm them is that we should approach this question in the spirit that I have indicated, and deal with it as among friends, and not as between adversaries, stickling for petty points and extremest rights, and counting every small concession made in the interests of peace a loss and a sacrifice. (Applause.)

I will make one more general observation, and it is one to which I anticipate a general assent. Any-

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thing which can increase and develop commercial relations between two countries is not only good in itself, but it will tend to bring about this good feeling that I desire. I think that the prospect of improved relations with the United States is hopeful, and my hope is altogether independent of any formal bargains or negotiations. No man who considers intelligently what is passing in the United States at this moment can doubt that circumstances will at no distant date force the government of that country to modify their tariff more or less liberally. Sooner or later that tariff will be altered so that it will cease to be what it is at present, a wall of commercial exclusion between the United States and the rest of the nations of the world. (Applause.) Whenever this change is effected it must have a great influence on your policy in the Dominion.

What is the pressing, the most urgent need of Canada at this moment? It is the early and rapid development of the illimitable resources of your country that have been opened up by your magnificent railway enterprises. (Loud applause.) You want to get upon the ground, at the earliest possible moment, an active, industrious population, which will work your mines and till your fields. A tariff which is unnecessarily high—understand I do not presume to offer any opinion on your tariff, I merely make a general observation; I do not say whether your tariff is, or is not, unnecessarily high; that depends upon how you feel it—(cheers and laughter)—

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but I say that a tariff that is unnecessarily high must have a tendency to bear heavily upon precisely the industry—the agricultural industry—which you wish to foster and to develop, and to divert from it labour which will go into other industries stimulated by this tariff. I am ready to sympathise with the inhabitants of a new country who repudiate any idea that their country shall be one in which existence shall be monotonously confined to a single trade or industry. I understand the desire—I will go further, and say the need—for various pursuits and occupations; but I say that in the case of Canada any anxiety on this score is surely a little premature. (Loud cheers.) The first object is to get the population on the land. When you have multiplied those industrious producers, you will find you have created a vast population of consumers; and powerful industries, suited to your local interests, will spring up and prosper whether there be any tariff or not. (Cheers.)

You will see, from what I have ventured to say, that I am in favour of the widest possible commercial union and intercourse, not only with the United States, but with all the world. (Cheers.) That is the true “unrestricted reciprocity.” There is, however, a restricted reciprocity which would make you dependent for your financial freedom upon the Government of another State, and perhaps pave the way for the surrender of something which is still more important; I mean your political independence.

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There are those who have adopted the well-known saying of Mark Twain, and who still think that as, upon this continent, the lion must lie down with the lamb, it would be better if the lamb consented at once to lie down inside the lion. (Laughter.) I confess I do not entertain that opinion, and I do not think it worth while, even if it were proper, to discuss to-night the various proposals, more or less disguised, more or less insidious, for your painless extinction and possible absorption.

I have not discovered in the course of my stay in the United States any general desire on the part of the American people, who have a good stock of territory of their own, to increase it and to increase their responsibilities at the same time; and any such arrangement as that which I have been considering, if it comes about at all, must come about after full discussion, and with good-will on both sides. When you become tired of the mild sovereignty of the Queen—(applause)—when you cease to be proud of the institutions which yourselves have framed, with due regard to your local needs and requirements, and when the slender tie which still binds you to the mother country, and which, like the electric cable, if it exerts no pressure, still maintains the community of sympathy and interest—when this tie becomes an intolerable strain, then it will be time enough for us to consider the necessary measures of relief. (Hear, hear.)

But, in the meantime, I cannot but think, that in working out the great problem of federal government

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which seems to have been left in charge of the English people, we shall more quickly reach the perfection of our free institutions by diversity of effort, and that this will prove to be more fertile and more effective than the immediate adoption of a single course of action. Of one thing you may rest assured; that if you desire to remain an integral part of the vast empire of Great Britain, your interests will be maintained and your rights will be respected, having behind them all the influence which that empire can wield; your fellow-subjects throughout the world will rejoice in your prosperity, will take pride in your ceaseless activity, and look forward with confidence to the speedy development of your resources. It is only a short time in the history of a nation since your confederation was established. Less than a human generation has passed away, and yet a new Canada has been revealed to us—not an ice-bound desert, which imperfect information formerly caused us to picture, but a vast stretch of fertile territory, which is sure to be the home, at no distant date, of a teeming population of God-fearing, law-abiding and industrious men and women, determined, as I hope they will be, to maintain—ay, and not only to maintain, but also to draw closer—the bonds which unite them to Great Britain. I am confident that their loyalty and affection will never lack a warm response; and, gentlemen, they will be “citizens of no mean city”—(applause)—a dominion the like of which the world

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has never seen, whether in regard to its extent, its resources, its population, or its beneficial influences. One of our poets, Matthew Arnold, has written of the burden of this vast empire. He has spoken of Great Britain as a Titan staggering under the burden of the obligations of empire. Yes! obligations! But we will not lessen them by a cowardly surrender, or by a mean betrayal of the interests that are entrusted to our care. (Applause.) Relief must be found in drawing together the great component parts of the empire, and not by casting away the outposts or cutting off the bulwarks. True democracy does not consist in the dismemberment and disintegration of the empire, but rather in the knitting together of kindred races for similar objects.

Gentlemen, you have your portion in the lot of our national life. It may well be that the Confederation of Canada may be the lamp to light our pathway to the Confederation of the British Empire. That idea may only exist at present in the imagination of the enthusiast; but it is a grand idea. (Hear, hear.) It is one to stimulate the patriotism and the statesmanship of every man who loves his country; and, whether or not it should ever prove capable of practical realisation, let us all cherish the sentiment which it inspires, let us do all in our power to promote the closer relations, the kindly feeling, the goodwill, which ought always to exist between the sons of England throughout the world and the old folks at home. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

Britons in America

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 29, 1888

The following address was delivered on February 29, 1888, in the Horticultural Hall, Philadelphia, to 3000 English men and women, members of the Order of the Sons of St. George. Mr. Chamberlain was received with enthusiastic applause, and, after thanking the meeting for its kind welcome, proceeded as follows:—

I DEEM it a great privilege and pleasure to meet this representative gathering of the Sons of St. George. I have while here made myself acquainted with the nature of your organisation and your history, and have followed with the greatest interest the more recent developments of your work. I can only say, as far as I understand your objects, and the way you propose to accomplish them, that you have my sympathy and good wishes.

I suppose I am right in assuming that the vast majority of this great meeting are British Americans. (Cheers.) I should like you to consider what is

involved in that distinctive appellation. In the first place, you are Americans, who have loyally and patriotically, without reservation, thrown in your lot with the great Republic that has so generously opened the portals of its constitution to you, and invited you to share its privileges and responsibilities. I cannot but congratulate you on your choice. Here, in Greater Britain, you find the characteristics of the Great Britain you left behind. You find the tenacity and endurance of the race, and learn that in crossing the Atlantic it has not lost its courage and devotion to duty. Its aspirations to liberty are tempered only by its reverence for law. You have changed your residence, but have not changed the cardinal conditions and features of your life. Your mother tongue still sounds in your ears, and the institutions, literature, religion, and laws of your adopted country are household words to you all. You decided to share the fortunes of America, but you have not on that account surrendered your great inheritance in the past of England. You have behind you a thousand years of glorious traditions, and who can tell the possibilities of the future, or measure the prospects of human progress?

There is another leading idea connected with your Order. You are British Americans, and you have to show that allegiance to your new country is not incompatible with an affectionate regard for your old home. I believe that friendship and unbroken amity between Great Britain and the

United States is the best guarantee for the peace and civilisation of the world ; and it was to promote that object that I came to this country, accepting at twenty-four hours' notice the difficult and delicate mission with which I was charged by the Queen. That mission has accomplished its purpose, and the result of our labours is now submitted to the judgment of the American people. It is not a mere treaty of fisheries that we have made ; it is a treaty of amity and good neighbourhood. (Cheers.) Great Britain has held out the right hand of fellowship to the United States, and I believe that every patriotic American who can rise above party bias will be in favour of grasping the hand thus held out. If you want to appreciate the treaty, you must first appreciate the spirit in which it was submitted, and in which those who negotiated it came to this work. We do not regard this long-standing difference as a dispute between hostile or rival nations, but rather as a difference of opinion between friends mutually anxious to remove every cause of dispute. Under these circumstances, to speak of concessions which have been made to us, or which are made by us, as an ignominious surrender on either side is an abuse of language. There has been no surrender on either side of anything that it was honourable to maintain. There have been concessions on both sides made between friends, who would, if they had been enemies, have disputed them even at the point of the bayonet.

I have been in America four months, and during that time I have received from every one with whom I have been in contact personal kindness and hospitality, which have made a deep impression on me, leaving upon my mind an overwhelming burden of gratitude. At the same time I have been pained at some expressions which have been publicly used by individuals, and especially by language which I have seen in the press, concerning my country. We are treated as though we were a foreign and rival nation. I decline to be considered a foreigner in the United States. (Cheers.) I feel much as a distinguished diplomatist, who once told the Prince of Wales that the world was divided into three classes—Americans, Englishmen, and foreigners. I confess that I am astonished at men who boast of an unbroken line of British descent, and who are proud of the purity of their speech, when I hear them fouling the nest from which they sprang, and imputing to Englishmen a policy, a malignity, a duplicity, and an arbitrary character, only existing in their diseased imagination. (Cheers.) I should like to appeal to these hostile critics, and should wish to ask them whether they have considered all the inferences which may be drawn from such sentiments as these. Have they forgotten their early traditions, that we are of the same blood as themselves, men of the same character, and imbued with the same love of justice which is the distinguishing feature of our race? Which of us in this world is infallible? We may be open to

their friendly remonstrances, but we are depicted as monsters of iniquity.

I wonder they did not reflect that they are deriding the stock from which they come, and are throwing discredit upon institutions which they embody, and which we, in the old country, have perfected through a long course of centuries until now they are even more democratic than those of the United States. (Cheers.) When I see different views sometimes presented to the American public by those professing to be its guides, philosophers and friends, I incline to think that the time has come when some American Columbus should undertake the discovery of England—(laughter)—not the England so frequently depicted to you as the dreary land groaning under a cruel and tyrannical government, a nation which is on the downward road to speedy well-deserved extinction, but the England of to-day, the true England, the mother of nations greater than herself, existing under a popular government in which all are represented, the England, which, in her glorious maturity, wields the sceptre of dominion over hundreds of millions of contented subjects.

I believe this Order of yours will do something to remove prejudice and to produce a right impression of the character of Englishmen and English policy. I heartily wish you prosperity and success. You are right to identify yourselves with the fortunes of America, to play your part in the government of this vast continent, and to have your share of its respon-

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sibilities, and your part in its obligations. You are right at the same time to keep green in your hearts the memory of your native land. That is a sentiment which has been implanted by the Creator Himself deep in the human breast, and I hope that you have not forgotten the ties binding you to your old home, to the motherland that bore you, and to the traditions of the proud-spirited dominant race to which you belong.

Relations with the United States and the Colonies

DEVONSHIRE CLUB, APRIL 9, 1888

On April 9, 1888, Mr. Chamberlain was entertained at a house dinner at the Devonshire Club upon his return from the United States, and to mark the completion of his labours in connection with the Fishery Commission. Earl Granville occupied the chair and proposed "The Guest of the Evening." In returning thanks Mr. Chamberlain said:—

I THANK you very much for the warmth of your reception, and for the kindness with which you have honoured the toast which has been proposed by Lord Granville. I appreciate fully the unusual character of this gathering. I am very glad to see so many of my old colleagues, and friends, and fellow-workers, from whom I am temporarily dissociated by a difference which I regret as much as they can do. (Cheers.) I think from their presence here to-night, as well as from the speech to which we have just listened, that I may

venture to assume two things. In the first place, that, in spite of divergencies of the most important character upon political and domestic questions, there is no intermission of the personal regard and good-will—(cheers)—which has been cemented by a long previous acquaintance. In the second place, that every Englishman who is worthy of the name sympathises with the objects of my recent mission, approves of such measure of success as has been already obtained, and is eager for a final settlement which shall remove all causes of difference between the United States and ourselves. (Cheers.)

I confess, my lord, that your hospitality to-night places me in a somewhat embarrassing position. I do not pretend that I am able to glide over thin ice with such skill as yourself. (Laughter.) I feel, as far as I am concerned, that it would be better for me to forget for one evening all subjects of party or sectional character. (Hear, hear.) At the same time the most ordinary diplomatic discretion precludes me from saying anything of importance about the negotiations or about the treaty which is now under the consideration of the Legislatures of the countries chiefly concerned. In these circumstances I can sympathise with Figaro in the comedy of Beaumarchais, who undertook to edit a journal under the conditions that he was to say nothing against the Government, nothing about politics, nothing about morality or religion, nothing against men in office, and nothing about any one who had any interest in anything. (Laughter.)

He endeavoured, I remember, to get out of his difficulty by calling his newspaper a *journal inutile*. (Laughter and cheers.) If, my lord, to-night I have to pronounce a *discours inutile*, I think I may claim some excuse; but, whatever may be my personal difficulties, I do not think this representative demonstration can possibly be considered as useless. It is, as you have pointed out, a significant fact. It marks the change that has taken place in public opinion in this country in the course of the last quarter of a century. It is quite curious to look back to the time of the great Civil War and to the opinions which were then expressed by distinguished statesmen and writers on both sides of politics. They were animated by a sincere dread lest the United States should become a great aggressive Power, dangerous to the peace of the world; and there is no doubt that they were genuinely afraid of the introduction in this country of American ideas and of American institutions.

Why, gentlemen, it is ludicrous to contrast the results as we know them with the fears and the anticipations of those too timid politicians. (Hear, hear.) The United States of America in the interval which has elapsed has more than doubled its population, until at the present time it exceeds the whole English-speaking population of the British Empire. Yet, so far from being aggressive, it is the most pacific country in the world; and it has shown the remarkable spectacle of a nation of sixty millions

content with an army of 25,000 men, and a fleet which is barely sufficient to carry the national flag to the principal centres with which it has commercial intercourse. (Cheers.)

As to the introduction of American institutions into this country, we all know that America has developed a conservatism which must be the envy of many people in the United Kingdom. (Laughter and cheers.) Nowhere in the world is the authority of the law greater, is the respect for the law more universal. (Cheers.) It is now over a century since they adopted the Constitution which then went far beyond the ideas of the governing classes of Europe. But now they have adhered to that Constitution with a persistency and a devotion unparalleled in history; and there are many Americans who say that much of our recent legislation is unconstitutional and revolutionary. (Hear, hear.) As to our practice, they are astonished at the mildness with which we meet the assaults upon the authority of Government. (Cheers.) I do not know whether it is this devotion to their Constitution, or whether it is this respect for law, and this determination that the rule of the majority constitutionally expressed shall be respected by the minority, which has commended American institutions in this country; but, at all events, I think that there is now an appreciation of American institutions, and of the American people, which, perhaps, did not exist a generation ago. (Cheers.)

All the prejudice, all the ignorance. I hope, and

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certainly all the dislike, have vanished from the minds of Englishmen; and there is now among all parties, and among all sections, one universal feeling of goodwill and admiration, not untinged with envy, and a cordial desire for a hearty and for a durable friendship. (Cheers.) That was the feeling which I considered myself specially commissioned to express in the conference at Washington.

As Lord Granville has said, I claim no triumph, and I sought no triumph. I should have thought it a mistake in politics, to speak of nothing higher. (Hear, hear.) But I claim, in common with my colleagues, to have done our best to secure an equitable and a friendly arrangement. (Cheers.) I do not think that this spirit was inconsistent with the maintenance of the great colonial interests which were committed to the charge of the British Plenipotentiaries. I believe we all held it to be our duty to yield everything that good neighbourhood and the comity of nations could claim at our hands, while at the same time we held fast to treaty rights that long usage and equity and international law had sanctioned. (Hear, hear.)

I believe that we have fulfilled the conditions that we laid down for ourselves in undertaking this mission. I see that Mr. Secretary Bayard, the statesman who holds the most important position in Mr. Cleveland's Government, says, in a letter that has been recently published, "Conciliation and mutual neighbourly concession have together done their

honourable and honest work in this treaty, and have paved the way for relations of amity and mutual advantage." I believe that that opinion would express the view of the vast majority of the people of Canada. I have no doubt that it is in accordance with the opinion of the vast majority of the people of the United States; and I hope and trust that it will receive its final endorsement from the great representative bodies which have now to pronounce upon it. (Hear, hear.) If that be done, when we have removed the local and temporary, although long-standing, causes of difference between us, then I think that we may trust to the good feeling and common interests, and more than all to the common blood, and common origin, and common traditions of the Anglo-Saxon race, to preserve unbroken the amity and peace which are essential to the progress and civilisation of the world. (Cheers.) In the case of the United States of America I hope for amity and peace, and I ask for nothing more. Our course has been marked out for us as separate and independent, but I hope as friendly, nations.

But is it necessary, is it desirable, that our relations with Canada, with our great colonies in Australasia and South Africa, should follow the same course, should result in a similar absolute independence? I am willing to submit to the charge of being a sentimentalist, when I say that I will never willingly admit of any policy that will tend to weaken the ties between the different branches of the Anglo-Saxon

race which form the British Empire, and the vast dominion of the Queen. (Cheers.) We all feel a natural pride in the restless energy and dauntless courage which have created this great empire. We feel a satisfaction in the constant evidence which is given us of the affectionate attachment of our fellow-subjects throughout the world to their old home. (Hear, hear.) It seems to me that it would be unpatriotic to do anything which would discourage this sentiment—that it would be cowardly and unworthy to repudiate the obligations and responsibilities which the situation entails upon us. (Hear, hear.) I would be willing to put it on the lowest possible grounds. Experience teaches us that trade follows the flag, and even in commercial questions sentiment is a powerful influence on the question of profit and loss. A great part of our population is dependent at the present moment upon the interchange of commodities with our colonial fellow-subjects, and it is the duty of every statesman to do all in his power to maintain and increase this commercial intercourse, and to foster the attachment upon which to a large extent it is founded. We have to watch for opportunities to strengthen the ties between our colonies and ourselves. There is a word which I am almost afraid to mention. I have been assured upon the highest authority that confederation is an empty dream, the fantastic vision of fools and fanatics.

“ It cannot be. The vision is too fair
For creatures doomed to breathe terrestrial air.
Yet not for that shall sober reason frown
Upon that promise, nor that hope disown,
We know that only to high aims are due
Rich guerdons, and to them alone ensue.”

I am well aware that up to the present time no practical scheme of federation has been submitted or suggested, but I do not think that such a scheme is impossible. (Hear, hear.) There are two points which have to be prominently borne in mind. There is the question of commercial union and the question of union for defence. I have heard it argued that the colonies would be very foolish to allow themselves to become mixed up in our old-world policy, and to concern themselves with wars in which they can have no possible interest or advantage. But I may point to the action of the colonies not so very long ago in the case of the Egyptian war—(hear, hear)—when they exhibited a sentiment, which I think we should all be ready to appreciate, on an occasion in which they certainly had nothing but a sentimental interest. But I will go further. I suppose the colonists read history; and if they do, they will know that every great war in which this country has been engaged since the great French war at the beginning of the century, and that every dispute which has seriously threatened our peace, have arisen out of the concerns and interests of one or other of the colonies or of the great dependency of India. (Hear, hear.)

28 Relations with the United States, &c.

Under these circumstances it appears to me that it may be at least as much to the interests of the colonies, as to those of the mother country, that we should seek and find a concerted system of defence. (Cheers.)

The difficulty in the case of commercial union is, no doubt, much greater. It is no use to expect that our colonies will abandon their custom duties as their chief and principal source of revenue. It is hardly to be hoped that the protected interests, fostered by their system, will willingly surrender the privileges which they now enjoy. All we can do is to wait until proposals are made to us; to consider those proposals, when they come, with fairness and impartiality; and to accept them if they do not involve the sacrifice of any important principle or of any interest vital to our population.

Meanwhile, we ought not to do anything to discourage the affection, or to repel the patriotic and loyal advances of our fellow-subjects and fellow-kinsmen, who are proud of the glorious traditions of our country, who share with us our history, our origin, and our common citizenship in the greatest and freest empire that the world has ever known. (Loud and continued cheers.)

Egypt

The British Occupation of Egypt

BIRMINGHAM, MARCH 24, 1890

*Speech delivered on March 24, 1890, at the annual
soirée of the West Birmingham Liberal Unionist
Association:—*

I AM delighted to be once more amongst you, as I have always regarded our relationship as a relationship between friends rather than the more formal connection which usually prevails between a member and his constituents. (Cheers.) Now, if I consulted my own feelings, and perhaps the feelings of many of you, I should stop here. (Laughter.) I have been told already by one gentleman that he is thirsting for the blood of those who would interrupt such proceedings as yours. For my part I agree with him, and I feel it to be almost an unpardonable presumption to interpose anything in the nature of a speech. (A voice.—Hear.) I am not in the least surprised at that gentleman's agreement. The

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gentleman who agrees with me is, no doubt, free and independent; but I am a slave. (A laugh.) I am told that the majority, at all events, would not be satisfied unless I took the opportunity of addressing a few words to you upon some matters of public interest. If that is so, I obey your behests, and I will endeavour, to the best of my ability, to comply with your wishes.

But about what shall I speak? I cannot help thinking that you must be almost as tired as I am of the eternal Irish question, and of the personal abuse and recrimination which attend every discussion of it. This is altogether an exceptional meeting, and under these circumstances, perhaps, I may be permitted to take an exceptional subject, and for once in a way to leave the well-worn and beaten path of political controversy and to discuss with you a question which at present, at all events, is outside all party politics—a question of the very greatest importance to all of us, but which at the same time has received so little public attention that I do not believe the majority of the public have as yet made up their minds about it.

Since I last had the pleasure of meeting you, I have been able to fulfil a long-felt desire to visit that wonderful land of Egypt which has so great a fascination for travellers, and which affords so many subjects of profound interest for the historian, the archæologist, and the politician. Thousands of years before this country was inhabited by the English

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race, thousands of years before we have any record whatever of our history, of our conditions, of our population, Egypt was a powerful Empire with a great and refined civilisation; and even to this day in Egypt there exist the ruins of this civilisation to attest the influence, and the power, and the cultivation of dynasties which held their sway there, at a time which goes back to the earliest records of our biblical history. I have seen the relics of this wonderful past pictured on the tombs and collected in the museums. I have seen the whole domestic and public life of this ancient people; the tools which they used, the instruments they played upon, the ornaments they wore, the models of their houses, their clothes—everything which enables one to re-constitute the life of the people; and, if I only had time, I could go on for a considerable period, and not altogether without interest to you, in telling you of this marvellous picture of a long-lost civilisation, which has been unveiled for us by recent discoveries.

But I am not going to talk about old Egypt. I am going to talk to you about the latest chapter in the history of this wonderful country, a chapter in which for the first time England and Englishmen have played the most prominent part. I want to tell you in the fewest possible words what is the great task which we have undertaken in Egypt, how far we have already accomplished it, and what ought to be the policy of the English nation with regard to it.

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Now you all know that the occupation of Egypt was forced unwillingly upon the Government of Mr. Gladstone. I do not think that any of us liked it at the time, or that any of us would not have been glad to have escaped from the obligation; but, in common with other European Powers, and especially in common with France, we had undertaken a great responsibility. Europe had interests in Egypt. Europe could not suffer Egypt to go back to a state of barbarism; and Europe had made of France and England mandatories of its will. We had told the present Khedive, who had come unexpectedly and perhaps unwillingly to the seat of power after the forced abdication of his father, Ismail Pasha, that, if he would follow our advice, we would maintain his authority. In the disorder which followed the state of things to which the country had been reduced by its previous government, in the confusion which prevailed, and with every kind of petty and personal ambitions seething all round, a military insurrection broke out. This insurrection led to disorder at different times and in different places. There was a massacre of Christians and Europeans, in which many scores, and probably many hundreds, perished; and it became absolutely necessary to interfere. Every attempt was made by France and England to prevent anything in the nature of armed intervention, and peaceably to settle the difficulties which had arisen. But Arabi Pasha, who was himself the tool of others less honest

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even and more self-seeking than himself, had his head turned by the success which followed his first efforts, and finally he defied the Powers of Europe, and began to fortify Alexandria against the foreign fleets.

There were then two alternatives open to us. We might have retired from the scene altogether. We might have abandoned the Khedive, who had depended upon our pledges, and who had wholly followed the counsel which we had given him. We might have left Egypt to anarchy, to disorder, and to massacre; and we might have allowed all the great European interests—not merely the interests of the creditors of Egypt, but the interests of all who had honestly invested capital in industrial enterprises in that country—to go to ruin. If we were not to do that the only alternative was by an armed intervention forcibly to restore order.

We decided that our honour and our duty required us to take the latter course; but, at that moment, France, which had recently undergone a change of Government, suddenly altered its policy, retired from all share in the business, and threw upon our shoulders alone the whole responsibility of restoring Egypt once more to its proper place among the nations of the world. I think that the policy of France was hardly worthy of a great nation. I think that it was a short-sighted policy, and I know that it was taken in direct opposition to, and in defiance of, an eloquent protest by M. Gambetta, who was one of the greatest of

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French statesmen and patriots. But when that policy was taken it left to us no alternative. The duty was cast upon us. We had to go alone or to be unworthy of our mission. We decided to go on and endeavour to carry out the work of regenerating Egypt.

Now let me tell you, as shortly as I can, what was the state of Egypt, of this ancient country, at the time that this duty was cast upon us. The Government of Ismail Pasha, the predecessor of the present Khedive, was one of the worst Governments to which Egypt had ever been subjected; at all events, the worst Government of which we have any historical knowledge. It was arbitrary, it was cruel, it was oppressive. But these are the common characteristics of Oriental Governments. Many Governments which had preceded it had been of the same character; but what was worse than all, what made this the most fatal of all the Governments of Egypt, was that it was incapable, inefficient, and ignorant, to a degree which made it disastrous to the country. What was the result of the action of this Government? In the course of the reign of Ismail Pasha an enormous debt^m was contracted, altogether disproportionate to the means of the country. It was expended largely in extravagance, in foolish enterprises, and very little for the benefit of the real interests of Egypt. The revenues had ceased to meet the expenditure; there was an annual and an increasing deficit, and in a short time it was perfectly evident that if the state of

things continued Egypt would be absolutely bankrupt. The taxation was onerous in the highest degree, not merely because it was heavy in itself, but because it was levied by corrupt officials, who were themselves underpaid, and who sought to recompense themselves, and to make their fortunes, by extorting from the unfortunate peasant more than what he was legally required to pay. He had no justice in any European sense of the word. The courts were corrupt; they carried out their business in a most ineffectual way, even when they were honest. Torture prevailed almost universally. What is called the *kourbash*—that is to say, the *bastinado*—was used upon every occasion; was used to extort the payment of taxes; was used to obtain confession of crime; was used to secure respect for authority, and for the position of every village tyrant, and every provincial governor who was inflicted upon this miserable country. You had a system of forced labour called the *corvée*, which was intended originally to maintain works of irrigation, and to keep clear the canals, by which the great system of watering the country was carried out. This had been abused, as everything else had been abused; and hundreds and thousands of men were taken from their own work, taken from their fields at a time when the harvest ought to have been proceeded with, or the fields ought to have been tilled, in order to labour on the land of others, and without prospect of any direct advantage or benefit to themselves. You had a conscription, a forced

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conscription, which also pressed most injuriously upon the people, which was open to the same objection as the *corvée*—that is to say, that while it pressed very lightly upon the rich, it pressed very hardly indeed upon the poor; the rich escaped by means of bribes, but the poor could not escape. They had double burdens to pay. Under the conscription an enormous army was formed in order to carry out the ambitious projects of the then Khedive. This army was engaged for life. The men were sent in chains to the Soudan and the equatorial provinces of Egypt. They were sent in chains to a country in which they perished like flies, some of them in consequence of the conditions of the life to which they were condemned, some of them because they were badly fed, and others by the sword of the fanatical tribes against whom they were constantly at war. Lastly, to sum up this account of the previous condition of Egypt, the irrigation of the country, upon which its welfare depended, without which it would be a barren desert, and which alone has accounted for its extraordinary fertility, was allowed to get into bad order. The canals were choked up, and the cultivation of the country was hindered. In the supply of water the rich once more benefited at the expense of the poor. They could get all the water, and the best water, while the poor could get no water at all. So that you had the unfortunate peasant in this position—that, while the exactions upon him were increasing almost beyond the power of a human being to sustain, the

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only means by which he could obtain a bare subsistence, let alone meet the claims upon him, were being taken away or doled out to him by corrupt officials.

That was the state of things only eight years ago. Those were the Augean stables which England had to cleanse; and I say to you, after having inquired into this matter on the spot, after having consulted not merely the officials, whether Egyptian or English, but having taken the opportunity of conversing with every native with whom I could come in contact, and with representative men who were well able to express their opinions—I say to you that the state of the fellaheen of Egypt was more miserable than the condition of any similar peasantry on the face of the earth.

Eight years later what did I find when I went to Egypt? I found a total change. I found the finances restored. I found an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure. I found the deficit turned into a surplus, which was being used for the reduction of taxation and for the promotion of public works and national education; and remember that this surplus, which is already a large one, might have been much larger but for the action of the French, who have refused their consent to the conversion of the debt, which would have enabled the interest on a portion of the debt to be reduced, and consequently the burdens on Egypt to be diminished. I do not think that such action as that is worthy of a great and

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generous nation. They retired from the field. They left us to do the work. Surely they might rather help us to do it well than throw difficulties in our way. (Hear, hear.) Courts of justice had been established throughout the country, and although I will not say that they are perfect, yet, at all events in theory, you have a complete code of equal justice, and I believe that corruption, at any rate, has almost entirely become extinct. Taxation has been revised. The peasant knows now exactly what he has to pay and when he has to pay it. Payment has been fixed at dates to suit his convenience—when the harvest has been gathered, and he is best able to meet his obligations. The officials have ceased to be ill paid; they receive their salaries as regularly as the Custom-house collectors in England; and the time has gone by when these local officials could, even if they wished, extort from the peasant one farthing more than his legal obligation. The *corvée* has been gradually reduced during several years, and this year it has been abolished altogether. (Cheers.) Conscription for the army has been gradually reduced. It is no longer as onerous as it was. The army, which has been under Sir Francis Grenfell, has been made a most efficient machine for the defence of the country. It is about one-fourth of the number at which it stood in the time of the late Khedive, and now the men are only taken, as here, for short service, and then return to their families. During their service they are well paid, well cared for, and

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well looked after. The irrigation has been reviewed and renewed. New works have been established. More water has been procured for the purpose. Arrangements have been made to secure an equal distribution of it. The rich and poor stand exactly on equal terms. Each man, according to the extent and character of his land, may depend upon having a proportionate amount of what is truly in Egypt the water of life.

All of this has been done in seven years. I do not say there is not still a great deal to do; but at least you will well understand what a change has been effected in the condition of the peasantry of Egypt by the operations which have taken place under the British occupation. One of the Ministers said to me when I was in Cairo the other day, "This is not a reform, this is a revolution and a new birth." (Hear, hear.)

I have spoken to you about the present, and now I want to say a word or two to you about the future. I am going to make a confession. I admit I was one of those—I think my views were shared by the whole Cabinet of Mr. Gladstone—who regretted the necessity for the occupation of Egypt. I thought that England had so much to do, such enormous obligations and responsibilities, that we might well escape, if we could, this addition to them; and, when the occupation was forced upon us, I looked forward with anxiety to an early, it might be even, to an immediate evacuation. The confession I

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have to make is that having seen what are the results of this occupation, having seen what is the nature of the task we have undertaken, and what progress we have already made towards its accomplishment, I have changed my mind. (Cheers.) I say it would be unworthy of this great nation if we did not rise to the full height of our duty, and complete our work before we left the country. (Cheers.) We have no right to abandon the duty which has been cast upon us, and the work which already shows so much promise for the advantage of the people with whose destinies we have become involved.

This great alteration is due to the influence of a mere handful of your fellow-countrymen, a few scores of Englishmen acting under Sir Evelyn Baring, our Minister at Cairo. They, by their persevering devotion, and their single-minded honesty, have wrought out this great work, and have brought Egypt from a condition which may fairly be described as one of ruin, to the promise of once more being restored to its ancient prosperity. I hear sometimes of pessimists who think the work of England is accomplished, who will tell you that we have lost the force and the capacity to govern. No; that is not true; and as long as we can spare from our abundance men like these, who, after all, are only ordinary Englishmen—men like these, who are able and willing to carry their zeal and their intelligence wherever it may conduce to the service of humanity,

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and to the honour of their native land—so long as we can do that we need not despair of the future of the United Kingdom. (Cheers.) But we owe it to them, we owe it to ourselves, that their work shall not be in vain. You cannot revolutionise a country like Egypt—you cannot reform all that is wrong in her system, all that is poor and weak in the character of the people—in a few minutes, or a few years. Egypt has been submitted for centuries to arbitrary despotism. I believe there is hardly any time in her history, even if you go back to almost prehistoric ages, when she has not been in the grasp of some foreign ruler; and, under these circumstances, you cannot expect to find ready to your hands a self-governing people. They are not able—they cannot be able—to stand alone; and they do not wish to stand alone. They ask for your support and assistance, and, without it, it is absolutely impossible that their welfare can be secured. If you were to abandon your responsibility, your retirement would be followed by an attempt once more to restore the old arbitrary methods and the old abuses, which in turn would no doubt be followed by anarchy and disorder; and then in time there would be again a foreign intervention, this time the intervention of some other European country. I have too much confidence in the public spirit of the country to believe that it will ever neglect a national duty. (Hear, hear.) A nation is like an individual; it has duties which it must fulfil, or else it cannot live.

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honoured and respected as a nation ; and I hope that, as we have been singled out for the performance of this great duty, the whole nation, without distinction of party, will resolve to carry it to a triumphant issue. (Loud cheers.)

Egypt and the Soudan

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 20, 1896

On March 20, 1896, Mr. John Morley moved a resolution in the Foreign Office Vote in order to discuss the policy of the Government, who had recently announced their intention of despatching a military expedition along the valley of the Nile as far as Dongola. In replying to Mr. Morley, Mr. Chamberlain said :—

MR. LOWTHER, as a member of the Cabinet which the right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Morley) believes to have gone mad—(laughter)—I hope I may, nevertheless, be permitted to congratulate the House upon the return to this House of the right honourable gentleman, and upon his active participation in our debates. (Cheers.) We do not always agree with him, and we do not agree with him upon the present occasion, but we feel his presence amongst us, and his part in our discussions will certainly add to them a variety and interest which otherwise they might have missed. (Hear, hear.)

I may say that the right honourable gentleman is entitled to claim, as he has done, that he is pursuing a consistent course in the line which he has taken to-day. He says that in the past he has been impartial; and I readily admit that statement. He has attacked, I think, as strenuously as he is attacking us, the gentlemen who are now his colleagues, when they were pursuing a policy similar to that which he now condemns. It is a suggestive and instructive fact that the criticism of the right honourable gentleman, like the criticism which has proceeded from every other member of the House upon the proposal of the Government, is a criticism which comes from men who are in favour of immediate, or, at all events, of the earliest possible evacuation of Egypt. We have to bear that in mind. From such a standpoint the conclusion of the right honourable gentleman is perfectly logical and intelligible. It is quite clear that in such a case it is natural for him to exaggerate the difficulties attending the prosecution of our present policy, and to depreciate the value of that policy, whether in Egypt or in Italy.

If Egypt has ceased to be any concern of ours, if our duty is to "scuttle" from Egypt at the earliest possible moment, what matters it whether Dervish rule is barbarous, as the right honourable gentleman himself admits it to be, or whether it is, as the honourable member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) told us the other day, more civilised than our own? (Laughter.) What does it matter whether Egypt is in

danger, or whether she has, as the right honourable gentleman says, an impregnable frontier at Wady Halfa? If we are to go out of Egypt, and no longer to make it our concern that the prosperity and security of Egypt shall be maintained, *cadit questio*, the whole discussion comes to an end, and I shall be prepared to follow the right honourable gentleman in his natural conclusion. The greater contains the less, and every argument we have heard to-night, as every argument which we heard in the same direction the other night, are all, if I may say so, tainted by this preconceived determination of honourable gentlemen that our duty is to have nothing more to do with Egypt.

Let me point out, at this stage, what seems an extraordinary inconsistency on the part of the right honourable gentleman. He was talking of the possibility of Egyptian rule in the Soudan. What my right honourable friend spoke of was Anglo-Egyptian rule, meaning Egyptian rule under English influences. But the right honourable gentleman opposite, in speaking of Egyptian rule, described it as a return to a rule so barbarous, so corrupt, that the Soudanese would not submit to it under any circumstances. But, at the same moment, the right honourable gentleman argues that we have so renovated the character of the Egyptian Government—(hear, hear)—that all possibility of barbarous and corrupt rule has ceased, and we may safely leave Egypt. (Cheers.) But if the Egyptians, under our guidance during the last fifteen years, have

become a new people, if we can safely leave Egypt, and the reforms we have instituted, to the Egyptians whom we have trained and educated, surely in the same way you may leave to them also the responsibility for the recovery of the Soudan.

Let us suppose that it is our policy to recover the Soudan in the way the right honourable gentleman has suggested. In the first place, it is quite impossible to judge of the present policy of the Government unless we can first make up our minds whether the position in Egypt is to remain as at present, or whether we seriously contemplate an immediate withdrawal.

I think the admission of the right honourable gentleman renders it unnecessary for me to dwell largely on the arguments in favour of remaining in Egypt. I will summarise them briefly. In the first place, we point to the advantages which our stay there has conferred upon Egypt. I do not think there is anything in our recent history to which we can look back with greater pride and satisfaction than the peaceful revolution accomplished in Egypt—(cheers)—by a handful of British civil administrators, and a handful of British officers, supported, no doubt, in the last resort, by the strength of the British Empire. What was the state of the case when we went to Egypt? The country appeared to be in the last state of decay. Her finances were bankrupt, her army had been annihilated, her administration was corrupt, justice was an empty name, extortion and torture were practised, the administration of every department

was feeble and inefficient, the great system of irrigation, upon which the prosperity of Egypt depended, had been allowed to fall into desuetude, and had ceased to be capable of providing for the necessities of the country. Commerce and agriculture were almost ruined.

We have been in Egypt fifteen years, and I say that every traveller to whom I have spoken, who has been in Egypt with an impartial mind, whether Englishman or American, or even in some cases a foreigner—because I have seen some remarkable articles by a distinguished Frenchman on the subject—admits that the change amounts, as I have said, to a revolution. To those who have not travelled in Egypt I point to Lord Cromer's most interesting report. A deficit of nearly a million sterling has been transformed into a surplus of over a million. At the same time there has been a great reduction of taxation which presses on the people. I do not speak of the regularisation of that taxation, or its just collection, instead of being extorted by persons making their fortunes out of the collection. *Corvée* has been abolished, judicial institutions have been reformed, large grants have been made for education, and the irrigation system, under the care of British engineers, has been restored to a position which I can say it hardly occupied even in the country's most prosperous days.

The second argument I have is that every well-informed person, whether our own authorities in

Egypt, or those impartial travellers to whom I have referred, agrees that at the present time, if we were to leave Egypt, all this would be undone. The right honourable gentleman, the leader of the Opposition referred the other day to a speech of mine, delivered in 1884, in which I protested against a policy of annexation or establishing a protectorate over Egypt. He quoted that speech as though it involved an admission on my part—at all events, in 1884—that we could safely leave Egypt. Whatever may have been the case in 1884—and I deny that even in that year I had any idea that evacuation could shortly take place—whatever I may have thought, or we may have thought, in 1884, I believe that now, at any rate, the vast majority of the English people are convinced that our work is not complete, and that it would be dishonourable in us to leave Egypt until it was completed.

But I do not mean to be understood as saying that our present policy alters in the slightest degree the position we hold in Egypt. Whatever that position may be with regard to eventual evacuation, the policy announced on Tuesday last does not in the slightest degree affect it. The situation is not altered; we shall, at least, be as ready afterwards as we were before—(laughter)—to consider any proposals leading to the eventual evacuation of Egypt, and we have never gone back from our pledges in that respect. But all I point out is that in the past, no doubt, we were too sanguine as to the time at

which the fulfilment of the pledges given could properly take place. No doubt, under pressure, statements were made at different times, and by different Governments, which were not indeed statements that amounted to promises, but which were rather in the light of an expression of hopes, and references were made to the periods after which the evacuation might possibly take place. That is a mistake which I do not think we are likely to repeat. (Cheers.) All we say is that the position in Egypt is such that the difficulties of evacuation are greater than we anticipated, that it will take longer to make a self-supporting people of the Egyptian nation than we imagined to be possible, and I cannot help adding that, if the difficulties attending such a task were great in themselves, they have not been made easy by the action of some of our allies, who have interfered to hamper and embarrass our administration.

Now, I proceed to argue the question of the "new policy," as it has been called. Although we are prepared to say that it is not a new policy, but only a development of the old policy of the country, I am ready to argue the point on the assumption that at all events the vast majority of the House are determined that we shall remain in Egypt until our work has been accomplished, and until we can retire without any idea that, by our retiring, we should sacrifice all the advantages which Egypt has hitherto gained by our presence in that country. I believe the policy I am defending is the only justifiable policy if

we continue to hold ourselves responsible for Egypt, and if it be desirable in the interests of Egypt.

Sir, the right honourable gentleman laid the foundation of his argument in an attack on the Government, because, as he said, they had only furnished to the House three trumpery telegrams as the basis of their policy. I must say that a greater perversion of the action of the Government I never heard in the course of my experience in this House. What are the facts? The statement of the policy of the Government was made, in the first place, in a speech by the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and then in fuller language by my right honourable friend the leader of the House, and I must say a clearer statement was never made of the objects the Government were pursuing, and the reason for which they were pursued. (Cheers.) The right honourable gentleman spoke as though the sole grounds for the policy of the Government were certain rumours which had been current as to the movements of the Dervishes, and that upon those rumours, detailed in three telegrams, we were basing our whole policy. That is absolutely contrary to the facts. The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs mentioned in the course of his early statement that we had had notice of movements showing a certain ferment among the Dervishes previous to the decision of the Government. That statement might have stood by itself. I do not know whether the right honourable gentleman suspected the integrity of the Government, but he

claimed to see the original telegrams on which the statement was made, and the telegrams were given to show that the statement was justified; but the Government have never put forward these rumours as being the basis of their policy.

I shall, perhaps, repeat a little of what was contained in the argument of my right honourable friend, but I hope I shall be able to show to the House that it is not upon so slender a foundation that we base our policy. But, for the right honourable gentleman to found, as he did, his whole attack upon the Government upon this misapprehension of the importance of the telegrams, is a course of argument I can only describe, in his own words, as flimsy, irrelevant, meagre, and hollow. (Hear, hear.)

I ought to notice another argument of the right honourable gentleman. I have spoken of the advantages which our rule has conferred upon Egypt. The right honourable gentleman says this policy will withdraw these advantages from Egypt because it will submit Egypt to a large expenditure. First, the funds are to come from a surplus which we are not permitted to use in any other way for the benefit of Egypt. Although the assent of the majority of the *Caisse* has already been given—and we have no knowledge at present which would lead us to assume that the assent of the remainder of the Powers will not be given—to this expenditure, we know perfectly well it has been refused, and would probably be refused, to expenditure for other purposes. There-

fore we are not withdrawing from Egypt funds which we can use for the ordinary purposes of administration. I go beyond that, and I say, if this policy should have any of the results contemplated in the speech of the right honourable gentleman, if it should have the great result of relieving Egypt from the constant pressure and menace of a Dervish attack, the saving to Egypt would more than compensate her for the capital expenditure, supposing that capital expenditure were not the unlimited sum which the right honourable gentleman referred to, but a sum within the fair resources of Egypt herself.

It has been said that any advance beyond the frontier would be a new departure and a reversal of the policy which fixed our frontier at Wady Halfa. That policy was set aside when we went to Sarras and Murad Wells. When exception is taken to this expedition, it is well to bear in mind that we have already proceeded beyond the old frontier to positions in one case forty and another eighty miles distant.

I want the House to follow me in my view of the situation, and in order to do that I must ask the House to go back for a minute to the circumstances which prevailed when Egypt was forced to abandon the Soudan. There is no doubt that the corruption and inefficiency of the Egyptian Government—although, bad as it was, it did not compare for a moment with the brutal and barbarous tyranny of the Khalifa—predisposed the population to rebel, and when a leader was found who, on the one hand

appealed to their religious fanaticism, and, on the other, promised them a redress of material grievances, he found a soil prepared for his operations, and was readily supported by the great bulk of the tribes. When, at the commencement of the campaign, he gained, as he did, easy victories over the inefficient, badly led, and ill-treated troops of Egypt, he enhanced the prestige attaching to his name and was able to go on to conquer the whole country, and to establish himself after the fall of Khartoum.

At that time the Mahdi was at the height of his power, influence, and prestige, and it was absolutely impossible for Egypt to have reconquered the Soudan against the forces of the Mahdi. Such reconquest could have been undertaken only by Great Britain; it could have been carried out only by an enormous expenditure of blood and treasure. As at that moment the regeneration of Egypt proper had not been commenced, it appeared to the Government at that time—and I have no doubt that at the time the decision was a wise one, nor do I think that any one ever contested it—that it was a necessity of the moment that the Soudan should be abandoned. But, even at that time, the abandonment was not adopted without great hesitation. We knew perfectly well what it meant for the Soudan; we knew also what it meant in the future for Egypt. Practically, at the moment of the decision, it appeared to be an inevitable one.

I must, however, remind the House that that

decision was reconsidered by the same Government at a later date. What happened? An expedition had to be sent from this country, not in order to recover the Soudan, but for the relief of General Gordon; and when, unfortunately, that expedition arrived in the neighbourhood of Khartoum too late to relieve General Gordon, the Government had then to consider under the altered circumstances, with a large force in the Soudan, whether they were still under that obligation to retire from the Soudan; and that Government decided that it was their duty to remain. ("No, no.") Does the honourable member doubt it? I will give him the date and everything. That Government in 1884 decided that it was its duty to remain, and, to use the words of General Gordon, "to smash the Mahdi at Khartoum." Those are the words of General Gordon.

The Government decided to follow the advice of General Gordon and smash the Mahdi. Why did they do so? They did so because they believed it was necessary for the safety of Egypt. The leader of the Opposition has a practice against which I am inclined respectfully to protest; it is to single out for quotation speeches of those who have been his colleagues in the Cabinet in order to fix upon them some special responsibility for the decision of the Cabinet to which they belonged. He has done that on several occasions with regard to the Duke of Devonshire and myself. He knows that, while every member of the Cabinet has a corporate responsibility for the decision

of the body to which he belongs, that that may not necessarily involve his own personal opinion upon the subject. I suppose there has never been a case in which sixteen or seventeen gentlemen have met together without differing in opinion on some points; I imagine that in most cases in which they differ, the minority yield to the majority; and, if that be the etiquette of our constitutional system, the member of a minority is not bound to oppose in public everything to which in private he may have offered objection. I make this observation to introduce a quotation from what was said by the leader of the Opposition, when the decision of the Government to smash the Mahdi was questioned by the right honourable gentleman, the mover of this amendment. I do not attempt to fix upon the right honourable gentleman any special or personal responsibility; I only say that as the mouth-piece of that Government on that occasion he used these words: "For the safety of Egypt I do think it is absolutely necessary that the military power of the Mahdi should be broken at Khartoum." I say that the policy of that Government, the Government which decided upon the evacuation of the Soudan, was, when the opportunity occurred, to reconquer the Soudan. I see my right honourable friend shakes his head. I will make a correction; to use his own words, the policy of that Government was that the military power of the Mahdi should be broken at Khartoum, and some kind of orderly government set up in its place. I point to that as showing that it was the

opinion of the Government of that time that the safety of Egypt could be secured only by establishing an orderly government at Khartoum.

We know perfectly well that that Government did not carry out its intention; it did not smash the power of the Mahdi; and there was a good and sufficient reason. The relations with Russia became extremely critical; a credit of eleven millions had to be asked for; and it was impossible to keep a large force of British troops locked up in the Soudan. (Hear, hear.) I quite agree; I understand the object of that cheer. But what is it that we have proved? It is that the Government, of which the leader of the Opposition was the spokesman, believed it was desirable in itself, on its merits, to smash the power of the Dervishes at Khartoum, but there were circumstances which made it undesirable to carry out that desirable policy at the time. Yet the policy in itself was a wise policy, a desirable policy, and necessary in the interests of Egypt.

I think the mover of the amendment did some injustice to Egyptian rule when he spoke in such exaggerated terms of its mischievous character in the Soudan. Let him bear in mind what we have been told in the interesting book to which he referred, the account of Slatin Pasha's experiences in the Soudan. Slatin Pasha points out that in the Soudan under Egyptian rule telegraph and post-office services were established, Christian churches, and schools, and Mahommedan mosques, were built, the lands were

cultivated, and hostile tribes were compelled to keep the peace.

But what followed when the Egyptians abandoned the country? We are told in the same book that at least 75 per cent. of the population have been destroyed by war, famine, and disease, while the remainder are little better than slaves; that the slave trade, with all its horrors, prevails in the land; and that great plains, once occupied by considerable populations, have been reduced to desert wastes. It must be remembered, when the honourable member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), following Mr. Gladstone, talks of the people of the Soudan as "rightly struggling to be free," that the result of that struggle has been that they are now much more slaves than ever they were under Egyptian rule. (Ministerial cheers.)

I will not dwell upon the results of the change of rule in the Soudan; but, deplorable as those results are, we have to consider, not the interest of the Soudan, but the interest of Egypt. Egypt is under our protection—Egypt is a dependency of ours. (Ministerial cheers.) Let us ask ourselves, if Egypt were independent and strong, what would be the policy of patriotic Egyptian statesmen? Anybody who knows anything of the opinion of the most distinguished politicians in Egypt can have no hesitation as to what their answer would be. Do not let the House make a mistake. Every nation has, in these matters at any rate, two policies. It has a practical and present policy; it has a future and ideal policy.

I am talking now of the ideal policy, and not of the immediate practical policy of that country; and I say that the aspiration and ideal of every Egyptian statesman, without exception, is the recovery of the Soudan. (Ministerial cheers.)

I particularly desire that I may not be misunderstood on this point. I do not say that if Egypt were independent she would at present enter upon a campaign for the reconquest of the Soudan, but I say that Egyptian statesmen believe that, until her influence over the Soudan has been recovered, there will never be permanent peace, and that there will never be permanent prosperity, in the country. They make, and they have always made, it a grievance against English intervention that by it they were forced to abandon their hope of recovering the Soudan, and it is a curious fact that some of those foreign critics, who are now representing the policy of the Government to be a fatal, injurious, and offensive policy, have done everything in their power to induce the Egyptians to lay stress upon this particular grievance—that we did not allow them to reconquer the Soudan. (Hear, hear.) The opinion of those Egyptian statesmen to which I have referred is, and has always been, that the Nile is the life of Egypt, and that accordingly the control of the Nile is essential to the existence and security of Egypt. I say again that, while this is the ideal of every Egyptian statesman, I do not for a moment suppose that, even if they were left alone, they would attempt the reconquest of the Soudan with their

present resources ; but they hope and believe that sooner or later their influence there may again become paramount.

I now come to the practical policy of Egypt. The present policy of Egypt itself is the defence of the Egyptian frontier—that is to say, the defence of all that we call Egypt proper. We are asked to believe that this defence ought to consist of the maintenance of what we have been told is the ideal frontier of Wady Halfa. The right honourable gentleman, the member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), spoke of that frontier as being exceptionally strong, because there was a desert in front of it, through which the Dervishes must pass to an invasion of Egypt. Of course I do not deny that. The desert in front of Wady Halfa is a barrier against conquest, but it is also a screen for raids. (Hear, hear.) Experience has shown very clearly that, however excellent that frontier may be, if anything like a conquest of Egypt were attempted by the Dervishes, it is no protection at all against continual incursions and raids, which are made from behind our frontier at Wady Halfa ; and the position is one of permanent insecurity to the villages and lands that lie on the inner side of our frontier. That being so, I say that no possibility of our fulfilling our duty to the people who are actually within our frontier exists so long as Dervish power continually threatens the peaceable industry of those people by these sudden raids and incursions ; and we cannot leave out of account altogether the fact that,

in spite of this strong frontier, it was possible for a very serious invasion to be made—an invasion the forces of which the right honourable gentleman, the member for the Forest of Dean, somewhat underestimated, but which, under other circumstances, might have attained still larger dimensions.

I admit that, bad as the situation is at Wady Halfa, it has been borne for some years; and it might have been borne for some years longer but for recent events which have materially altered the situation. The defeat of the Italians has caused a new situation. If we ask the House to go beyond Wady Halfa, it is not in consequence of three telegrams, which the right honourable gentleman described as trumpery telegrams; but it is because of the entirely new situation that has been created by the disastrous defeat of the Italian army by the natives in that part of Africa. (Hear, hear.) It is no new thing to say of barbarous and savage tribes that their aggressive force is largely determined by what I must call moral as opposed to physical considerations. It is determined by their enthusiasm; by their fanaticism; and, above all, by the prestige of success; and a body that would be absolutely inoffensive, that would not stir a step under other circumstances, might be encouraged and driven to a dangerous degree of fanaticism and fury by such an event as that to which I have referred. (Hear, hear.)

The defeat of the Europeans in Abyssinia has encouraged, and, according to the last advice we can

get, is likely to still further encourage, a dangerous ferment amongst the Dervishes; and it is now the opinion of all the authorities that if Kassala were to fall—and, though we hope for the best, we cannot be absolutely certain that it is still secure—if Kassala were to fall, the effect might be altogether incalculable upon Egyptian interests (hear, hear); because, though we have reason to believe that up to the present time there has been great discontent with the Khalifa—that many tribes have been alienated from his rule by his barbarity and cruelty, it is possible, in the presence of a great defeat of Europeans, with the consequent rising of the courage, and the spirit, and the hopes of the native tribes, that their intestine disputes may be put aside, and that they may join together in one great effort to destroy that Egyptian civilisation of which we are the protectors. (Hear, hear.)

That is the position. (Ministerial cheers.) That is the cause of the new policy, as it has been called. That is the cause of the development of our policy; that is the basis upon which we ask the House to place it. (Ministerial cheers.) We say that it is to the interest of Egypt—almost to the paramount interest of Egypt—that, if possible, Kassala shall not fall. (Ministerial cheers.) The right honourable gentleman, the member for the Montrose Burghs (Mr. Morley), made an attempt, which I do not think was worthy of him—although it has been made by other honourable members—to distinguish between the

interests of Egypt and the interests of Italy in this matter. Sir, the interests of the two countries are inseparable. You cannot separate them. Even if Italy did not appeal, as she does appeal, strongly to our sympathies in her present time of trouble—even if she were put out of the question altogether—it would still be the interest of Egypt to do what she could to prevent the fall of Kassala. (Ministerial cheers.)

The advance which we have taken is dictated by this consideration—that it is the wiser policy of Egypt to anticipate the threatened attack—the attack which we believe to be probable, and even certain—in the event of the fall of Kassala; that it is the wiser policy of Egypt to anticipate this attack, and to prevent that concentration of the Dervishes upon a single objective which would, after a success in the first instance, bring them, with all the prestige of that success, to attack Egypt itself. (Hear, hear.) We want to create a diversion. If we were to allow the Dervishes to direct all their efforts against Kassala, and if Kassala were to fall, then all their forces would combine against Egypt. In the meantime we make a diversion, which we were told from the Opposition side the other night that Italy would not be thankful for, and which could not be of any use to Italy. But honourable members who said that were a little premature. If they had waited twenty-four hours they would have seen that Italy has appreciated the course we have taken; that she has warmly and cordially accepted it, and has thanked us for it. (Ministerial

cheers.) It is an incident that, in attempting the defence of Egypt, we are also assisting the Italiana. We hope that we may be able to lessen their task and enable them to hold their own. I ask, does any responsible politician on the other side of the House object to that policy? Will they make it a ground of additional criticism and complaint that in endeavouring, as we are, to secure the best interests of Egypt, we are also at the same time helping our Italian allies? (Cheers.)

The other day, at a public dinner, Lord Rosebery taunted the Government with the isolation in which he said we were placed, and he attributed that isolation to our policy. The present policy, at all events, does not find us isolated in Europe. (Cheers.) One of the members who spoke the other night said that all Europe was against us. The right honourable gentleman opposite made a great point. He complained that the leader of the House, in pointing out that it was probable that the Triple Alliance, at all events, would support us, and that he could see no reason why the other two Powers should not support us, had shown a want of foresight.

What is the case? The case is that Germany has supported us; that Austria has warmly approved the course we have taken; and that Italy has thankfully accepted it and cordially received the announcement. (Cheers.) As to France and Russia, we wait. (Ironical cheers and counter-cheers.) It would be as unwise as it would be discourteous on my part, or on

any one's, to anticipate what the ultimate decision of those countries will be. We have no reason at present to know or to suppose that it will not be found in accordance with the views of the other three Great Powers. (Cheers.) I say then that our policy at the present moment is warmly supported by three of the Great Powers of Europe, and it is no longer, at any rate, a policy of isolation. (Cheers.) I am convinced that Lord Rosebery, at least, will not make it a charge against us that we have been able, in pursuing the primary interests committed to our charge, to show our sympathy and our goodwill to a gallant and friendly nation. (Cheers.)

The advance which we have decided to make is to Akasheh, some eighty miles from Wady Halfa. The Under-Secretary, while of course declining to pledge himself in regard to matters which must depend largely upon military considerations, pointed out that the advance might possibly extend to Dongola—that is, as far as any present intention of the Government is concerned. (Ironical cheers.) But I will add to that. The advance, whatever it may be, will be limited by two considerations. It will be limited in the first place by our power to maintain the security of the communications—(hear, hear)—and it will be limited in the second place by the nature and extent of the resistance we may find. (Ironical cheers.) I was really under the impression that we were discussing a matter which the Opposition thought to be of exceptional gravity—

(Opposition cheers)—but I should not be in the least aware of it from the interruptions of honourable members opposite. With regard to the security of the communications, the railway will follow the troops to Akasheh, and it will provide for the communications with the troops, because it is not intended to cut them off from their supplies and from Egypt.

Let me say one other word, and that is in answer to something which fell from the leader of the Opposition about the question of permanent occupation. The making of the railway may, I think, be assumed to be a pledge that where we go we shall remain. (Cheers.) We have no idea of handing back to barbarism such territory—be it more or less—as we may recover for civilisation. (Cheers.)

On the other hand, I desire to make clear another point to which I have already referred. Her Majesty's Government have no conception of such a policy of reckless adventure as was indicated by the right honourable member for the Forest of Dean. We do not count upon "incalculable expenditure" and "gigantic military efforts," nor do we propose to "lock up large masses of troops in the rainless deserts and untravelled countries of the Soudan." Nothing of the kind ever entered into our minds.

There is a contingency which appears to have entered into the mind of the right honourable member for Montrose, and which is worth while taking into view. We have no doubt been told by authorities from time to time, as he says, that the power of the Khalifa

is waning; that, owing to his extraordinary misgovernment, he has no friends left him but the Bagara tribe; and that, the moment news arrived of the approach of the Anglo-Egyptian forces, his followers would leave him, and his empire would totter to its fall. I admit that when I was in Egypt I heard much conversation to this effect, and received similar assurances from, among others, some of the leaders and sheikhs of the tribes in the Soudan; but I think that it would be dangerous to place upon these statements anything like implicit reliance.

I do not think it is possible to predict the effect of this advance. (Ironical cheers.) The advance itself will make clear whether, as is affirmed in some quarters, the Dervish power is hollow and a sham, or whether, on the contrary, it still stands so firmly as to make any assault upon it a dangerous and difficult operation. (Ironical cheers and laughter.) All I say is—and I cannot conceive why it should be the cause of merriment—that this distinctly is the policy of the Government. If this Dervish power should prove to be unbroken, if it is capable of what I have called serious resistance, if to destroy it would put upon the finances of Egypt a strain beyond the resources of that country, and a strain beyond that which a patriotic Egyptian statesman would himself be willing for the country to undergo, then there is no intention whatever on the part of the Government to enter upon such a policy. (Ironical cheers.)

On the other hand, if it were found true, as has

been suggested, that the power of the Dervishes was entirely broken, that the tribes, tired of the misgovernment which has prevailed, were willing to welcome the advance of the force, then I think it would be very unfair and very unwise to refuse, to Egyptians at all events, the possibility of recovering the position which they believe to be essential to their security. (Cheers.)

I say again that that is the ideal which we keep in view. The present policy of the Government is confined to what we believe to be the immediate needs of Egypt. We are not going to take the extraordinary risks which have been depicted in such glowing colours by right honourable gentlemen opposite; but we do ask that the House will meet the new situation which has been created by recent events, and that they will consent to make the demonstration which will anticipate, and, as we hope, may avert the possibility of a revival of the Dervish power. (Cheers.)

The Unity of the Empire

The Future of the British Empire

DINNER GIVEN ON THE COMPLETION OF THE
NATAL RAILWAY, LONDON, NOV. 6, 1895

On November 6, 1895, Mr. Chamberlain was the principal guest at a dinner given in the Whitehall Rooms of the Hotel Métropole, London, by Mr. Walter Peace, C.M.G. (the Agent-General for Natal), in celebration of the completion of the Natal-Transvaal Railway. This was the first public occasion on which Mr. Chamberlain appeared in his official capacity as Secretary of State for the Colonies; and, in replying to the toast of "The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies," which was proposed by Sir Charles Tupper, High Commissioner of Canada, Mr. Chamberlain said:—

I THANK you sincerely for the hearty reception you have given to this toast. I appreciate very much the warmth of your welcome, and I see in it con-

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firmation of the evidence which is afforded by the cordial and graceful telegram from the Premier of Natal, which has been read by your chairman, and by other public and private communications that I have received, that any man who makes it his first duty, as I do, to draw closer together the different portions of the British Empire—(hear, hear)—will meet with hearty sympathy, encouragement, and support. (Cheers.) I thank my old friend and colleague, Sir Charles Tupper, for the kind manner in which he has spoken of me. He has said much, no doubt, that transcends my merits, but that is a circumstance so unusual in the life of a politician—(laughter)—that I do not feel it in my heart to complain. (Laughter.) I remember that Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who was certainly one of the most genial Americans who ever visited these shores, said that when he was young he liked his praise in teaspoonfuls, that when he got older he preferred it in table-spoonfuls, and that in advanced years he was content to receive it in ladles. (Laughter.) I confess that I am arriving at the period when I sympathise with Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. (Laughter and cheers.)

Gentlemen, the occasion which has brought us together is an extremely interesting one. We are here to congratulate Natal, its Government and its people, and to congratulate ourselves on the completion of a great work of commercial enterprise and civilisation, which one of our colonies, which happens to be the last to have been included in the great circle

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of self-governing communities, has brought to a successful conclusion, giving once more a proof of the vigour and the resolution which have distinguished all the nations that have sprung from the parent British stock. (Cheers.)

This occasion has been honoured by the presence of the representatives of sister colonies, who are here to offer words of sympathy and encouragement; and, in view of the representative character of the gathering, I think, perhaps, I may be permitted, especially as this is the first occasion upon which I have publicly appeared in my capacity as Minister for the colonies—(cheers)—to offer a few words of a general application. (Hear, hear.)

I think it will not be disputed that we are approaching a critical stage in the history of the relations between ourselves and the self-governing colonies. We are entering upon a chapter of our colonial history, the whole of which will probably be written in the next few years, certainly in the lifetime of the next generation, and which will be one of the most important in our colonial annals, since upon the events and policy which it describes will depend the future of the British Empire. That Empire, gentlemen, that world-wide dominion to which no Englishman can allude without a thrill of enthusiasm and patriotism, which has been the admiration, and perhaps the envy, of foreign nations, hangs together by a thread so slender that it may well seem that even a breath would sever it.

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There have been periods in our history, not so very far distant, when leading statesmen, despairing of the possibility of maintaining anything in the nature of a permanent union, have looked forward to the time when the vigorous communities to which they rightly entrusted the control of their own destinies would grow strong and independent, would assert their independence, and would claim entire separation from the parent stem. The time to which they looked forward has arrived sooner than they expected. The conditions to which they referred have been more than fulfilled; and now these great communities, which have within them every element of national life, have taken their rank amongst the nations of the world; and I do not suppose that any one would consider the idea of compelling them to remain within the empire as within the region of intelligent speculation. Yet, although, as I have said, the time has come, and the conditions have been fulfilled, the results which these statesmen anticipated have not followed. (Cheers.) They felt, perhaps, overwhelmed by the growing burdens of the vast dominions of the British Crown. They may well have shrunk from the responsibilities and the obligations which they involve; and so it happened that some of them looked forward not only without alarm, but with hopeful expectation, to a severance of the union which now exists.

But if such feelings were ever entertained they are entertained no longer. (Cheers.) As the possibility of separation has become greater, the desire for

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separation has become less. (Renewed cheers.) While we on our part are prepared to take our share of responsibility, and to do all that may fairly be expected from the mother country, and while we should look upon a separation as the greatest calamity that could befall us—(hear, hear)—our fellow-subjects on their part see to what a great inheritance they have come by mere virtue of their citizenship; and they must feel that no separate existence, however splendid, could compare with that which they enjoy equally with ourselves as joint heirs of all the traditions of the past, and as joint partakers of all the influence, resources, and power of the British Empire. (Cheers.)

I rejoice at the change that has taken place. I rejoice at the wider patriotism, no longer confined to this small island, which embraces the whole of Greater Britain and which has carried to every clime British institutions and the best characteristics of the British race. (Renewed cheering.) How could it be otherwise? We have a common origin, we have a common history, a common language, a common literature, and a common love of liberty and law. We have common principles to assert, we have common interests to maintain. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I said it was a slender thread that binds us together. I remember on one occasion having been shown a wire so fine and delicate that a blow might break it; yet I was told that it was capable of transmitting an electrical energy that would set powerful machinery

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in motion. May it not be the same with the relations which exist between the colonies and ourselves; and may not that thread of union be capable of carrying a force of sentiment and of sympathy which will yet be a potent factor in the history of the world? (Hear, hear.)

There is a word which I am almost afraid to mention, lest at the very outset of my career I should lose my character as a practical statesman. I am told on every hand that Imperial Federation is a vain and empty dream. (Cries of "No, no.") I will not contest that judgment, but I will say this: that that man must be blind indeed who does not see that it is a dream which has vividly impressed itself on the mind of the English-speaking race, and who does not admit that dreams of that kind, which have so powerful an influence upon the imagination of men, have somehow or another an unaccountable way of being realised in their own time. (Hear, hear.) If it be a dream, it is a dream that appeals to the highest sentiments of patriotism, as well as to our material interests. It is a dream which is calculated to stimulate and to inspire every one who cares for the future of the Anglo-Saxon people. (Cheers.) I think myself that the spirit of the time is, at all events, in the direction of such a movement. How far it will carry us no man can tell; but, believe me, upon the temper and the tone in which we approach the solution of the problems which are now coming upon us depend the security and the maintenance of that world-wide dominion, that edifice of Imperial

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rule, which has been so ably built for us by those who have gone before. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, I admit that I have strayed somewhat widely from the toast which your chairman has committed to my charge. (No.) That toast is "The Prosperity of South Africa and the Natal and Transvaal Railway." As to South Africa, there can be no doubt as to its prosperity. We have witnessed in our own time a development of natural and mineral wealth in that country altogether beyond precedent or human knowledge; and what we have seen in the past, and what we see in the present, is bound to be far surpassed in the near future. (Hear, hear.) The product of the mines, great as it is at present, is certain to be multiplied many fold, and before many years are over the mines of the Transvaal may be rivalled by the mines of Mashonaland or Matabeleland; and in the train of this great, exceptional, and wonderful prosperity, in the train of the diamond-digger and of the miner, will come a demand for labour which no man can measure—a demand for all the products of agriculture and of manufacture, in which not South Africa alone, but all the colonies and the mother country itself must have a share. (Cheers.)

The climate and soil leave nothing to be desired, and there is only one thing wanted—that is, a complete union and identity of sentiment and interest between the different States existing in South Africa. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I have no

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doubt that that union will be forthcoming—(cheers)—although it may not be immediately established. I do not shut my eyes to differences amongst friends which have unfortunately already arisen, and which have not yet been arranged. I think these differences, if you look below the surface, will be found to be due principally to the fact that we have not yet achieved in South Africa that local federation which is the necessary preface to any serious consideration of the question of Imperial federation. (Cheers.) But, gentlemen, in these differences, my position, of course, renders it absolutely necessary that I should take no side. (Cheers.) I pronounce no opinion, and it would not become me to offer any advice; although, if the good offices of my department were at any time invoked by those who are now separated, all I can say is that they would be heartily placed at their service. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, I wish success to the Natal Railway, and to every railway in South Africa. (Cheers.) There is room for all. (Cheers.) There is prosperity for all—(hear, hear)—enough to make the mouth of an English director positively water. (Laughter.) There is success for all, if only they will not waste their resources in internecine conflict. (Hear, hear.) I have seen with pleasure that a conference is being held in order to discuss, and I hope to settle, these differences. I trust that they may be satisfactorily arranged. In the meantime I congratulate our chairman, as representing this prosperous colony,

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upon the enterprise they have displayed, upon the difficulties they have surmounted, and on the success they have already achieved. (Cheers.) And I hope for them—confidently hope—the fullest share in that prosperity which I predict without hesitation for the whole of South Africa. (Cheers.)

A Young Nation

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE, LONDON, NOVEMBER 11,
1895

On November 11, 1895, Mr. Chamberlain presided at a banquet which was given at the Imperial Institute in honour of Colonel Gerard Smith, the Governor-Designate of Western Australia. After the usual loyal toasts, Mr. Chamberlain proposed the health of Colonel Gerard Smith, and said:—

I NOW propose the health of our guest, Colonel Gerard Smith, who has been appointed by her Majesty Governor of Western Australia, in succession to Sir William Robinson, who has retired, after a long and most honourable career in the public service. (Cheers.)

The choice of a governor is part of what is pleasantly called the patronage of the Colonial Office. (Laughter.) I am not fond of the word, and I dislike excessively the impression which it appears to produce upon certain of the public that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has always in his

gift a number of eligible and lucrative appointments—(laughter)—which are at the disposal of any one who has failed in other walks of life. (Laughter.) Whenever a new Administration comes into power, I am afraid, there are many expectations of this kind which are inevitably doomed to disappointment; and even when they may be gratified without injury to the public service, I think that sometimes there is disappointment to the sanguine hopes which have been formed by those who have solicited these appointments. At all events, although I myself have but a slight experience, I have come to the conclusion that a large portion of my time in future will be devoted to explaining to a number of estimable gentlemen why it is absolutely impossible for me to appoint nine-tenths of them to positions in the colonies, and that another large portion will be taken up in explaining to the one-tenth who are successful that I cannot immediately remove them to more favourable situations and to healthier climes. (Laughter.)

Gentlemen, I suppose there is no part of this patronage which involves greater responsibility or more anxious consideration than the selection for the approval of her Majesty of gentlemen fitted to fill the important and dignified office of her Majesty's representatives in our self-governing colonies. (Hear, hear.) Such a man, the occupant of such a position, ought to have high character and good social standing. He should have a large experience of affairs.

He should have tact and discretion, exceptional intelligence and attractive personality; and I regret to say that, as day by day the requirements increase, there is a tendency to diminish the emoluments. (Laughter.) I cannot help saying that we may well be proud of the fact that there is not, that there never has been, any real difficulty in finding men who are willing and anxious to accept positions which certainly do not offer any great pecuniary attractions, with the hope of being able to render good service to the empire, and in so doing to earn distinction and honour for themselves. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, I think that the friends who have met here to-night to wish God-speed to Colonel Gerard Smith will hope with me that he will take a worthy place in the illustrious roll of colonial Governors. He is going to an interesting colony at an interesting time. (Hear.) The history of Western Australia is a singular one. It is said, I know not on what authority, that it was the first of the Australian colonies to be discovered by any European visitor, and that in the early part of the fifteenth century it was visited by the Portuguese, who called it at that time "the land of parrots," in consequence of the incredible bigness of those birds which they found upon the shores. I do not know, as I have said, whether that claim can be sustained; but, if the colony be the first in Australasia to be discovered, I think it will be admitted by its warmest friends that it has been one of the latest to be developed. (Cheers.)

It was only colonised by the English in 1829, and for many years, in spite of its great advantages, in spite of the well-known salubrity of its climate and its great natural resources, it seems to have made very little progress. But in the last few years a change has come "o'er the spirit of its dream," and this young nation has made strenuous and rapid progress. In 1850—that is to say, twenty years after its colonisation—the white population was only 5800. At the last census it was 76,000. The revenue in 1880, fifteen years ago, amounted to only £180,000 a year; in 1895 it has risen to £1,125,000.

There are some persons, I believe, who attribute this happy result to the concession of self-government a few years ago. I myself am in favour of self-government in the circumstances of the Australian colonies, but I confess I have never ventured to attribute such magical power to it. (Laughter.) Possibly the gold discovered may have had something to do with the change which we are all glad to chronicle. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) At all events, in 1890—that is to say, only five years ago—the export of gold was £86,000; in 1894 it amounted to £910,000.

I think, then, we may say that the prospects of this colony are indeed encouraging, and that it may hope in a very short time to rival the prosperity and population of the older settlements of Australia; and here, in the old country, we have nothing but goodwill and sympathy for this vigorous offshoot of the

parent race. (Cheers.) We have, of course, relinquished absolutely all right to interfere. We have hardly a claim, except perhaps the claim of kinship and mutual interest, even to offer suggestions; but I think we may venture to hope that this colony, while profiting by the experience of other self-governing communities, will not hesitate to strike out a line for itself if its interests should dictate a separate course.

What are the interests of a colony in this condition? What are the circumstances? Here is a vast territory eight times the area of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with a white population which is one five-hundredth part of the population of the mother country. Of this area only a fraction is in anything like profitable occupation. Does it not stand to reason that the first need for many years to come of any colony in this position must be labour—labour to till the soil, labour to work the great natural resources of the country? (Hear, hear.) We may say to Western Australia, and to every country in the same position—Get population, and all else shall be added unto you. (Cheers.) We hope, then—and we are justified in hoping—that in order to induce this immigration everything will be done to make life desirable and economical to the labourers, who are, as I have said, the greatest need of the colony, and that no obstacle will be placed in the way of the introduction of the articles of necessity and of luxury which this population will need. I know that there is an idea prevalent in new communities, with which

I have very great sympathy, that they should encourage a diversity of employment, that it would be a mistake to commit as it were for all time the whole of the population to a single industry; but there need be no fear of that in such a case as the one which we are considering; for with the growth of population there will necessarily come, naturally and without artificial stimulus, a demand for local manufactures; and it seems to me that the clear duty of the colony, and the clear interest of the colony, is to spend its whole energy in cultivating to the best advantage the natural resources of the soil, with the certainty that this will result in the development of all the elements of a great nation. (Cheers.)

I look forward to a time, which I think is not very distant, when our great colonies in Australasia will imitate the wise example of Canada, and will agree to unite—(cheers)—for the purposes which are common to all. (Cheers.) I see with satisfaction the great step in that direction which has just been taken by the legislature of New South Wales, and I feel confident that Western Australia will not be behind the sister colony. Such a step as the federation of Australia will be the consummation of a great idea, in which local jealousies and petty ambitions will be buried in the foundation of a mighty commonwealth, which—in a time that is, at all events, historically visible—is destined to outstrip the waning greatness and the lagging civilisation of the older countries of Europe. (Cheers.) It will be a step in

the direction of that Imperial unity which we cherish as the ideal future of the British race. (Renewed cheers.) And it will enable this old country of ours to extend its fame and its history in the greatness of its children across the sea. (Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, whatever may be in store for us, I am sure that to-night our hearts go out to this young and fresh country of ours in Australasia, and that with the good wishes which we offer for the success of the government of our friend and guest, Colonel Gerard Smith, we send also a message of sympathy and goodwill to our fellow-subjects and fellow-citizens in Western Australia. (Cheers.)

In responding to the health of the Chairman, Mr. Chamberlain said:

I am extremely obliged to you for the welcome which you have given to me to-night. It is a great pleasure to me to have these opportunities of making the acquaintance of those who have already distinguished themselves in connection with our great colonies. Sir Robert Herbert has said many kind things, but I am well aware of the saying that no man should call himself happy until he is dead—(laughter)—and there is another statement which I like even better, which is, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." My career as Secretary of State for the Colonies is yet to be made; but I

will say this, that no one has ever been wafted into office with more favourable gales. (Hear, hear.) It is to me an encouragement and a great delight to find that in the colonies and in the mother country there is some confidence, at all events, in my desire to bring them closer together. (Cheers.) I will venture to claim two qualifications for the great office which I hold, and which, to my mind, without making invidious distinctions, is one of the most important that can be held by any Englishman. These qualifications are that, in the first place, I believe in the British Empire—(cheers)—and, in the second place, I believe in the British race. (Renewed cheering.) I believe that the British race is the greatest of governing races that the world has ever seen. (More cheering.) I say that not merely as an empty boast, but as proved and evidenced by the success which we have had in administering the vast dominions which are connected with these small islands (Cheers.) I think a man who holds my office is bound to be sanguine, is bound to be confident, and I have both those qualifications. (Laughter, and cheers.) I wish sometimes that the English people were not so apt to indulge in self-criticism, which, although it does no harm at home, is sometimes misinterpreted abroad. (Hear, hear.) We are all prepared to admire the great Englishmen of the past. We speak of the men who made our Empire, and we speak of them as heroes as great as any that have lived in the pages of history; but when we come to our own time we doubt

and hesitate, and we seem to lose the confidence which I think becomes a great nation such as ours ; and yet, if we look even to such comparatively small matters as the expeditions in which Englishmen have recently been engaged, the administrations which Englishmen have recently controlled, I see no reason to doubt that the old British spirit still lives in the Englishmen of to-day. (Cheers.) When I think of the incidents of such a campaign as that of Chitral, when I think of the way in which in numerous provinces in India—and I might speak from my own experience of the administration in Egypt—of the way in which a number of young Englishmen, picked as it were haphazard from the mass of our population, having beforehand no special claims to our confidence, have nevertheless controlled great affairs, and with responsibility placed upon their shoulders have shown a power, a courage, a resolution, and an intelligence, which have carried them through extraordinary difficulties—I say that he indeed is a craven and a poor-spirited creature who despairs of the future of the British race. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I thank you for the reception you have given me, and I hope I may deserve your confidence. (Hear, hear.)

Splendid Isolation

WHITEHALL ROOMS, LONDON, JANUARY 21,
1896

The incursion of Dr. Jameson into the Transvaal was made on December 29, 1895, and on January 3, 1896, the Emperor of Germany sent a message to President Krüger in terms which were considered to be unfriendly to Great Britain, and which were greatly resented in this country. In view of the threatening aspect of affairs the "Flying Squadron" of powerful ships was commissioned and made ready for sea in a few days, and assurances of sympathy and support were received from the principal Colonies of the Empire.

These were the circumstances under which the following speech was delivered on January 21, 1896, when Mr. Chamberlain presided at a complimentary banquet which was given to Lord Lamington, at the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Métropole, on the occasion of his departure to take up his appointment as Governor of the Colony of Queensland. In proposing the toast of the evening the Secretary of State for the Colonies said:—

I THINK that I see before me a representative gathering of British subjects, whose principal interests lie in that great group of Australian colonies, whose present greatness and importance give us but a faint indication of the splendid future which awaits them. (Cheers.) For of one thing I am certain, whatever may be the fate of the old country—and even as to that I have sufficient confidence—(cheers)—no man can doubt that our vigorous offspring in the Southern Seas are bound at no distant time to rival the older civilisation of the Continent of Europe in wealth, in population, and in all the attributes of a great nation. (Hear, hear.) But, although, as I have said, your interests lie in this direction, I have an instinctive feeling that to-night you are thinking not so much of Australian politics and of Australian progress as you are of events that have recently occurred—(loud cheers)—in another quarter of the globe and of their connection with Imperial interests. If that be so, I hail the fact as another proof of the solidarity of Imperial sentiment in making it impossible that a blow can be struck, or a chord sounded, in even the most distant portion of the Queen's dominions, without an echo coming back from every other part of the British empire. (Cheers.)

It would be inopportune in me, it would be improper, if I were to dwell on the incidents which have diverted attention to South Africa. Those incidents will be the subject of judicial inquiry in this country and in Africa, and I assume that, with the

fair-mindedness which distinguishes them, my countrymen will wait to hear both the indictment and the defence before they pronounce a judgment. (Cheers.) But, in the meantime, I will venture to say that I think there is a tendency to attach too much importance to sensational occurrences which pass away and leave no trace behind, and not enough to the general course of British policy and the general current of colonial progress. I have heard it said that we never have had a colonial policy, that we have simply blundered into all the best places in the earth. (Laughter.) I admit that we have made mistakes. I have no doubt that we are answerable for sins of commission as well as for sins of omission; but, after all is said, this remains—that we alone among the nations of the earth have been able to establish and to maintain colonies under different conditions in all parts of the world, that we have maintained them to their own advantage and to ours, and that we have secured, not only the loyal attachment of all British subjects, but the general goodwill of the races, whether they be native or whether they be European, that have thus come under the British flag. (Cheers.) This may be a comforting assurance when we think of occasional mistakes, and when we are rebuked even for our misfortunes—(laughter)—we may find some consolation in our success. (Cheers.)

There is, gentlemen, another consideration which I think is not inappropriate to such a gathering as

this. A few weeks ago England appeared to stand alone in the world, surrounded by jealous competitors and by altogether unexpected hostility. Differences between ourselves and other nations which were of long standing appeared suddenly to come to a head and to assume threatening proportions; and from quarters to which we might have looked for friendship and consideration—(cheers)—having regard to our traditions and to a certain community of interest—we were confronted with suspicion, and even with hate. We had to recognise that our success itself, however legitimate, was imputed to us as a crime; that our love of peace was taken as a sign of weakness; and that our indifference to foreign criticism was construed into an invitation to insult us. (Loud cheers.) The prospect of our discomfiture was regarded with hardly disguised satisfaction by our competitors, who, at the same time, must have been forced to own that we alone held our possessions throughout the world in trust for all—(cheers)—and that we admit them to our markets as freely as we do our own subjects. (Cheers.) I regret that such a feeling should exist, and that we should be forced to acknowledge its existence; but, as it does exist, I rejoice that it found expression. (Cheers.) No better service was ever done to this nation, for it has enabled us to show, in face of all, that while we are resolute to fulfil our obligations we are equally determined to maintain our rights. (Loud cheers.)

Three weeks ago, in the words of Mr. Foster, the

leader of the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada, "the great mother-empire stood splendidly isolated." And how does she stand to-day? She stands secure in the strength of her own resources, in the firm resolution of her people without respect to party, and in the abundant loyalty of her children from one end of the Empire to another. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution which was conveyed to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Australian colonies, and the display of patriotic enthusiasm on the part of the Dominion of Canada, came to us as a natural response to the outburst of national spirit in the United Kingdom, and as a proof that British hearts beat in unison throughout the world, whatever may be the distances that separate us. (Cheers.)

Then let us cultivate those sentiments. Let us do all in our power by improving our communications, by developing our commercial relations, by co-operating in mutual defence—(cheers)—and none of us then will ever feel isolated; no part of the empire will stand alone, so long as it can count upon the common interest of all in its welfare and in its security. (Cheers.) That is the moral I have derived from recent events. That is the lesson I desire to impress on my countrymen. In the words of Tennyson, let

" Britain's myriad voices call,
' Sons, be welded each and all,
Into one Imperial whole,
One with Britain, heart and soul !
One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne ! "

(Loud cheers.) And in the time to come, the time that must come, when these colonies of ours have grown in stature, in population, and in strength, this league of kindred nations, this federation of Greater Britain, will not only provide for its own security, but will be a potent factor in maintaining the peace of the world. (Cheers.)

Our guest to-night goes out to take his part in this work of drawing tighter the bonds which unite us to our children in the Antipodes. He goes to an infant colony, an infant which is destined to become a giant, and the future possibilities of which no man can measure. Queensland has an area, which—shall I say?—is three times greater than the German Empire. (Laughter and cheers.) It has a soil which can produce anything. It has vast mineral resources. In a generation its population has increased fifteen-fold. It has already a revenue of three or four millions sterling. It has completed 2500 miles of railway. It has exports valued at ten millions sterling, all of them, except a small fraction, coming to the United Kingdom or to some of the British possessions. Yet this colony of Queensland, great as it is, is only one of seven, all equally important, equally energetic, equally prosperous, equally loyal. (Cheers.) I say that the relations between these colonies and ourselves are questions of momentous import to us both, and I hope that our rulers and our people will leave no stone unturned to show the store that we all set on the continued amity, the

continued affection, of our kindred beyond the sea. That is the message we ask Lord Lamington to take with him, and we wish him health and prosperity in the colony over which he is about to preside. (Loud cheers.)

In responding to the toast of "The Chairman," which was proposed by Sir James Garrick, Mr. Chamberlain said :

Nothing could be more gratifying to me than that this toast should have been proposed by the eloquent representative of the colony which we have met to honour as well as its future Governor, and nothing could be more agreeable than the kindly response which you have given to the toast. It almost emboldens me to think that there may yet be occasions upon which I shall venture to address my fellow-countrymen—(laughter and cheers)—a point on which, I admit, I have had grave doubts since I have become acquainted with certain criticisms of my recent performances. (Laughter.) When I became Secretary of State for the Colonies I accepted with that office certain duties, not the least pleasant being that of presiding over gatherings similar to this. I attended a meeting of the friends of South Africa on an occasion interesting especially to our colony of Natal, and I made a speech upon that occasion in which, in my simple and ingenuous way—(laughter)—I ventured to point out that this

was on the whole a considerable Empire, and that any true view of its perspective would take into account the greatness of the colonies, and the magnitude of their resources, as well as the past history of the mother country. And thereupon I was surprised to read, in the report of a speech of a minor luminary of the late Government—(laughter)—on the occasion of the recent raid into the Transvaal, that that unfortunate occurrence was entirely due to the “spread-eagle speech” which I had made. (Laughter.) It is extraordinary what great events spring from trifling causes. I had no conception that my words would travel so far or have so great an influence. To the best of my knowledge and belief, I have never made a “spread-eagle” speech in my life. (Hear, hear.) I think I have been able to distinguish between patriotism and jingoism. (Cheers.) But in order that there may be no mistake, I desire to say now, in the most formal way, that the few remarks which I have addressed to you to-night are not to be taken as an intimation to any individual to carry on war on his own account—(laughter)—or to make an invasion upon a friendly nation with which we are at present at peace. (More laughter.) But this is not all, because this afternoon I read in an evening newspaper that this same speech, which I thought so natural and so innocent, was really the dictating cause of our difficulties in British Guiana, and of the complications with our cousins across the Atlantic. It appears that in speaking of Imperial unity, in

endeavouring to popularise that idea among my countrymen, I am giving offence to other nations.

Gentlemen, I cannot help thinking that Lord Rosebery was mistaken, when, a short time ago, he said that the "Little Englanders" no longer existed among us. (Cheers.) A pretty pass we must have come to if the Minister who is responsible for the British colonies is forbidden to speak of their future, of their greatness—(loud cheers)—of the importance of maintaining friendly relations with them, of the necessity of promoting the unity of the British race, for fear of giving offence. (Renewed cheers.) I remember a story of a certain burgomaster in a continental town to whom complaints were made that naughty boys were accustomed to throw mud upon the passers-by. He was asked to intervene, and he issued a proclamation which was to the effect that all respectable inhabitants were requested to wear their second-hand clothes in order not to give offence. (Loud cheers.) I do not so understand the position which I hold. (Loud cheers.) I decline to speak with bated breath of our colonies for fear of giving offence to foreign nations. We mean them no harm; we hope they mean us none. But not for any such consideration will we be withheld from speaking of points which have for us the greatest interest and upon which the future of our Empire depends. (Cheers.) Sir James Garrick has kindly attributed to me very creditable motives in seeking the office which has been conferred upon me. He is perhaps not far wrong in

thinking that I have long believed that the future of the colonies and the future of this country were interdependent, and that this was a creative time, that this was the opportunity which, once let slip, might never recur, for bringing together all the people who are under the British flag, and for consolidating them into a great self-sustaining and self-protecting Empire whose future will be worthy of the traditions of the race. (Loud cheers.)

A Noble Heritage

CONGRESS OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF
THE EMPIRE, LONDON, JUNE 10, 1896

On June 10, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain presided at the banquet held at the Holborn Restaurant in connection with the third Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire. After proposing the toasts of "The Queen" and "The Prince and Princess of Wales and the Royal Family," Mr. Chamberlain said :—

I HAVE now to propose to you the toast of the evening, "Commerce and the Empire," and, gentlemen, although this is a toast of infinite scope which appeals to our imagination as well as to our material interest, I hope to observe in my remarks upon it the brevity of which the compounder of the toast list has set me an example. He has found it possible to put before you a toast of this magnitude in what practically amounts to two words. Succinct as he has been, he might have been still briefer, for I believe that the toast of the Empire would have carried with it all that is meant by commerce and the Empire, because,

gentlemen, the Empire, to parody a celebrated expression, is commerce. It was created by commerce, it is founded on commerce, and it could not exist a day without commerce. (Cheers.) But this fact does not derogate in the slightest degree from the high ideal which we have formed of that world-wide dominion, which covers so large a portion of the earth's surface, and which to so many hundreds of millions of persons has brought civilisation and security and peace. (Cheers.) It is true that the great Napoleon called us a nation of shopkeepers; but we may bear in mind that it was his ambition to open shop himself—(cheers and laughter)—and I think the taunt was born rather of jealousy than of contempt. (Cheers.) The fact is history teaches us that no nation has ever achieved real greatness without the aid of commerce, and the greatness of no nation has survived the decay of its trade. Well, then, gentlemen, we have reason to be proud of our commerce and to be resolved to guard it from attack. (Cheers.)

If I were to ask myself the oft-repeated question, whether this Empire is destined to follow the empires of antiquity and to perish, and the memory of it to be forgotten, or whether we are to sink like some of our rivals into a condition of mediocrity or obscurity, I confess my answer would depend not so much upon what may be done or said by the population of these small islands, but rather upon the eventual determination of that greater Britain which forms, in space at any rate, the larger portion of the Empire—

(cheers)—and upon the arrangements which they may make to bind us together in closer union. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, the advantages of such a union are now universally appreciated. They are becoming the commonplaces of after-dinner oratory. No one now has to argue for the principle. We in this country are, I think, pretty well convinced of the assured future of our colonies and our dependencies. (Cheers.) There may have been times, but it is long ago, when these great countries, with their enormous potentialities, were not appreciated in the United Kingdom. We know now their capabilities for the production of every article of general necessity or general use. We know of their enormous mineral and natural resources. We know that they must inevitably grow in wealth and in power and in intellectual strength. We know that day by day they are attracting to themselves a vigorous and intelligent population. (Cheers.) But knowing all that, is it wonderful that we desire that the ties of blood and of language, of laws and of religion, which now bind us so closely together should never be loosened by selfish competition, by unworthy jealousy?—which nevertheless insensibly spring up even between kindred nations unless their institutions are linked together by something more material than sympathy. (Cheers.) More and more our sons leave our shores and go to distant lands, and we desire that the lands to which they go should be British like the land that they leave.

(Cheers.) We desire that if they leave us they should continue to associate themselves with what they leave behind, and should continue to cherish our aspirations for the greatness of our common race.

(Cheers.)

That is our position, but am I wrong in thinking that the colonies share our feelings and share them to the full—that they have no idea of cutting themselves adrift from the great history of the mother land, from the glorious traditions in which we find the germs and origins of the ordered liberty which they enjoy, from the history of the struggles in which their ancestors took no mean part, and from all the common pride in the glories of art and literature which, perhaps, more even than our victories in arms, have made the name of Britain illustrious? (Cheers.) No, gentlemen, I believe that our colonies recognise the fact that the life of a great nation is fuller than the life of a small one, and the life of an old nation more instructive than the life of a new one; and I am convinced that none of our colonies will be backward in the effort to secure and maintain this connection, nor ready to abandon its part in the heritage which belongs to all of them. (Cheers.)

We ask you who come from the colonies to attach yourselves closer to us. The benefit is not all on our side. It is not to a decrepit ruin that you are asked to cling. (Cheers.) You have come here, and I think you will agree with me in saying that there are no signs here of waning life or decaying greatness.

(Cheers.) The continued growth of this country is almost as remarkable as the growth of those sister nations that we call our colonies. I could name large cities in our midst the annual addition to whose population could furnish many townships even in most vigorous communities. (Cheers.) Surely, then, it is better to remain a valued associate in such an Empire as this than to sink isolated and separate into a fifth-rate Power. (Cheers.) It is better for your commerce and for our commerce that we all alike should share in the free interchange of commodities between 300 millions of people, than that we should be engaged in setting up barriers, one against the other, and in exciting a competition from which all will be sufferers. The unity of the Empire is recommended to us by sentiment, and sentiment is one of the greatest forces in human affairs, but it is recommended to us no less by our material interests; and it is, in my opinion, the duty of every statesman, whether in this country or in the colonies, to make permanent and to secure this union by basing it upon material interests; and, although I am ready enough to admit that there is much that still remains to be done—we are sowing the seed of which, it may be, we shall not reap the harvest—yet I am optimist enough to think that the forces of cohesion are greater than the forces that tend to disruption. (Cheers.)

I rejoice in everything which tends to identify the commercial life of the colonies with that of the

United Kingdom, and therefore I welcome such a congress as this which is met in our metropolis to-day, and I cannot doubt that its deliberations, with the opportunity which it affords for personal intercourse and communion, will be fruitful of future good. I appeal to the representatives of the commerce of the United Kingdom to facilitate our task, to make sacrifices, if need be, to secure this great object and ideal; and I appeal to the delegates from the colonies to recognise and to reciprocate the spirit in which we bid them welcome, and to recognise the pleasure with which we see them once more "at home"—(loud cheers)—and I ask them to carry back to all the quarters of the globe where the Union Jack floats over a British community the assurance of the affection, the pride, and the confidence with which the mother country regards her distant children. (Loud cheers.)

The Expansion of the
Empire

Pegging out Claims for Posterity

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 20, 1893

In December 1890, Captain Lugard induced King Mwanga, of Uganda, to sign a treaty acknowledging for two years the supremacy of the British East Africa Company. Owing to the incessant intrigues of the Catholic or French Party, Mwanga was encouraged to try to free himself from allegiance to the Company, and for some time the country was in a state of anarchy, until Captain Lugard succeeded in restoring peace. Meanwhile the Directors of the Company, with their comparatively small capital of half a million, and without the power to raise taxes, had become somewhat appalled at the vast responsibility cast upon them, and in 1891 gave it to be understood that it was their intention to retire from Uganda. They were, however, induced to hold on, till in September 1892, a letter from the Foreign Office was sent to them accepting the principle of evacuation, but offering assistance to the Company to prolong the

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occupation to the end of March 1893. In January 1893, Sir Gerald Portal, Her Majesty's representative at Zanzibar, was appointed to proceed to Uganda to inquire into the position, and to furnish information to Mr. Gladstone's Government to enable them to decide as to the course to be ultimately adopted. It was in connection with this Expedition that Mr. Labouchere moved a reduction of £5000 in the Estimates, and in speaking on this Motion on March 20, 1893, Mr. Chamberlain said :—

THE discussion, opened by the honourable member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and carried on by the honourable member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), has been an extremely interesting and important one, and many serious questions have been raised in the course of the debate. I confess that when I listened to my two honourable friends I thought that their primary object was to show to the Committee the difference between Liberals in office and Liberals out of office—(laughter)—between Liberals above the gangway and Liberals below the gangway; and I certainly think that they proved that while Liberals above the gangway are extremely latitudinarian in their acceptance of Liberal principles, Liberals below the gangway remain rigidly sectarian as long, at all events, as there is no prospect of their being transferred to the bench above the gangway. (Laughter.) That is no doubt an extremely interesting question, but it is one on

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which, I think, that an outsider like myself, who has been excommunicated from the congregation—(laughter)—has really very little right to offer an opinion. I do not like to interfere in domestic squabbles. I know the proverb which says it is wrong to put your finger between the bark and the tree, and therefore I shall leave my honourable friends to settle this private question with my right honourable friends upon the Government bench. (Laughter.)

But there is another issue that has been raised which perhaps has a greater, a more general, and even a national interest, and it was put, to my mind, extremely well by my honourable friend the member for Sunderland. He said that he as a Radical—I may perhaps in passing say that there are Radicals and Radicals—(laughter)—and that, although I fully admit his claim to be a Radical, I hope he will admit that there are other Radicals who do not hold altogether with his opinions—(hear, hear)—was opposed to the expansion of the Empire, and that he would not spend a penny for any such object so long as there are poor and distressed and destitute persons at home for whom the money which can be afforded by the State might be expended with great advantage. That is a very important statement, and I should like to know how far it is likely to meet with general concurrence. I wonder, in the first place, how far my honourable friend's economy will carry him? Take, for instance, one of the subjects which we have

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been discussing to-night. We are spending at the present time £200,000 a year, which might be spent on the poor and destitute at home, in the endeavour to put down the slave trade. Is my honourable friend prepared to move that that expenditure should cease?

Mr. STOREY : That is not a question of expenditure for the expansion of the Empire.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN ; No, no. My honourable friend made two statements. He said, in the first place, that he was opposed to the expansion of the Empire. That may stand by itself. But he said, also, that he was opposed especially to the expenditure of money abroad which might be laid out for the advantage of persons at home who are poor and destitute ; and the inference every one who heard him would draw was that, so long as there were poor and destitute persons in the United Kingdom, they had the first claim upon our consideration. Then, I ask him whether, for himself and for those whom he professes to represent, he considers that the £200,000 a year now spent in order to put down the slave trade might be better spent on the poor and destitute at home?

Mr. STOREY explained that his statement was that he was not prepared to spend money on these wild expeditions for expanding the Empire in Africa or elsewhere so long as so much was needed at home. If he had to choose to-morrow in this House as to whether he would spend £200,000 a year in improving the slums in London, or in putting an end to the

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slave trade, he would spend it in attending to the
slums of London.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I am much obliged to my honourable friend. He confirms my suspicion. He would to-morrow prefer to devote the £200,000 a year, which this country spends in endeavouring to put down the slave trade, on the improvement of the position of persons in the slums. I am not saying for a moment that it is not an arguable contention, but I am curious to know how far my honourable friend is consistent. We have it that the honourable member thinks the hereditary duty and responsibility which this country has taken on itself in regard to the slave trade of less importance than the new duty which he foresees in the future of dealing with the slums. (Laughter.) I am tempted, however, by his answer, to ask him how he reconciles this intense sympathy with the poor with the vote which I understand he is going to give on Friday night—to spend something like £300,000 a year in paying members of Parliament—(much laughter and cheers)—who do not live in slums—(laughter)—and who do not want to be paid. (Renewed laughter.) But I must put another question to my honourable friend, and I ask it because I think he is the best representative of a view which I regard as consistent, arguable, and as well worthy of serious consideration. He is opposed to all expansion of the Empire, on the ground, as I understand, that we have enough to do at home.

Now, suppose this view, which he puts before the

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Committee, and which will not be accepted to-day by the majority of the Committee, had been put fifty or one hundred years ago, and suppose it had been accepted by the Parliament of that day. I ask myself what would now be the position of this country, what would be the position of persons in the slums for whom my honourable friend has so much sympathy and feeling? (Hear, hear.) Does my honourable friend believe, if it were not for the gigantic foreign trade that has been created by this policy of expansion, that we could subsist in this country in any kind of way—I do not say in luxury, but in the condition in which, at the present time, a great part of our population lives? Does he think that we could support in these small islands forty millions of people, without the trade by which a great part of our population earns its living—a trade which has been brought to us by the action of our ancestors, who in centuries past did not shrink from making sacrifices of blood and treasure, and who were not ashamed—if I may borrow the expression which has been referred to more than once to-night—to peg out claims for posterity? Are we, who enjoy the advantages of the sacrifices which they made, to be meaner than those who preceded us? Are we to do nothing for those who come after us? Are we to sacrifice that which those who went before have gained for us? If this idea of closing all the doors through which all new trade is to come to us be accepted by this House, at least we ought to adopt some means

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by which our population can be kept stationary; and we should bear in mind that when our ancestors pegged out claims for us in many parts of the world, these were not, at the time, more promising than the claims which we are now marking out. (Cheers.)

What are we asked to do to-night? This is not a question of Uganda only; but we are asked to reverse the whole policy of this country—a policy undertaken, I believe, with the consent of the vast majority of the people of this country—and to relinquish the vast advantages which have accrued to us by the surrender of Heligoland, and by the treaties and engagements with foreign States, and to secure which our country has made sacrifices, in the belief that we were, in return, getting a *quid pro quo*. That *quid pro quo* we are now asked to sacrifice, and are asked to give up all share in what has been called the partition of Africa. (Cheers.) My honourable friend almost always speaks in the first person singular, therefore I do not suppose that he claims to speak for more than himself, and I think that he will find himself to-night in a minority. In the country I believe that he is in a still smaller minority. (Cheers.) I believe that the people of this country have definitely made up their minds on this question, and have determined that they will take their full share in disposing of these new lands and in the work of civilisation they have to carry out there. (Cheers.) They are justified in that determination—justified by the spirit of the past, justified by that spirit of adventure

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and enterprise which has rendered us, of all nations, peculiarly fitted to carry out the work of colonisation. (Cheers.) It is a curious fact, and one which I have never been able to explain, that, of all the nations in the world, we are the only one which has been able to carry out this work of colonisation without great cost to ourselves. Take, for instance, the case of France, which has been ruling for so many years in Algeria. Up to this moment, although French rule there has been beneficent, Algeria costs to the French exchequer large sums annually. The same is the case with regard to Tunis, and, also of the foreign possessions of Germany, and the possessions of Italy in Abyssinia. It is likewise true of the foreign possessions of Portugal. Except in the case of Spain, in the discovery of America, and the early history of Holland, up to comparatively recent times, this is the case with the possessions of all foreign countries, which have not been able to carry out their colonisation permanently without expense to their subjects.

All these facts should lead us to be hopeful in undertaking this new work of colonisation which does not differ from what has been done in other directions in the past. If we are not going to give up this mission—I adopt the expression which has been employed—let us look the matter in the face and be prepared, if need be, for some sacrifice of life and money, which, in the first instance, we may have to make. We have come to the point at which we should not consider life so sacred that it may not be

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sacrificed to save life. I hold that, both in matters of life and money, we may sacrifice both, if we see before us a prospect of good, and a satisfaction for the sacrifice we may have to make. (Cheers.) This country has by large majorities declared its conviction that it is our duty to take our share in the work of civilisation in Africa. We are not, therefore, prepared to sympathise with my honourable friend below me, nor to count the cost which, in the long run, will prove to be well expended. (Cheers.)

I leave the general question and come to the particular matter of Uganda. (Mr. Storey: "Hear, hear.") My honourable friend is pleased to hear this, but let me remark that he said nothing whatever about it. (Laughter.) His observations were directed to the general question of the expansion of the empire. I say in the first place—and, after all, I do not think that our divisions should make us indifferent to national honour—(cheers)—I say our honour is pledged; and whatever you may think of the matter, it is too late to go back. (Cheers.) The Government are in a state of suspense. They are always in a state of suspense. (Laughter.) I respect the honourable member for Sunderland for having a definite policy. I, and those who agree with me, have also a policy, and I believe in the expansion of the empire, and we are not ashamed to confess that we have that belief. We are not at all troubled by accusations of Jingoism. But the Government have, on the other hand, no policy whatever. (Cheers.)

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My profound sympathy is given to the Government, who are endeavouring once again to do what no Government has ever done with success—namely, to ride two horses and to promote two different policies at the same time. (Laughter.) Here is my honourable friend below me, the member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), the great opportunist of the present Parliament. (Laughter.) He has an excuse for the Government. I do not know whether the Government approve of their defender—(renewed laughter)—he says that he approves of their policy of inquiry. This policy of inquiry? Is there any man in this House who believes in it? (Cheers.) The Government have plenty of information at their disposal; they know now all that they will know when Sir Gerald Portal reports; but it is difficult to go against old friends; it is better to appoint a commission than to come to a decision. (Hear, hear.) I wonder they did not send out a Judge of the High Court. (Great laughter.) But they have sent a “commission of inquiry” to Uganda, and, of course, the commission cannot report until very late in the session; and then, as my honourable friend, the member for Leicester, says, the one supreme object of the Government will have been accomplished, and then, perhaps, he will support them in attending a little to what he calls subsidiary questions.

It is a most convenient doctrine which my honourable friend, who is a leader among the new Radicals, has now taken up. He never mentioned his new

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convictions in the time of the late Government; I never heard him explain then that the Government might have in hand a supreme object which would lead them to disregard all subsidiary ones. The only things he cared about then were the subsidiary questions. (Laughter and cheers.) I do not accuse him of inconsistency; it is delightful to note the growth of his mind. (Great laughter.)

I was saying that in Uganda we cannot go back if we would. What have we done there? By a charter we gave to a company certain powers. Not only was the company intrusted with discretion, but distinct and definite pressure was put upon it to go forward, and to prevent other countries from coming in and taking possession of territories which were within the sphere of British influence. Rightly or wrongly, the company yielded to that pressure of public opinion: they went forward in Uganda; they broke up such government as there was in Uganda. I am told the honourable member for Dumfries has said, in an excellent and powerful speech, that the normal condition there was one of massacre. Of course, there was a Government there—such a Government as you may expect in those countries; and if we have no business there whatever, and no responsibility, and never intend to take any, we had better have left those people to work out their own salvation for themselves, be it by massacre or in any other way. But, as a matter of fact, we did not do so. We broke up the authority of those who were held to be chiefs

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among the people. We came in at a cost which to my mind was trifling in comparison with the results achieved. We have secured for Uganda the *pax Britannica* which has been so beneficial in India.

I heard the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) to-night speak about the sad and deplorable circumstances in Uganda; I think he spoke of those occurrences as constituting a massacre. There was no massacre at all. What existed in Uganda at that time were anarchy and civil war of the worst kind. If we had not been there, thousands, and perhaps hundreds of thousands, of people would have been cruelly massacred; and, after the victory of one party, what remained of the other would have been cruelly tortured.

Captain Lugard was on the spot. Let me say, in passing, that I sometimes feel we do not do justice to our bravest and noblest citizens. Of Captain Lugard I know no more than any member of the House may know—I know him only through reading his works. He was, I believe, an Indian officer who was sent to Uganda under the orders of the company; he undertook a work of the highest responsibility and the greatest importance. Any one who reads his accounts impartially will agree in this—that he was, at all events, a man of extraordinary power and capacity, tact, discretion, and courage. Courage is a common virtue, but he has shown it in no common way, and he has exhibited a modesty which is beyond all praise. (Cheers.) It is something for England to glory in that we can still boast such servants as these.

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I was saying that he was present in Uganda when this state of things arose. He took his measures. In the confusion which followed, four hundred lives at the outside were sacrificed. Captain Lugard himself puts the number at considerably less. It was deplorable, no doubt; but that sacrifice cheaply purchased the peace and temporary civilisation which followed. Long before now the people would have been at each other's throats but for the presence of the English. You gave a charter to the company, and through it have undertaken this responsibility; you have never disavowed them; and now you cannot leave that country whatever it may cost you. Even if, as the honourable member for Northampton said, it cost you another expedition, you are bound at all hazards to fulfil the obligations of this country, to maintain the faith of this country to the people to whom it is pledged.

What would happen if you left? Would not the Protestants, Catholics, and Mahomedans be at one another's throats, and would there not be a massacre almost unparalleled in the history of Africa? And who would suffer most? Those who have been our allies; they are the people whom we have disarmed, and who would now fall an easy prey to their enemies. I do not think my honourable friend contemplated such an abandonment as that. He was quite ready to protest against any further extension of the empire. But the extension has been accomplished, and we are dealing now with what has taken place and cannot be

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recalled; and I say it would be as great a disgrace as ever befel England if you were to retire from a country whose prosperity and the lives of whose people depend absolutely upon your continuance of the hold you have upon them.

The honourable member for Northampton has made one of those speeches to which we are accustomed. It was a very amusing speech on a very serious subject, but I do not think that questions of international policy ought to be determined by satire. (Cheers.) The consequences of the decision at which this committee is about to arrive will extend to long years after you have made it. (Cheers.) The decision at which you are about to arrive involves the faith of Great Britain, and the influence of Great Britain, not only in Uganda, but in the whole of Africa, for news travels fast even in that vast continent. (Cheers.)

The honourable member has talked about the cost of an expedition to Uganda, but I do not understand this measuring duty and honour by the money it costs. (Cheers.) The honourable member for Northampton, however, is only following the example of the right honourable gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Morley) in that respect. (Cheers.) If we have to protect people who are in danger of their lives we ought not to count the cost. (Cheers.) According to the argument of the honourable member, if it will cost £10 we may protect their lives, but if it will cost a million we had better keep the money in our pockets. (Hear, hear.) I

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believe that the honourable member for Northampton has ludicrously exaggerated the cost of this matter. He has told the committee that it will be necessary to bring up the British troops in large numbers if we are to have an expedition like that to the Soudan. But Uganda is only six hundred miles from the coast, while the Soudan is two thousand miles from the coast.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I was referring to the expedition to Suakin.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The honourable member speaks as if Suakin were really a serious part of our work in connection with the Soudan. Our position in Suakin was abandoned. The railway was abandoned. I confess now that I wish it had not been abandoned. (Cheers.) The heavy part of that expedition was the cost incurred in the attempted rescue of Gordon. (Cheers.) The two expeditions are absolutely incomparable. All the evidence—and I believe it to be good evidence—goes to show that the peace of Uganda and of the neighbouring countries can be secured at a comparatively small expenditure. A few English officers with a small body of Soudanese troops will be able to keep the country quiet. The honourable member for Northampton talks of the cost of erecting forts, but all the forts that will be necessary are mere stockades, which can be erected at the cost of a few shillings, and which will be amply sufficient to withstand the assaults of savages. (Hear, hear.) I do not see the slightest reason for

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believing that the cost of preserving the peace, and of policing the country, need be anything more than the taxation of the country itself will bear. We have had this same question argued over and over again with regard to other parts of Africa, and in every case the discretion and the prudence of a few English officers has enabled the peace of the district to be preserved without a single farthing of expense to the English Exchequer.

The honourable member spoke of possible danger that would arise from the attacks of the Mahdi and Senoussi. As for the Mahdi, those who know best do not fear him in any way. Mahdism is a periodic outburst of fanaticism which is nearly exhausted, and I believe that in a very short time the Soudan will fall like a ripe pear into the lap of Egypt. (Hear, hear.) The Senoussi is a person of a very different character, and it is very difficult to prophesy what will be the future of the party he leads. Tradition and all information as to this sect are, however, entirely in a different direction, and he is not at all likely to interfere with the position we may acquire in Uganda. Putting aside these two improbable hypotheses, there is no reason to believe that the cost of our protectorate or rule in Uganda is likely to be anything but moderate in the first instance, and nothing at all in the course of a very few years.

As to the commerce of Uganda, the late Mr. Mackay, the African missionary, who was so universally respected, said that the climate of Uganda

is excellent, that the country can produce almost anything, and that the only difficulty is the want of transport and of British enterprise; but that when once those two things were secured there was no reason whatever why Uganda should not be a most prosperous, even a wealthy, country. How can we expect the commerce of Uganda to thrive when the cost of traffic between that country and the coast amounts to about £200 per ton? But what would the honourable member have said about the cost of carriage to the North-West of Canada a hundred years ago? Until the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed there was scarcely any trade in those great dominions of the British Crown. I maintain that the prospects of Uganda are quite equal to those of the North-West of Canada fifty years ago. This is what Lord Rosebery means by pegging out claims for posterity. Lord Rosebery knows that the returns from Uganda cannot be immediate, but he knows that the returns some time or another are certain.

This brings me to another point. I have quoted the opinions of Mr. Mackay to the effect that you cannot have a commerce in Uganda without a means of transport. I call the policy of the Government one of drifting. They might just as well take a bold stand now, because the result will be the same. They have committed themselves just as much by sending this mission as they could have done by saying, "We are going to retain the country, and make the best of it." (Hear, hear.) The question is, Are we going

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to make the best of it, and how much time are we going to waste before we make the best of it? I believe that nothing can be done in this territory unless you are prepared to make the railway at a cost of some two-and-a-half millions, or of three millions, according to that great financial authority, the member for Northampton. (Laughter.) That would be the cost if you made the whole six hundred miles, but those who are best acquainted with the country think that it would be sufficient at first to carry the railway up to the mountains, a distance of three hundred miles. If you made the line up to the mountains you would get over all the country which is difficult for animal portorage, and by animal portorage you would be able to carry on the traffic for the rest of the way. The cost of a railway for three hundred miles would be a million and a half. But whether the railway is to cost a million and a half or three millions, you had better make up your minds to-night that if you are going to stay in this territory you will have to spend the money—that you will have to guarantee some interest on the money in order that the line may be made. I firmly believe that the railway will be a good investment, and if you spend this money the working classes of this country, and the people in the slums, for whom the honourable member for Sunderland is so anxious, will benefit, for the whole of the work will, of course, be done in this country, and the line will be engineered by natives of this country. Even in the honourable

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member's view, therefore, the money will not be wholly thrown away. I believe that the chances of this railway are just as good as were the chances of the railways which were built in India thirty years ago and which are now producing a large revenue. This railway will bring you into communication with twelve millions of people in the countries conterminous with the Victoria Lake and the other great lakes; and, whatever may be said of Uganda, nobody will deny that the neighbouring countries, like Unyoro and Usoga, are countries of enormous natural wealth. As soon as you make porterage possible we shall have a large commerce.

We shall get from this country gum and rubber, and perhaps even wheat, and in return we shall send out large quantities of our manufactures. It is a most remarkable fact that as soon as we created this company, and this sphere of influence, the British and indeed the general trade of Zanzibar increased at a perfectly marvellous rate. In the last year for which we have returns it nearly doubled, increasing from 72,000 to 131,000 tons. If that is done in the green tree what will be done in the dry? I think, therefore, that the investment is one which a rich country can wisely undertake. (Hear, hear.)

With regard to the slave trade, the railway will certainly do more than anything else could do to put a stop to the abominable traffic in slaves. (Hear, hear.) What is the slave trade and its cause? People do not make slaves from mere love of cruelty

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and mischief. They carry on the slave trade because they get their livelihood by it, and the slave trade in Africa is largely a matter of portorage. Tribes are enslaved in order to carry burdens down to the coast, and then are sold for what they will fetch. If you can give to the slave-raiding Arabs peaceful means of making an honest livelihood, do you think that they are so fond of war that they will not accept these means? Whenever it has been made profitable to a nation or tribe to keep the peace they have always done so. Take an illustration. In the old days we had to fight with the people of the Punjab, and when we had conquered them they supplied us with our best native soldiers. But now that peace reigns, and the country is prosperous, these people, who were once the most warlike race in India, are confirmed agriculturists and peasants, and we cannot get from them an adequate number of recruits for our army. What happened in India will happen in Africa.

Make it the interest of the Arab slave traders to give up the slave trade and you will see the end of that traffic. Construct your railway, and thereby increase the means of traffic, and you will take away three-fourths if not the whole of the temptation to carry on the slave trade.

I ask the Committee, Are they in earnest in this matter of the slave trade? Is the hereditary sentiment of the British people still alive? Do we hold it to be one of our prime duties, as Lord Rosebery said, and great glories, to take a prominent part

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in suppressing this trade? If we do, let us look boldly in the face the necessities of the situation, and let us spend our money wisely. We spend £200,000 a year for a squadron on the East coast which, I am afraid, has too often increased indirectly the horrors and sufferings entailed by the slave traffic, and now we are asked to sanction an expenditure which I believe will be much more fruitful of good results.

I wish, in conclusion, to say that I do hope that the Government will take to heart this debate. They get no credit from either side by taking a middle course. (Cheers.) I am uncertain, whether, if the majority of them follow out their wishes, they would not at once pronounce in favour of the absolute evacuation of Uganda, and whether they would not be prepared to take all the risks of such a course. At all events that would be a bold course, and they might make their own defence, and might go to the country and see if they could get approval for it. But, on the other hand, they may take the course I urge most earnestly upon them. I do not care whether they say that course was forced upon them by the proceedings of the party opposite, or in obedience to their own wishes; but at least they could say in the present situation, and with the responsibilities which we have undertaken, and which are incumbent upon them as much as they were upon their predecessors, that they will face this problem and that they will carry out the policy which of course will

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result in the protectorate or the annexation which is feared by the honourable member below me, but which I believe will do credit to the British name and will in the long run be in accordance both with our interest and our honour. (Cheers.)

Want of Employment and the Development of Free Markets

BIRMINGHAM, JANUARY 22, 1894

On January 22, 1894, Mr. Chamberlain presided at the third annual meeting of the West Birmingham Relief Association. In dealing with the question of the unemployed he argued against proposals for municipal workshops and for the limitation of the hours of labour, and proceeded to urge that the only real remedy was to develop and extend the free markets for British manufactures. He said:—

WE must look this matter in the face, and must recognise that in order that we may have more employment to give we must create more demand. (Hear, hear.) Give me the demand for more goods and then I will undertake to give plenty of employment in making the goods; and the only thing, in my opinion, that the Government can do in order to meet this great difficulty that we are considering, is so to arrange its policy that every inducement shall be given to the

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demand; that new markets shall be created, and that old markets shall be effectually developed. (Cheers.) You are aware that some of my opponents please themselves occasionally by finding names for me—(laughter)—and among other names lately they have been calling me a Jingo. (Laughter.) I am no more a Jingo than you are. (Hear, hear.) But for the reasons and arguments I have put before you to-night I am convinced that it is a necessity as well as a duty for us to uphold the dominion and empire which we now possess. (Loud cheers.) For these reasons, among others, I would never lose the hold which we now have over our great Indian dependency—(hear, hear)—by far the greatest and most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have in this country. For the same reasons I approve of the continued occupation of Egypt; and for the same reasons I have urged upon this Government, and upon previous Governments, the necessity for using every legitimate opportunity to extend our influence and control in that great African continent which is now being opened up to civilisation and to commerce; and, lastly, it is for the same reasons that I hold that our navy should be strengthened—(loud cheers)—until its supremacy is so assured that we cannot be shaken in any of the possessions which we hold or may hold hereafter.

Believe me, if in any one of the places to which I have referred any change took place which deprived us of that control and influence of which I have been

speaking, the first to suffer would be the working-men of this country. Then, indeed, we should see a distress which would not be temporary, but which would be chronic, and we should find that England was entirely unable to support the enormous population which is now maintained by the aid of her foreign trade. If the working-men of this country understand, as I believe they do—I am one of those who have had good reason through my life to rely upon their intelligence and shrewdness—if they understand their own interests, they will never lend any countenance to the doctrines of those politicians who never lose an opportunity of pouring contempt and abuse upon the brave Englishmen, who, even at this moment, in all parts of the world are carving out new dominions for Britain, and are opening up fresh markets for British commerce, and laying out fresh fields for British labour. (Applause.) If the Little Englanders had their way, not only would they refrain from taking the legitimate opportunities which offer for extending the empire and for securing for us new markets, but I doubt whether they would even take the pains which are necessary to preserve the great heritage which has come down to us from our ancestors. (Applause.)

When you are told that the British pioneers of civilisation in Africa are filibusters, and when you are asked to call them back, and to leave this great continent to the barbarism and superstition in which it has been steeped for centuries, or to hand over to

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foreign countries the duty which you are unwilling to undertake, I ask you to consider what would have happened if 100 or 150 years ago your ancestors had taken similar views of their responsibility? Where would be the empire on which now your livelihood depends? We should have been the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; but those vast dependencies, those hundreds of millions with whom we keep up a mutually beneficial relationship and commerce would have been the subjects of other nations, who would not have been slow to profit by our neglect of our opportunities and obligations. (Applause.)

Let me give you one practical illustration, in order to show what ought to be done, and may be done, in order to secure employment for our people. I will take the case of a country called Uganda, of which, perhaps, you have recently heard a good deal. A few years ago Uganda was only known to us by the reports of certain enterprising and most venturesome travellers, or by the accounts which were given by those self-denying missionaries who have gone through all these wild and savage lands, endeavouring to carry to the people inhabiting them the blessings of Christianity and civilisation. (Applause.) But within very recent times English authority has been established in Uganda, and an English sphere of influence has been declared. Uganda is a most fertile country. It contains every variety of climate; in a large portion of it European colonisation is perfectly

feasible ; the products are of the utmost richness ; there is hardly anything which is of value or use to us in our commerce which cannot be grown there ; but in spite of these natural advantages, during the past generation the country has been desolated by civil strife and by the barbarities of its rulers, barbarities so great that they would be almost incredible if they did not come to us on the authority of thoroughly trustworthy eye-witnesses.

All that is wanted to restore this country to a state of prosperity, to a commercial position which it has never attained before, is settled peace and order. (Hear, hear.) That peace and order which we have maintained for so long in India we could secure by a comparatively slight exertion in Uganda, and, when this is proposed to us, the politicians to whom I have referred would repudiate responsibility and throw back the country into the state of anarchy from which it has only just emerged ; or they would allow it to become an appanage or dependency of some other European nation, which would at once step in if we were to leave the ground free to them. I am opposed to such a craven policy as this. (Applause.) I do not believe it is right. I do not believe it is worthy of Great Britain ; and, on the contrary, I hold it to be our duty to the people for whom at all events we have for the time accepted responsibility, as well as to our own people, even at some cost of life, some cost of treasure, to maintain our rule and to establish settled order, which is the only founda-

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tion for permanent prosperity. When I talk of the cost of life, bear in mind that any cost of life which might result from undertaking this duty would be a mere drop in the ocean to the bloodshed which has gone on for generations in that country before we ever took any interest in it.

But I will go further than that. This rich country should be developed. It is at the present time 800 miles from the sea, and unless we can reach a country by the sea we cannot obtain its products in a form or at a cost which would be likely to be of any use to us, nor can we get our products to them. Therefore what is wanted for Uganda is what Birmingham has got—an improvement scheme. (Laughter.) What we want is to give to this country the means of communication by a railway from the coast which would bring to that population—which is more intelligent than the ordinary populations in the heart of Africa—our iron, and our cloths, and our cotton, and even our jewellery, because I believe that savages are not at all insensible to the delights of personal adornment. (Laughter.) It would bring to these people the goods which they want and which they cannot manufacture, and it would bring to us the raw materials, of which we should be able to make further use.

Now, it is said that this is the business of private individuals. Private individuals will not make that railway for fifty years to come, and for the good reason that private individuals who go into invest-

ments like railways want to see an immediate prospect of a return. They cannot afford to go for ten or twenty years without interest on their money, and accordingly you will find that in undeveloped countries no railway has ever been made by private exertion, but has always been made by the prudence and foresight and wisdom of a government.

If the Government choose to employ its credit in order to make a railway from the coast to some point of the country from which the goods of Uganda could easily reach it, I venture to say that at once would spring up a great industry, a great trade, which would be beneficial to the people of this country, and that, in the long run, it might be ten years, it might be fifteen years, and it might even be twenty years hence, not only would this indirect advantage come to the country, but the railway itself would more than pay its expenses. That has always been the result of such expenditure. Take the case of India. In India it was impossible to make the railways in the first instance by private capital and private enterprise. The Government undertook them, and they did not pay their way for some time, but now the whole of that vast network of railways is paying fair interest upon the expenditure which has been made. (Applause.) And, in the meantime, the trade of India, the wealth of India, the population of India, not to speak of the wealth of this country, has increased enormously. The fact is, that railroads are the very arteries which

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carry the life-blood of countries, that without them the country languishes and dies, that with them it springs up again into healthy life; and I am convinced that, when we ask the Government to give employment to its people, we should not dwell upon such proposals as those which I have ventured to stigmatise as impracticable, we should not ask them to establish municipal workshops, or to insist on an eight hours day; but we should ask them to look about in places like Uganda, in some of those vast undeveloped possessions which own the sway of the British Crown, and to see whether or not, by a judicious investment of money, by a little looking into the future, they might not only find present employment for all the men in this country, who would be engaged in making these railways, in furnishing the plant, in supplying the things which would be required by those who have to manage and supervise them, but might also establish a foundation for a trade which for generations yet to come may find employment for the working population of this country. (Applause.)

Ladies and gentlemen, I ought to make an apology for having strayed so far from the direct object of the meeting, but my excuse must be that I do not see too much of my constituents, and that when I have such an opportunity as this, I may be justified in looking a little beyond the mere palliatives for distress such as those which in this association we

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are to the best of our ability endeavouring to provide, and may seek beyond them if haply we may trace the causes for this distress, and if haply we may find some permanent and effectual remedy. (Loud applause.)

British Trade and the Expansion of the Empire

BIRMINGHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
NOVEMBER 13, 1896

The following speech was delivered in the Grand Hotel, Birmingham, at a banquet given to Mr. Chamberlain by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, on November 13, 1896. Mr. P. A. Muntz, M.P., presided. The toast of "Her Majesty's Ministers" having been proposed by Councillor Tonks, Mr. Chamberlain replied as follows:—

I THANK you most heartily on behalf of my colleagues and myself for the cordial reception which you have given to this toast; and I can assure you that we value very highly the support of the representatives of commerce irrespective altogether of party considerations. (Hear, hear.) The present Government, like all the Governments that I have known in our constitutional system, came into office in conse-

quence of a party victory. It is, therefore, in a sense, a party Government; but, from the moment that we accepted and entered upon the duties of office, our most important duty, our most absorbing care, has been not the party legislation which occupies probably the largest part of our public discussions, but the development and the maintenance of that vast agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial enterprise upon which the welfare and even the existence of our great population depends. (Hear, hear.)

Now, I think, gentlemen, that you may safely give the widest interpretation to the statement that I have just made.

All the great offices of State are occupied with commercial affairs. The Foreign Office and the Colonial Office are chiefly engaged in finding new markets and in defending old ones. (Hear, hear.) The War Office and Admiralty are mostly occupied in preparations for the defence of these markets, and for the protection of our commerce. (Hear, hear.) The Boards of Agriculture and of Trade are entirely concerned with those two great branches of industry. Even the Education Department bases its claims to the public money upon the necessity of keeping our people well to the front in the commercial competition which they have to sustain; and the Home Office finds the largest scope for its activity in the protection of the life and the health, and in the promotion of the comfort, of the vast army of manual labourers

who are engaged in those industries. Therefore, it is not too much to say that commerce is the greatest of all political interests—(hear, hear)—and that that Government deserves most the popular approval which does most to increase our trade and to settle it on a firm foundation.

I think the time has come when I may put in a modest claim on behalf of the Government which I represent. (Cheers.) I will not dwell upon the recovery of trade to which Mr. Tonks has referred, which undoubtedly was coincident with our accession to office—(hear, hear, and laughter)—and which has continued, I am happy to say, down to the present time. But it may be said that that was only a coincidence, and that it was due to circumstances over which we had no control. I have observed that Sir William Harcourt stated on one occasion that this improvement in trade began to manifest itself during the discussions upon his Budget—(laughter)—from which I imagine that he would like you to infer that it is due entirely to the increase of the death duties. (Laughter and cheers.) That is a matter of controversy which it would not be proper for me to discuss more fully on the present occasion. (Laughter.) Neither will I claim credit, although I think I might, for the fact that we have, by giving relief in taxation to the greatest and the most distressed of all our industries, done something to brighten the prospects of agriculture—(cheers)—upon which the manufactures of our towns and so

many other interests largely, if not entirely, depend.
(Cheers.)

But I think—although I do not make a party claim, and although I am not here to-night to make a party speech—I think I may claim, perhaps with the assent of some of my political opponents, credit to the Government for doing all in their power to increase and to develop those great free markets in the world to which we look now, to which we shall have in future to look still more, for outlets for British trade—for the trade which, I am sorry to say, foreign nations, and even some of our own colonies, are threatening by hostile and restrictive tariffs. (Hear, hear.) Attention was called the other day, in a very able and a very powerful speech delivered by Lord Rosebery in Edinburgh, to the fact that during the last few years we have added 2,600,000 square miles to the territories which are either dominions of the Queen or over which the Queen exercises her influence. I am not quite certain that the orator was not himself a little alarmed at this vast development, although I think that he has in some sort contributed to it by speeches of a stimulating character on previous occasions. (Laughter.)

I should be perfectly prepared to admit that, if other nations would only stand aside, it might have been wiser that we should have proceeded more gradually, and that we should have developed the countries that we already possessed before seeking this vast extension. But there was no appearance

of such an inclination on the part of other nations. (Laughter.) I can truly say that we were not the first or the most eager to move; but, if we had remained passive, what would have happened? Is it not as certain as that we are sitting here that the greater part of the continent of Africa would have been occupied by our commercial rivals, who would have proceeded, as the first act of their policy, to close this great potential market to British trade? (Cheers.)

Let me make one remark here, the proper consideration of which would, I think, do very much to modify that jealousy with which undoubtedly foreign nations regard our extension. My remark is this—that we, in our colonial policy, as fast as we acquire new territory and develop it, develop it as trustees of civilisation for the commerce of the world. (Cheers.) We offer in all these markets over which our flag floats the same opportunities, the same open field to foreigners that we offer to our own subjects, and upon the same terms. (Hear, hear.) In that policy we stand alone, because all other nations, as fast as they acquire new territory—acting, as I believe, most mistakenly in their own interests, and, above all, in the interests of the countries that they administer—all other nations seek at once to secure the monopoly for their own products by preferential and artificial methods.

Under those circumstances, I say, it was a matter of life and death to us that we should not be fore-

stalled in these markets of the future to which we have learned to look for the extension of our trade, and even for the subsistence of our people—(hear, hear)—and in considering the results of our policy I think we Britons—I must not say Englishmen, because my Scotch friends—(hear, hear)—would think I was excluding them from a field in which, indeed, they have taken even more than their fair share—(laughter)—but I say that the results of our policy are results upon which we Britons can look back with satisfaction. (Hear, hear.)

It is interesting to notice that we alone have been successful, astonishingly successful, in making these acquisitions profitable. (Hear, hear.) Every addition to the colonial possessions of France, or of Germany, adds immediately, and continues to add, to the latest date, a heavy burden upon the taxpayers of the mother country. Whereas, in our case, all our colonies and territories are either self-supporting from the first, or become so in a very short space of time, the French colonies and the German colonies seem somehow or other to fail to attract any commercial and civilian population. I think the recent official returns of the German Empire show that in their colonies, which extend over more than a million square miles, there are less than seven hundred civilian Germans—less, in fact, than there are of that nationality in many of our own colonies. (Laughter.) While in the foreign colonies no population from the mother country is attracted, in our colonies we find

that settlement proceeds gaily, and they take off our most adventurous spirits and relieve us of some of our surplus population. (Cheers.)

I think I may go further and say that this system, while it is certainly satisfactory to ourselves, is productive of advantages to the people over whom we exercise control. (Hear, hear.) It is said that you cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs. You cannot exercise control over barbarous countries, which previous to your arrival have been in a state of constant anarchy and disorder, without occasionally coming into conflict with their savage rulers and having to shed some blood; but I say that universally it has proved to be the case that after a time we have secured the pacification of the country, we have put an end to the tribal conflict which has previously interfered with progress, we have stopped those slave-raiding expeditions which have been fatal to commerce, and we have secured the permanent improvement of the country and the increase of the population. (Cheers.) Now that is a statement which I believe applies universally to all the new acquisitions which we have made on the continent of Africa, and I cannot help thinking that it justifies even that large extension of territory which has been forced upon us. (Cheers.)

I said I was going to make a claim for the Government. I have been describing to you that policy which commends itself to our minds, and which hitherto has been so successful. I go on to say that

during the last twelve months, we, the present Government, have redeemed from barbarism in Ashanti and in the Soudan, with a small expenditure of life and treasure, by expeditions which have been admirably planned—(hear, hear)—splendidly led—(hear, hear)—and successfully prosecuted—(cheers)—two provinces, where previously trade was impossible, because no man could call his life or his property his own, or consider himself to be safe from the tyranny and cruelty of his native rulers. (Hear, hear.)

I note here a certain inconsistency in some of those men of light and leading who profess to instruct and to guide public opinion. In Dongola, and in Ashanti, the country was ruled by two princes, whom I think I may describe as "great assassins." (Hear, hear.) In these two countries the number of the victims was tenfold the number of all that have suffered by Turkish tyranny and Turkish cruelty in the last few years, and the kind of cruelty that was practised upon them was, if possible, even more horrible than that which struck so deep a chord of indignation and sympathy in regard to the Armenian massacres. We all sympathise, I am sure, with the people who in Asia Minor have suffered from the cruelty of the Turk, and from the anarchy which has prevailed in their land. We sympathise with those who desire by every practical means to come to their aid and to prevent the continuance of these cruelties; but is the fact that the Armenians are of the same colour as ourselves, or that they profess the

Christian religion, a reason why the sympathy which we feel for them should not be extended to still larger populations in Africa and elsewhere who are suffering from at least equal tyranny? (Cheers.) Yet I find that those who have been preaching a crusade for the Armenians, in spite of the knowledge that such a crusade might easily produce even greater evils than those which we seek to avoid, have said not one word of sympathy, one word of approval, for a policy which at comparatively small sacrifice has, I believe, diminished the sum of human misery by a greater amount than would have been the case even if we had secured the destruction of the Turkish Empire. (Cheers.)

I say that to my mind this inconsistency needs to be explained, and I want to know how one and the same man can preach a crusade and encourage this country to take risks on behalf of the Armenians, whom I admit to be well worthy of your sympathy, and then can describe the expedition in Egypt—which has rescued a whole province from the greatest possible suffering, and has restored it to civilisation and to peaceful industry—as “wanton folly” and an “infatuated policy.” (Cheers.) It is not only in the Soudan, or in Ashanti, that this policy has been pursued. Two other expeditions, which seem almost to have escaped public attention although their results are of the utmost importance to humanity at large, have also been successfully conducted, one in East Africa, the other in Nyassaland, under Sir

Harry Johnston. Both these expeditions have been successful, and have struck a heavy blow at that system of slave-raiding which has been probably for centuries the curse of Central Africa, and has prevented the civilisation and the improvement of that vast continent.

I would not like you, however, to suppose that it is only on military expeditions that I base my claims to your support for the policy of the Government. After conquest must come development—(hear, hear)—and by the railways in the Soudan, by the railway to Uganda, the railways which are being planned or are already in progress on the West Coast of Africa, and by other railways which we are stimulating and encouraging by every means in our power in all the dominions of the Crown, by furthering the means of communication in all parts of the world, and especially those between our own colonies and ourselves, by endeavouring to bring out the latent resources of our territories, we are actively pursuing that policy of developing the Imperial estate which I ventured to recommend to the House of Commons as the true, the wise, and the economical policy for this country to pursue. (Cheers.) If we pursue it, and if, like that of so many great empires that have passed away, our great dominion comes to an end, we shall at least have left behind us the material monument of our progress through the world. Just as the Romans left their roads which remain to this day to speak for their intelligence and their courage, so we shall leave

railroads and means of communication which we have provided as permanent benefits to the country over which we have exercised Imperial sway. (Cheers.)

That is part of our business ; we have to find new markets, and we have to develop old ones. But there is something else to be done, something in which your co-operation and the co-operation of the commercial classes is absolutely necessary, and that is to see that this country retains at least its fair share of trade in the markets we have provided. That is a question which has created a good deal of interest, and as to which the impression appears to prevail, encouraged, I think, by the speeches of some very prominent personages indeed, that British trade is being undermined by foreign competition, that British manufacturers have lost all their old energy and enterprise, and that British workmen have lost their cunning. If the object of statements of that kind is merely to stimulate you to further exertions, if these bogeys are dressed up in order to frighten you into an unwonted activity, perhaps they may prove to have their advantages ; but believe me, I think it would be a great mistake that we should be too much discouraged, that we should begin to despair, either of our country or of ourselves.

These extremely pessimistic statements will not bear a moment's serious examination.

What is the charge made against British industry ? I wish to confine it as far as possible to its prominent

characteristic, in order that I may deal with it in a few words. Germany is the country which we are to fear. (Laughter.) Germany is the country which is to undermine our industry, and which has made this astonishing progress. Germany, we are told, is making inroads upon our trade as the sea encroaches upon our shores. (Laughter.) Well, I am not certain that the sea does encroach upon our shores. (Laughter.) At least I am certain of this, that if it makes inroads on some portions, for instance, of the east coast, there are other portions of the country in which the sea is retiring, and in which land is being reclaimed for profitable cultivation.

But I would prefer to reply to charges of this kind by facts and figures rather than by rhetorical ornament. Let us look, then, at the course of trade as between Germany and this country, and when we do so I think we shall find that, although there is reason for watchfulness, there is no reason at all for despairing—(no, and hear, hear)—and there is hardly reason for serious alarm—certainly nothing of a kind which would make Mr. Chantrill's hair stand upon end. (Loud laughter.) I do not want, at a meeting of this kind, to burden you with many statistics, but I will ask you to follow me in one or two figures so plain and so simple that I think they will be sufficient to prove my case. If Germany is encroaching in this terrible way upon the trade of the United Kingdom, of course we should expect to find that the exports from the United Kingdom

would materially have diminished, and the exports from Germany have materially increased. What are the facts? The last year for which I have complete returns is 1894, and I take a period of ten years backwards from 1894. In 1885 the total export of domestic produce from the United Kingdom—that is, leaving out of count altogether the foreign and colonial produce which comes to this country, and which is re-exported at a profit, and taking only things of our own manufacture and production—was 213 millions. In 1894 it was 216 millions, an increase of three millions. The total exports of domestic produce from Germany were 143 millions in 1885, and 148 millions in 1894—that is to say, they had increased five millions, while ours had increased three millions.

Then, what has been the course of trade between Germany and this country? Here I have the returns down to last year, 1895. The exports of produce from the United Kingdom to Germany have risen in the ten years from twenty-six millions to thirty-three millions, an addition of seven millions. The exports in the other direction, from Germany to the United Kingdom, have risen in the same time from twenty-one millions to twenty-seven millions, or an increase of six millions. That is to say, the trade of both States has increased in practically the same proportion, but the increase of British trade has been seven millions while the increase in German trade has been six millions. (Cheers.)

Now is it not perfectly clear, whatever special changes may have taken place, that the general movement of trade has not been of material importance? There have been considerable fluctuations in the course of the ten years which I have taken for the purpose of examination, sometimes in favour of Germany, sometimes in favour of this country, but on the whole, and taking the whole period, the result shows that there is substantially no change of importance in the relative proportion of German and of British trade.

There is only one other branch of inquiry to which I would direct your attention, and that is the exports of the two countries to our colonies and possessions. The returns are again for different periods, but they are substantially the same period. I find that the exports from the United Kingdom to the principal colonies and dependencies of the British Crown averaged 105 millions in 1884-85. They rose to 113 millions in 1893 to 1895—that is to say, a rise of eight millions. The exports from Germany at the beginning of the period were only one and a half million, and they rose to four and a half millions, which is an increase of three millions. In this case you will see that the percentage of increase of the German exports is very large, but the actual amount of increase is only about one-third of the amount of increase of British products; and I may add that that increase, although it appears very large as between 1884 and 1893-95, all took place in

the first five or six years of the period, and there has been no increase in the last five years. I say, then, that, on the whole, I think I have justified my position. While it is most important that this question should have your careful and continuous attention, there is no reason whatever for putting forward alarmist views of our position, which are greedily accepted abroad, and which lead our foreign friends and competitors to take altogether an erroneous view of the commercial power and the commercial influence of Great Britain. (Loud cheers.)

But I have not been satisfied to rest entirely upon official statistics, which deal with only the general movement of trade. Mr. Tonks referred to the circular, which, after consultation with this and with many other chambers of commerce in the United Kingdom, I issued to all the Governors of the colonies of the Empire. The returns to that circular have already to a great extent been received, and the remainder are still coming in. Undoubtedly they contain an immense amount of most valuable and most interesting information, and, when they are coupled with the samples of foreign goods which have found a sale in those countries, I think they will give to every manufacturer and to every working man an opportunity of estimating the character and the importance of the competition with which he is threatened. (Cheers.)

When these returns are complete, I intend that they shall be published in a Blue-book, with a com-

plete summary of the whole of the results; but, in the meantime, I may say this, that, while they give to us no reason for excessive alarm, they do show that, in certain branches of our trade, in particular industries, and particular classes of goods, we have been outstripped by our competitors, and have lost trade which we ought to have retained. (Hear, hear.) What is the reason of that? The reasons, no doubt, are multifarious, but the principal reason undoubtedly is to be found in what I must call the too great independence of our manufacturing population, and by manufacturing population I include all classes, the manufacturers as well as their work-people—and it is unfortunately true that in late years our competitors abroad, and especially our German competitors, have shown a greater willingness than we have—(hear, hear)—to consult the wishes, and, if you like, the prejudices of their customers. It seems to be a theory with certain of our manufacturers that consumers were sent into the world by Providence in order to take the things which they (the manufacturers) make—(laughter)—and that there is no corresponding obligation at all upon the manufacturers to make the goods that the consumers want. (Laughter and cheers.) I have been very much struck by the interest which has already been taken in these exhibits, which have hitherto been confined to the City of London; and the number of manufacturers and working people who have visited them makes me sanguine that when

the exhibits have been through the country, as they are now to go—(cheers)—and have been seen in each district by the people who are specially concerned in them, we shall find that our manufacturing people, whether employers or employed, will be perfectly prepared to profit by the object-lesson which they afford. (Cheers.)

I do not believe that it is necessary for us, in order to maintain our position, to copy slavishly the methods of our foreign competitors. (Hear, hear.) I do not believe in adopting in this country the bureaucratic and almost military organisation by which they attempt to discipline their trades and industries. (Cheers.) I do not believe in adopting foreign rates of wages or foreign hours of labour. (Cheers.) But I do believe in stimulating the invention of our people, in maintaining that originality on the part of our manufacturers and merchants, which, after all, has given to us our great character for enterprise and individuality. (Cheers.) I believe in maintaining the high standard of technical and scientific instruction, and I believe generally in keeping abreast with the current of industrial progress—(cheers)—and I think we have good reason to believe that this is in effect what we are striving to do. If I look to the question of invention, which, after all, is one of the most important factors in the increase of our trade—(hear, hear)—I find that since the change in the Patents Act which I was able to inaugurate in 1883—(cheers)—the number of patents annually taken

out in the United Kingdom alone has risen from something like 6000 to nearly 30,000. (Cheers.) It is a curious and a most interesting and a most encouraging fact that some of the greatest inventions that have recently been made—inventions which have led, like the cycle industry, to the employment of an enormous number of people in this country, and I hope to corresponding profits—(laughter and hear, hear)—at all events, to the original owners—(renewed laughter and cheers)—I say it is an encouraging fact that these inventions have almost invariably been English inventions. (Cheers.) We are making great progress also in connection with our technical instruction, although it is still in its infancy, and for my part, I see no reason upon this review to doubt for a moment that we shall be able, with a continuance of the efforts which we are now making, to hold our own against all competitors. (Cheers.)

Mr. President, I have been permitted before I sit down to propose what I think is the toast of the evening, "Prosperity to the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and its officers," and I have pleasure in connecting the toast with the name of Mr. Albert Muntz, M.P., the president of the chamber, and Mr. J. B. Chantrill, the acting chairman. (Cheers.) I have the greatest pleasure in proposing this toast because my office has brought me into close communication with the chambers of commerce, and I have received from them most valuable advice and assistance. I want to take this, which is the first

opportunity I have had, to express especially my thanks to the London Chamber, which has most actively co-operated with me, and which has contributed very largely to the success of those colonial exhibitions to which I have referred. But the fact is that, whenever I have had occasion to apply to any chamber of commerce throughout the United Kingdom, I have always received the most hearty support, for which I desire to express my sincere gratitude.

If I may, in conclusion, make a statement of the result of my experience, without being thought to be in any way a critic, I would say that that experience seems to show that it is by practical methods of this kind, by assisting in the work of education, by disseminating information, by giving that expert advice which you are so well entitled to offer, and not by academic discussion upon highly controversial points of legislation and policy, that chambers of commerce will best serve the important interests which they specially represent. (Cheers.) We all pride ourselves upon being practical men in Birmingham, and I have no doubt the Birmingham Chamber will show a good example in this respect to all the chambers of the Empire. I have, therefore, very much pleasure in proposing "Prosperity to the Chamber and the Health of its President." (Loud cheers.)

Imperial Trade

The First Step to Federation

CANADA CLUB DINNER, LONDON,

MARCH 25, 1896

Mr. Chamberlain was the principal guest at a dinner of the Canada Club held on March 25, 1896, at the Albion Tavern, Aldersgate Street, London. The President of the Club, Sir Robert Gillespie, occupied the Chair, and in proposing the toast of "The Governor-General (the Earl of Aberdeen) and the Dominion of Canada," associated with it the names of Mr. Chamberlain and the Hon. Dr. Montague, Minister of Agriculture in the Canadian Cabinet. In responding Mr. Chamberlain said:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—I feel honoured in being associated in this toast with Dr. Montague, a member of the Ministry and of the Parliament of Canada, and I have much pleasure in meeting so many representatives of that great Dominion, which, whether we have regard to the area of its territory, to its population, to its natural resources, or to any other test by which we gauge the greatness of a

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people, stands to-day first among the group of kindred nations, which, together with the United Kingdom, form the British Empire. (Cheers.) I have on two occasions had the pleasure of visiting Canada, and I have had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of many of her leading statesmen, and notably of the late Sir John Macdonald, that most Imperially-minded man—(cheers)—whose guiding idea throughout his long political life was to maintain intact the local independence of Canada in close alliance with the mother country. (Cheers.) I think that at times he had no easy task. (Hear, hear.) There were prominent men on both sides of the Atlantic who at one time assumed that the manifest destiny of Canada was to be absorbed into the great Republic on its southern frontier. ("No, no"; "Never.") That was the opinion. (Hear, hear.) It is an ancient controversy, and I do not think it necessary to refer to it to-night except to mark the contrast between the doubt and hesitation of those days and the determination now of every son of Canada to maintain his local institutions, his separate identity, and at the same time to draw closer the bonds which unite him to the great parent State. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

The recent isolation of the United Kingdom, the dangers which seemed to threaten us, have evoked from all our colonies, and especially from Canada, an outburst of loyalty and affection which has reverberated throughout the world, which has had a great

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effect, and which testifies to a sentiment that is deeper than words can express. (Cheers.) We have been told by cynics that these expressions of loyalty and affection are superfluous—that they are the ornaments of after-dinner oratory—(No, no)—but that they would not bear the test and trial of serious conflict, that if a war should ever arise the mother country would be left to her fate—(No, no)—and that the colonies would take care of themselves. That idea, at any rate, must have been dispelled by what has recently happened. (Hear, hear.) The shadow of war did darken the horizon, and to none of her Majesty's subjects was that shadow more ominous than it was to our fellow-citizens in Canada; but there was no hesitation, although, if that had happened which would have been abhorrent to all of us, the brunt in the first instance would have fallen on Canada. A unanimous voice went up from the people and Parliament of Canada to say that this matter, although it did not directly affect their interests, yet affected the honour of the British Empire, and they made common cause with us. (Cheers.) They were prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder and to bear their share in all the evils that might come upon us. Their decision was emphasised in the debate to which you, Mr. President, have referred, which took place recently in the Dominion Parliament, and the moral of which was summed up in the conclusion of the eloquent speech of Mr. McNeill, the mover of a loyal and

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patriotic resolution, when he said, "The British people are one people, animated by one spirit, and determined to stand together as one man in defence of their common rights and in the maintenance of their common interests." (Hear, hear, and cheers.) "We desire peace before all, we regard war with horror, but we are prepared to accept it with all its consequences, come from what quarter it may, if it be necessary to do so in order to defend the honour and the integrity of our own Empire." (Cheers.) I call your attention to the last words of the orator. He speaks of "our own Empire," and he struck the right chord, for the Empire of Great Britain is the common heritage of all her sons, and is not the appanage of the United Kingdom alone. (Cheers.) Now in the course of that debate many speeches were made all to the same effect, and the resolution was unanimously passed with acclamation.

But again and again allusion was made to the opportunity, to the occasion, which every well-wisher to the unity of the empire was bound to seize, and a hope was expressed that something might be done to bring us nearer together. Sir, we share that hope—(hear, hear, and cheers)—and I ask you now, gentlemen, is this demonstration, this almost universal expression of loyalty from all our Colonies, to pass away without a serious effort upon the part both of colonial and Imperial statesmen to transform these high sentiments into practical results? (Cheers.) I have, at any rate, thought that it was my duty, the

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first time I had the opportunity of speaking, at least to call attention to the position of this great question, which has been before us now for a good number of years, which has appealed strongly to the sentiments of the people, but which has not up to the present time resulted in anything like a practical scheme. In the year 1884 a league was formed—the Imperial Federation League—under the most favourable auspices. The late Mr. Forster was its president, and it afterwards enjoyed the assistance of a long series of distinguished statesmen and prominent personages; but two years ago it was dissolved without having accomplished its object, unless, indeed, its chief object was the education of public opinion to the importance of the subject. Sir, I think that we may, at all events, learn from its experience that the complete realisation of our hopes, if they are in the direction of a federation of the empire—their final realisation—is a matter of such vast magnitude and such great complication that it cannot be accomplished immediately.

But it does not follow that on that account we should give up our aspirations. (Hear, hear.) It is only a proof that we must approach the goal in a different way, that we must not try to do everything all at once, that we must seek the line of least resistance. To create a new government for the British Empire—a new government with large powers of taxation and legislation over countries separated by thousands of miles of sea, in conditions

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as various as those which prevail in our several dependencies and colonies—that, indeed would be a duty from which the boldest statesman might shrink appalled. We may, however, approach this desirable consummation by a process of gradual development. (Hear, hear.) We may bear in mind the words of the poet that

"A great Design is seldom snatch'd at once;
'Tis Patience heaves it on."

We may endeavour to establish common interests and common obligations. When we have done that it will be natural that some sort of representative authority should grow up to deal with the interests and the obligations we have created. What is the greatest of our common obligations? It is Imperial defence. What is the greatest of our common interests? It is Imperial trade. (Hear, hear.) And those two are very closely connected. It is very difficult to see how you can pretend to deal with the great question of Imperial defence without having first dealt with the question of Imperial trade. Imperial defence is largely a matter of ways and means, and ways and means are dependent upon the fiscal and other commercial arrangements you may make; and, therefore, the conclusion to which I arrive is this—that if the people of this country and the people of the colonies mean what they have been saying, and if they intend to approach this question of Imperial unity in a practical spirit, they must approach it on its commercial side.

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We have a great example before us in the creation of the German Empire. How was that brought about? You all recollect that, in the first instance, it commenced with the union of two of the States which now form that great empire in a commercial Zollverein. They attracted the other States gradually—were joined by them for commercial purposes. A council, a Reichsrath, was formed to deal with those commercial questions. Gradually in their discussions national objects and political interests were introduced, and so, from starting as it did on a purely commercial basis and for commercial interests, it developed until it became a bond of unity and the foundation of the German Empire.

We have another reason why we should approach this subject from its commercial side; and that is, that in regard to this the colonies, to whose feelings we must pay the utmost deference, who must, in fact, in one sense at any rate, take the initiative in any movement, have clearly pointed, by their action, to commercial union as the point upon which, as they consider, the whole subject is most ripe. Let me remind you of what happened at the great conference at Ottawa which was held in 1894? The principal resolution—principal, at all events, in regard to its importance—which was passed at that conference, was in the following terms:—"That this conference records its belief in the advisability of a Customs arrangement between Great Britain and her colonies, by which trade within the Empire may be placed upon a more favourable

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footing than that which is carried on with foreign countries." (Cheers.) It is quite true that that was the declaration of a general principle, and that no definite plan was submitted to or adopted by the conference, but we have other means of information. We are acquainted with the speeches that were made there, and we know what was in the minds of the delegates. I observed in the *Times* this morning a telegram from Canada which tells us that Mr. M'Neill, the gentleman who moved the patriotic resolution to which I have already referred, has moved another resolution in the House of Commons of Canada, by which he proposes to declare that it is desirable in the interests of Great Britain and of the colonies that a moderate *ad valorem* duty, independent of any existing duty, should be imposed both by the colonies and by the mother country upon all imports from foreign countries. (Cheers.)

That, therefore, is the suggestion—for I will call it no more—it is not a formal proposition, but it is the suggestion that has been made to us by our colonies for carrying out a system of commercial union. At any rate a proposition of that kind is entitled to respectful consideration, and if we object to it, we ought, I think, to propose an alternative, or we ought—and this is the only other thing for us to do—to say at once that all that we have said, all that we have done, all that we have thought about Imperial unity, has been thrown away, and that that idea must be abandoned as an empty dream.

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Now, Sir, do not let us minimise the proposition we are asked to consider. It would involve in the case of the United Kingdom a most serious disturbance of our trade; it would be a great change in the principles which for many years past have guided our commercial policy. It involves the imposition of a duty, it may be a small one, but it is a duty upon food and upon raw material, and whatever may be the result of imposing such a duty as to which, if I had time, I could discourse for many minutes—whatever may be the actual result—the tendency is to increase the cost of living which would intensify the pressure upon the working classes of this country—(No, no and hear, hear)—and it would also have a tendency to increase the cost of production, which would put us, of course, in a worse position than now in competition with foreign countries in neutral markets.

I see no use in shutting my eyes to the consequences of the proposition—(cheers)—which I desire to consider with an impartial mind. The first thing is to establish the facts, and the facts are as I have stated.

In return, under this proposal we should get a small, and a very small, consideration in the shape of a preference of, it may be 2 per cent., it might be even 5 per cent., in our competition with foreign manufacturers in the colonial market.

What, then, is the proposal we are asked to consider? It is a very startling proposal for a free trade country—(hear, hear)—and I say that in its present form it is a proposal which it is impossible for us to

adopt. (Cheers.) I do not say that merely because a proposal of this kind is contrary to free-trade principles; because, although I am myself a convinced free-trader in the sense of believing that the theory is undoubtedly the theory on which the world would become most prosperous, yet I have not such a pedantic admiration for it that, if sufficient advantage were offered to me, I would not consider a deviation from the strict doctrine. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Cobden himself took this view, and compromised his principles in making the French treaty; and it cannot be expected that we, his disciples, should be more orthodox than the apostle of free trade himself. (Hear, hear and laughter.)

But my first point is that in the proposal and the suggestion which has hitherto been made there is no sufficient *quid pro quo*, the advantage offered is not enough to induce this country to take the certain loss and the possible risk which would be involved in revising altogether its present commercial policy. Having regard to the amount of the colonial duties which are at the present time levied upon British produce, it is evident that a fixed addition such as is suggested would be a much smaller preference in the case of goods going to the colonies than it would be in the case of goods coming from the colonies to this country. In the case of this country the preference would be given on the present cost price of the goods, but in the colonies the preference would only be reckoned on the cost of the goods *plus* the heavy

duties now imposed. The percentage therefore would be much more in favour of the colonies than it would be in favour of the United Kingdom. (Hear, hear.)

The second point, which is much more important, is that our foreign trade is so gigantic in proportion to the foreign trade of the colonies that the burden of an arrangement of this kind would fall with much greater weight on the United Kingdom than upon our fellow-subjects in the colonies.

I therefore think we may very fairly ask them to better their offer if, as I believe, they desire to proceed upon those lines, and if those lines do really offer the best direction in which we can proceed.

The arguments I have used, and a good number of others with which I should not think of wearying you, have been very ably stated in an important despatch which was addressed by my predecessor, Lord Ripon, in 1895, to the Governors of all the colonies, and that despatch has been generally assumed to be an absolute negative to the proposals of the colonies. That is a mistake. That despatch is conclusive, in my opinion, as to the particular proposal which has up to the present time been suggested for our consideration, but it does not bar the door to other proposals, which, being more favourable, might receive a more favourable consideration. There is one passage in Lord Ripon's despatch, most important in my eyes, which somehow or other seems to have escaped general attention. It is a paragraph to this

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effect:—"The resolution"—that is, the resolution of the Ottawa Conference—"does not advocate the establishment of a Customs union comprising the whole Empire, whereby all the existing barriers to free commercial intercourse between the various members would be removed, and the aggregate Customs revenue equitably apportioned among the different communities. Such an arrangement," says Lord Ripon, "would be free in principle from objection, and, if it were practicable, would certainly prove effective in cementing the unity of the Empire and promoting its progress and stability."

Now that is another suggestion. That is a suggestion of an alternative to the proposition which I have been considering; and I would like to be allowed, in order to make the course of my argument perfectly clear, to summarise what I have said to you upon this point.

I have laid down four propositions which I think cannot be controverted. The first is that there is a universal desire among all the members of the Empire for a closer union between the several branches, and that, in their opinion as in ours, this is desirable—nay, it is essential for the existence of the Empire as such. My second proposition is that experience has taught us that this closer union can be most hopefully approached in the first instance from its commercial side. My third proposition is that the suggestions which have hitherto been made to us, although we know them to have been made in good

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part, are, when considered from the point of view of British interests, not sufficiently favourable to be considered by this country. My fourth proposition is that a true Zollverein for the Empire, that a free trade established throughout the Empire, although it would involve the imposition of duties against foreign countries, and would be in that respect a derogation from the high principles of free trade and from the practice of the United Kingdom up to the present time, would still be a proper subject for discussion and might probably lead to a satisfactory arrangement if the colonies on their part were willing to consider it. ("Hear, hear," and cheers.)

It has been assumed, in Lord Ripon's despatch and in many other documents, that the colonies must necessarily refuse to consider a proposition of this kind because it would interfere with the necessities of their revenue, that they are obliged to rely upon indirect taxation for the funds by which their administration is carried on, and that they could not enter on such an agreement as this without providing ways and means by methods which, at present at any rate, are altogether unpopular in many of our colonies. I am not convinced of the truth of that statement, and I want especially to point out that the advantages of such a proposal are so great to the colonies, as it would undoubtedly lead to the earliest possible development of their great natural resources, would bring to them population, would open to them the enormous market of the United Kingdom for their

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products, their food, their timber, their sugar—the advantages, I say, are so important that it appears to me that the colonies themselves would be bound to give to any suggestion, of this kind at all events, a careful reconsideration.

My second point is that we are dealing with an entirely exceptional state of things, and that we cannot, even if we wished, imitate exactly the German Zollverein. We are not conterminous countries; we are countries, as I have said, separated by thousands of miles, in some cases, and the circumstances of our different countries vary so considerably that it is evident that in any arrangement as to general free trade within the Empire exceptions must be made in the case of articles that are chiefly taxed for revenue purposes. For instance, we cannot admit free trade in spirits or in tobacco, and to any gentleman who has any experience other articles will suggest themselves, which, in one part of the empire or another, are the subject of strictly revenue duties, and might, by common agreement, be excluded from any such arrangement. But the principle which I claim must be accepted, if we are to make any, even the slightest, progress, is that within the different parts of the empire protection must disappear, and that the duties must be revenue duties, and not protective duties in the sense of protecting the products of one part of the empire against those of another part.

It seems to me that if that principle were adopted there would be reason for calling a council of the

Empire, for calling representatives from the different States forming the Empire ; and although the subject would be one of enormous difficulty and the greatest complication, still, with the good-will that exists and the ultimate goal in view, I cannot but think that something like a satisfactory and a workable arrangement might be arrived at. (Cheers.) And although in such a case the principles of free trade would lose something in their application to the dealings between ourselves and foreign countries, advocates of free trade must remember how much they would gain by its extension to all the States which form the British Empire, States which are after all, whatever may be said of their present position, more likely to develop and increase in prosperity and population and wealth and power and commerce than any of the foreign States with which we have relations.

Mr. President, I feel that I owe you some apology for dealing at such length with a subject which might be thought to be too serious for after-dinner oratory, but there is no doubt that we all feel that it is a subject of enormous importance, and I desire very much to call attention to it. I speak on this occasion for myself only. I want, not to lay down a course of policy which must be followed, but I want to provoke discussion—to provoke discussion in this country and to provoke discussion, above all, in the colonies ; and if the details of such a subject as this are prosaic, at all events the ultimate aim that we have in view appeals to our highest sentiments of patriotism. To

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organise an empire—one may almost say to create an empire—greater and more potent for peace and the civilisation of the world than any that history has ever known—(cheers)—that is a dream if you like, but a dream of which no man need be ashamed. (Loud cheers.) We appreciate and we cordially respond to the notes, the stirring notes, of loyalty and affection that have been evoked from our colonies when the great mother country has appeared to be in danger. We look forward with hope and with confidence to the development of those countries which are populated by our children and our kinsmen, but these sentiments alone will never make an empire unless they are confirmed by bonds of material interest, and we can only found Imperial unity upon a common weal. (Cheers.) And so, if you will permit me, I will conclude in the words of a Canadian poet who, addressing the statesmen of the Dominion, said :

“ Unite the Empire—make it stand compact.
Shoulder to shoulder let its members feel
The touch of British brotherhood ; and act
As one great nation—strong and true as steel.”

(Loud cheers.)

Commercial Union of the Empire

CONGRESS OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF
THE EMPIRE, LONDON, JUNE 9, 1896

On June 9, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain, as Honorary President, took the Chair at the opening meeting of the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, which was held in the Hall of the Grocers' Company, Prince's Street, E.C. There was a large attendance of delegates from all parts of the Empire.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—In opening the proceedings at this, the third Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, it is a great pleasure to me, both as your honorary president and as a member of the Government, to bid you all—and especially those who come from a distance—a hearty welcome.

As Secretary of State for the Colonies I rejoice in every fresh indication of the essential unity of the Empire—(hear, hear)—and of that community of

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interest upon which we found all our hopes of maintaining and strengthening the relations between the mother country and her colonies and dependencies. (Hear, hear.) I think we may say that the omens were never more favourable, and I am encouraged to hope from your deliberations that you will make an important advance towards the goal to which all our patriotic aspirations and our mutual interests are steadily tending. The very existence of such a congress as this—the fact that to-day the representatives of the commerce of the Dominion of Canada and of the West Indies, of Australasia, of South Africa, and of our great Indian dependencies, should meet in London the delegates of the commerce of the United Kingdom—is evidence that we have to a great extent annihilated space, and that the distance which separates us is no longer any barrier to those free communications and that personal intercourse which are the conditions of national unity. Insensibly the bonds between us are strengthening and multiplying. You have for a long time—you gentlemen who come from the colonies—been in our thoughts; you are now actually in our sight. Your claims, your wishes, the resources of your separate countries, your political conditions—all these are becoming as familiar to us as if we were all provinces in one great kingdom or States in a true Imperial federation. (Cheers.) I think that further knowledge must tend to complete the agreement between us, and that it will bring within the range of practical politics that splendid

dream which has been cherished by all the greatest and most patriotic statesmen, both at home and in the colonies, when we may reach a union in which free States, all of them enjoying their independent institutions, will yet be inseparably united in defence of common interests, and in the observance of mutual obligations. (Cheers.)

My lords and gentlemen, I have studied the long and multifarious list of proposals which will be laid before you, and I can assure you that your decisions will be carefully noted by Her Majesty's Government. One thing I observe with great satisfaction, and that is that the same note rings throughout the whole of them. There is one guiding principle, and I think it is a significant fact, that, almost without exception, all these resolutions, whether they are propounded by the colonial or by the home Chambers, tend in the direction of greater uniformity and of closer union between the colonies and ourselves. (Cheers.) I find that you are called upon to consider the necessity for improved communications within the limits of the Empire; that you are asked also to consider the possibility of greater and cheaper facilities of inter-Imperial postage; that you are asked to see whether some approach may not be made to greater uniformity in commercial law—in the laws regulating inter-Imperial commerce; and I note one resolution—which I think comes from my own city of Birmingham—in favour of the creation of an Imperial council for consultation and advice. (Cheers.)

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All these proposals are of great and of pressing importance, but they are, I was going to say, dwarfed into insignificance in comparison with other proposals which will also be put before you and which are intended to secure the commercial union of the Empire. (Cheers.) It is, I cannot help thinking, to your deliberations and your discussions on this question that the public will look with the greatest interest and the greatest expectation, because it must be evident to you that, if this question could once be satisfactorily settled, all the other things to which I have referred would follow as a matter of course in its train. If we had a commercial union throughout the Empire, of course there would have to be a council of the Empire, and that council would be called upon to watch over the execution of the arrangements which might be made, and to consider and make amendments in them from time to time; and, whenever such a council is established, surely there will naturally be remitted to it all those questions of communication and of commercial law in which the whole of the Empire is mutually interested. (Hear, hear.) Even Imperial defence could not be excluded from its deliberations, for Imperial defence is only another name for the protection of Imperial commerce, and to such a council as I have imagined to be possible the details of such defence, the method of carrying it out, the provision to be made for it, would naturally be remitted. Gradually, therefore, by that prudent and experimental process by which all our greatest

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institutions have slowly been built up we should, I believe, approach to a result which would be little, if at all, distinguished from a real federation of the Empire. In my personal opinion this is a question which dominates all other Imperial interests, to which everything else is secondary, and which is at the root of the problem with which we have now to deal. The establishment of commercial union throughout the Empire would not only be the first step, but the main step, the decisive step towards the realisation of the most inspiring idea that has ever entered into the minds of British statesmen. (Cheers.)

I shall not venture to anticipate the discussion in which you will shortly engage, but perhaps you will permit me very briefly to lay before you the conditions of the problem with which you must deal. There is one advantage which we must recognise at the outset—that is, that I believe we are absolutely unanimous as to the object which we desire to attain. (Cheers.) No one nowadays, in this country or outside of it, denies the enormous benefit it would be to the British race throughout the Empire if we could arrange some union which would lead to closer relations, and which would retain within the Empire, and for the benefit of the Empire, the trade and the subjects now diverted to foreign lands—(cheers)—but up to the present time we have not been agreed as to the methods by which this object may be reached.

It appears to me that there are only three lines

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of progress which have been suggested, or which can be suggested, to accomplish this great object. The first of them is a proposal that the colonies should abandon their own fiscal system, and should adopt ours, that they should carry out fully the doctrines of free trade, that they should open their markets not only to us, but to all the world, and that they should abandon entirely the protective duties upon which now they rest very largely for the revenues they collect. That is a proposal which is supported by the Cobden Club, by extreme, or, perhaps, I ought to say, by orthodox free traders; and there is no doubt a great deal to be said for it. I do not deny that possibly it might be for all concerned the best solution. At the same time I am bound to point out that that would not bring about commercial union in the sense in which we have generally understood the word—(hear, hear)—because that would be in the direction of cosmopolitan union, but would offer no particular advantage to the trade of the Empire as such. But what is to my mind a much more fatal objection, is the fact that, speaking generally, the colonies will not adopt this proposal. We must consider it, therefore, as a counsel of perfection, and if we are to wait until the colonies generally are converted to our views in regard to the advantages of free trade, let us recognise the fact that in that case we must postpone the hope of commercial union to the Greek kalends. (Hear, hear.) Free trade in this country has been developed, no

doubt, to the great advantage of this country, for a period of half a century, but in spite of that it has made no converts. We do not find—again I am speaking generally, because I know there are exceptions—but we do not find that there is any considerable approach to our system on the part of the colonies, and there is no approach at all to it on the part of foreign countries.

I pass on, then, to the second proposal, which has been laid before a similar congress to this, and which found expression at the great conference at Ottawa a year or two ago—that is, a proposal which has been favoured by some of our principal colonies, and which has been advocated with great force and eloquence by leading colonists. It is the very reverse, in spirit at any rate, of the proposal I have just been considering, for whereas the first proposal requires that the colonies should abandon their system in favour of ours, this proposal requires that we should abandon our system in favour of theirs, and it is in effect that, while the colonies should be left absolutely free to impose what protective duties they please both on foreign countries and upon British commerce, they should be required to make a small discrimination in favour of British trade, in return for which we are expected to change our whole system, and impose duties on food and raw material. Well, I express again my own opinion when I say that there is not the slightest chance that in any reasonable time this country, or the Parliament of this country, would

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adopt so one-sided an agreement. (Cheers.) The foreign trade of this country is so large, and the foreign trade of the colonies is comparatively so small, that a small preference given to us upon that foreign trade by the colonies would make so trifling a difference—would be so small a benefit to the total volume of our trade—that I do not believe the working classes of this country would consent to make a revolutionary change for what they would think to be an infinitesimal gain.

You will, then, see that so far we have only arrived at a deadlock. We have a proposal by British free-traders which is rejected by the British colonies; we have a proposal by colonial protectionists which is rejected by Great Britain. We have, therefore, if we are to make any progress at all, to seek a third course—a course in which there shall be give and take on both sides, in which neither side will pedantically adhere to preconceived conclusions, and in which the separate interests of the parts shall be subordinated to the good of the whole.

I admit that, if I understand it correctly, I find the germs of such a proposal in a resolution which is to be submitted to you on behalf of the Toronto Board of Trade. (Hear, hear.) What is that resolution? Again I say I hope that I am correctly explaining it. That resolution I understand to be one for the creation of a British Zollverein or Customs Union, and would establish at once practically free trade throughout the British Empire, but would leave the separate

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contracting parties free to make their own arrangements with regard to duties on foreign goods, except that this is an essential condition of the proposal—that Great Britain shall consent to place moderate duties upon certain articles which are of large production in the colonies. Now, if I have rightly understood it, these articles would comprise corn, meat, wool, and sugar, and perhaps other articles of enormous consumption in this country, which are at present largely produced in the colonies and which might, under such an arrangement, be wholly produced in the colonies and wholly produced by British labour. (Cheers.) On the other hand, as I have said, the colonies, while maintaining their duties upon foreign importations, would agree to a free interchange of commodities with the rest of the Empire, and would cease to place protective duties on any product of British labour. That is the principle of the German Zollverein, that is the principle which underlies federation in the United States of America; and I do not doubt for a moment that if it were adopted it would be the strongest bond of union between the British race throughout the world. (Cheers.) I say that such a proposal as that might commend itself even to an orthodox free trader. It would be the greatest advance that free trade has ever made since it was first advocated by Mr. Cobden, since it would extend its doctrines permanently to more than 300,000,000 of the human race, and to communities many of which are the most prosperous,

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the most thriving, and the most rapidly increasing in the world ; and, on the other hand, it would open up to the colonies an almost unlimited market for their agricultural and other productions. (Cheers.)

Of course, the details of such a scheme would require the most careful examination. There may have to be exceptions made to the principle, although I believe the principle itself must be adopted if any progress is to be made at all ; but I am not going to discuss these exceptions on the present occasion. I only want to impress on you my personal conviction that if a proposal of this kind came to us from the colonies, backed by any considerable support on their part, it would not be met with a blank refusal by the people of this country. (Cheers.) I say, gentlemen, if it were proposed to us by the colonies, because I do not consider it would be either wise or practical that a proposal of this kind should come in the first instance from the United Kingdom. We know how strenuously the colonies cling to their own independence, and their own initiative. If they desire, as we believe they do, this closer union, if they are willing to make some sacrifice of their present arrangements and convictions in order to secure it, let them say so. Let the offer come voluntarily from them, and I believe it will be considered in this country not in any huckstering spirit, but will be entertained as part of a greater policy that is intended to unite in the closest bonds of affection and of interest all the communities which are under the British flag, and all the subjects of Her

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Majesty throughout the Empire. (Cheers.) I hope you will not consider that I have gone beyond my duty in making these observations to you. (Hear, hear.) Believe me that I am actuated solely by the strong desire I entertain that your deliberations, which in any case will be most useful, should have some practical result in bringing us nearer to the object which we all have in view, and which I do not hesitate to say is the greatest object which Britons can pursue in what I believe to be a critical stage in Imperial history. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

South Africa

British Interests in South Africa

LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
MAY 14, 1888

On May 14, 1888, Mr. Chamberlain presided at a meeting which was held in the Cannon Street Hotel, by the London Chamber of Commerce, at which the Rev. John Mackenzie delivered an address on South African questions. In opening the proceedings Mr. Chamberlain said :—

I HAVE accepted with very great pleasure the invitation to preside at this meeting on two grounds—in the first place, that the question which we are met to discuss is one of the very greatest importance and interest, well worthy of the consideration of this representative body in the greatest commercial capital in the world, and, in the second place, because the lecturer has peculiar qualifications for the work that he has undertaken. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Mackenzie has

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spent a great part of his life in South Africa; he has occupied a high and important official position; he is intimately acquainted with the chiefs and tribes of that part of Africa, and he is hardly less versed in the complications of colonial politics, and the characteristics of colonial officials and statesmen. Under these circumstances, whatever he may have to say to us will be well worthy of our consideration; and, whether we agree with him or not, at all events it will be most valuable at a time like the present, which I venture to say is a critical time in the history of our relations with this portion of our dominions, to have the information and the suggestions that can be afforded by so competent an observer.

I have said that the question is one of great importance to the representatives of a commercial community. The trade of South Africa has suffered from even greater fluctuations than that of the rest of the world. It has been unduly inflated owing to the wave of speculation which passed over the country, and recently it has been as unduly depressed in sympathy with the falling off which we have witnessed everywhere else. But, referring only to the trade with the United Kingdom, I find from the latest official returns that the total exports of merchandise to the Cape and Natal reached more than £8,000,000 in 1882, and that they fell to something over £3,500,000 in 1886, which is the last date to which the official returns extend. During the same

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time the imports from the Cape and Natal to the United Kingdom were £6,250,000 in 1882, and they were more than £4,500,000 in 1886. But these figures refer to merchandise alone, and they are altogether exclusive of the exports of gold and of the exports of diamonds, which in the last year reached a declared value of something like £3,500,000.

I think you will agree with me that these figures, taken as they stand, and without allowing for the increase which undoubtedly has since taken place in 1887 and 1888, are not contemptible figures, and that they cannot be properly disregarded even by the greatest commercial nation in the world. And you must bear in mind that they give no idea at all of the probable future development of the country. The great staples of South African trade, its wool, and its ostrich feathers, and its wine, and to a small extent its corn, gave at one time no promise of anything like a great or rapid expansion; but recently, the extraordinary productiveness of the mining industry, and the existence of great auriferous deposits, not only in British territory, but in the independent territories which are to the northward, all promise an increase in the prosperity of the country which must have very considerable effect upon all its other productions.

Now, at this stage, I would like to guard myself against a suspicion that I should be inclined to put forward our material interests in this great present and probable future trade as a reason or an excuse

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for unnecessary extension of territory, or for wrongful invasion of the rights of any other people whatsoever. (Hear, hear.) But you must remember that, so far as the unoccupied territories between our present colonial possessions and the Zambesi are concerned, they can hardly be said to be practically in the possession of any nation. The tribes and chiefs that exercise dominion in them cannot possibly occupy the land or develop its capacity, and it is as certain as destiny that, sooner or later, these countries will afford an outlet for European enterprise and European colonisation. (Cheers.) And in considering what part this country is to take in this great movement, it is worth while to look to both sides of the account, and to see the profit that may be in store for us, when we are also reckoning the sacrifices and the risks that we may have to encounter.

What is the problem for which we have to seek a solution? It is undoubtedly the most difficult one with which we have to deal in connection with any of the vast dominions of the Queen. We can get very little assistance from our experience in other cases. When we talk of the practically independent colony of the Cape, we are apt to think of those other great self-governing colonies in Australia and in the Dominion of Canada. When we speak of the administration of native territories, we are inclined to assume some resemblance to the conditions with which we have had to deal in our East Indian dependency. But those who know the country will,

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I am sure, confirm me when I say that there is no analogy whatever between these cases, and that there is nothing in the experience of the past which can safely guide us in dealing with the difficulties which South Africa presents.

Look at the facts of the case. We have, in the first instance, as the principal feature in the conditions of South Africa, the Cape Colony with a population of 340,000 whites and 760,000 natives; but the whites of the Cape Colony are not homogeneous; they are not of the same blood and of the same race. A majority of them, probably 180,000, are of foreign origin, either Dutch or French; and although I am glad to think, and to know, that they are as loyal as any other subjects of the Queen, and as well intentioned towards the British connection, yet the facts of their history, and their traditions, and, above all, their methods of administration of native affairs, are, in some sort, antagonistic to—at all events they are different from—those which are pursued in accordance with the philanthropy, or what some people would call the sentimentalism, of British administration.

Then there is the Crown Colony of Natal, with a population of 30,000 whites and of 400,000 natives. Lastly, there are the native territories, in which, here and there throughout the country, are scattered something like 3000 whites, while there are 500,000 natives.

Altogether we have 370,000 whites and 1,750,000

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of natives; and, besides these, there are, in the vast territories of which I have spoken, which lie between our colonies and the Zambesi, probably another population amounting to nearly 1,000,000 natives. Nothing we can do, nothing that our legislation can devise, will prevent the white population from spreading into these unoccupied territories—(hear, hear)—and the questions that we have to consider are, first, who is to direct this necessary and certain movement, who is to determine its limitations, who is to prescribe the conditions under which the work of colonisation is to go on; and, in the second place, we have to determine who is to protect that great population of natives forming the vast majority of those who now inhabit this portion of South Africa, who is to undertake their protection, and to secure that they peacefully continue their progress in civilisation and in orderly government. In other words, who is to be the dominant power in South Africa? (Cheers.)

Now, before we attempt to answer this question, let us consider for a moment what has been the past policy of the British Government. I am not speaking of any particular Government; I am speaking of all Governments. Fortunately, the questions affecting South Africa have not hitherto been made party questions, and we at least have been spared this difficulty in dealing with the subject. All Governments and both parties are equally responsible for the policy, or the want of policy, which has

hitherto prevailed—(hear, hear)—and if I ask you to review it now, I beg you to believe that I am not casting any blame upon any one, and if I were inclined to do so—if blame, indeed, does attach—I am here frankly to admit that, so far as my limited Parliamentary life is concerned, I am, perhaps, as great an offender as any.

The policy of successive Governments for a long period of time has been the policy of shirking. (Cheers.) There is no doubt about that. It has been the avowed policy, and, considering the difficulties that we have had to encounter, and the small profit that we have ever derived, it is not, perhaps, wonderful that there should have been an attempt to get rid of responsibilities and burdensome obligations, and that everything that we have done has been directed to this end. The concession of self-government to the Cape Colony, the premature and ill-advised attempt to secure confederation, the war with the Transvaal and the subsequent retirement from that country, the transfer of the Basuto people to the Cape Colony, the indifference to the recent acquisitions on the West Coast by Germany, every one of those things, and many other parts of our policy to which I might refer, are all dictated by the same desire on the part of successive Ministries and successive Governments to wash their hands of the whole business. (Cheers.)

I think it must be apparent that this policy of shirking has not been consistently and logically

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carried out, and it will also be admitted that it has been a most conspicuous failure. (Cheers.) We have tried to avoid complications and native wars, and in the short period which has elapsed since full self-government was conferred upon the Cape Colony, we have been engaged in no fewer than six serious struggles, which have involved not only a deplorable loss of human life, but a loss to the British taxpayer of something between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000 sterling. (Hear, hear.) What has happened in every case has been this: When difficulties—difficulties that might, perhaps, have been foreseen, and might, perhaps, have been prevented—have come upon us, we have endeavoured to put them off from us as long and as far as we could, and then, when at last they culminated in open disturbance, we have reluctantly undertaken the duty of settling matters, and we have settled them with more or less discredit, and then we have hastened to shake ourselves free from the whole question, and to retire into fancied security until we have once more been roughly awakened. (Cheers.)

If this policy of shirking is to be continued, do let us understand what it means, and do let us carry it out to the end. If the British public have made up their minds that they have no interest in South Africa beyond their interest in maintaining a naval station at the Cape, if they think that they can honourably throw off all the obligations which they have contracted to the great populations that have trusted to

us, if they think they can afford to give up the large trade that we enjoy, and the prospect of larger trade in the future, then let us squarely face the issue. Let us say to all the world that we intend to retire; that we intend to leave Boers and British and natives to fight out their quarrels as best they may, and that whatever happens, whatever bloodshed and turmoil may be the result, that we will not move a British soldier nor spend one farthing of British money in order to put things straight. That at all events would be a consistent policy. It would not be a very noble policy. (Cheers.) It might, however, find defenders, although I confess that I should be very sorry to argue for it myself.

What would happen in such an event? The Cape Colony, flourishing as it undoubtedly is, enterprising and ambitious as its statesmen have shown its Government to be, would be altogether unable to step into our vacant places. It would be quite impossible that 180,000 Dutchmen who, being in the majority, would control the government of the colony, would be able, according to their principles, to deal satisfactorily with the affairs of something like, roughly speaking, 3,000,000 of natives, and sooner or later, with the sympathy and, perhaps, at the suggestion of the Dutch in the Transvaal and of the Orange Free State, they would stretch out their hands to the kindred nation which is already established on the West Coast of Africa, and I venture to say that Prince Bismarck and the German Empire

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would not shrink from a responsibility which would give them a colony better than anything they have hitherto dreamt of possessing, and would give them access to those vast auriferous and fertile regions which stretch almost into the very heart of the African continent. (Cheers.)

Speaking for myself personally, I say reject a policy which will lead to such results. (Renewed cheers.) Now, what is the alternative? There is only one alternative, and that is that we should frankly accept our obligations and responsibilities. (Cheers.) We should maintain firmly and resolutely our hold over the territories that we have already acquired, and we should offer freely our protectorate to those friendly chiefs and people that are stretching out their hands towards us and seeking our protection and our interference. (Cheers.) I have no doubt that a policy of this kind would enable us, with much less risk than has attended the policy we have hitherto pursued, to prescribe the conditions under which in the future this necessary work of colonisation and civilisation shall go forward. I believe that by such a policy alone can we secure the interests of the great majority of the population, and can we justify our position as a nation.

If it be adopted, it will raise, no doubt, one or two questions for discussion, and prominently among them the question of the continued retention in the same hands of the two great offices of High Commissioner and of Governor of the Cape Colony.

It appears to me that this is a question which depends very much upon the personal qualities and characteristics of the man who may be chosen to fill these two offices. If he is an able and discreet and, above all, a firm and resolute man, it is quite possible that he may be able to maintain an Imperial policy in South Africa in the territories under the protection of the Crown, and at the same time he may be able to impress this policy upon the Government of the Cape Colony; but, if he should ever be weak or incompetent, it is probable that the Government of the day, the Government of the majority at the Cape Colony, would impress him, and that they would secure the adoption of their policy in the administration of these trans-colonial territories, and once more we should be called upon to pay the piper without setting the tune. (Hear, hear.) I will not venture myself to offer any final judgment upon this question. It is a matter which must be left to the responsible advisers of the Queen, who have much better opportunities of knowledge than any that I can possess; but one thing I do say, that, if we are once for all to recognise our obligations in regard to this great continent, we must do so in pursuance of an Imperial policy, and not of a colonial policy, if in any respect their policy differs from ours. (Cheers.) It is only upon those terms that the people of this country can be asked to take the risk, can be asked to make the possible sacrifices which will be called for from them, and it is only in

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that way that we can justify the additional liabilities that we assume.

I have endeavoured to state very briefly and succinctly the conditions of the problem, the facts of the case, and the alternative policies from which we have to choose. Undoubtedly the question for our decision is one of the very greatest importance. We have suffered much in this country from depression of trade. We know how many of our fellow-subjects are at this moment unemployed. Is there any man in his senses who believes that the crowded population of these islands could exist for a single day if we were to cut adrift from us the great dependencies which now look to us for protection and assistance, and which are the natural markets for our trade? (Cheers.) The area of the United Kingdom is only 120,000 miles; the area of the British Empire is over 9,000,000 square miles, of which nearly 500,000 are to be found in the portion of Africa with which we have been dealing. If tomorrow it were possible, as some people apparently desire, to reduce by a stroke of the pen the British Empire to the dimensions of the United Kingdom, half at least of our population would be starved—(cheers)—and at a time when a policy of disintegration is openly preached by high authorities—(renewed cheers)—it is well to look the consequences in the face. No doubt the burden of this great Empire is tremendous, and the responsibilities and the obligations which fall upon us are greater than those which

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have weighed upon any other nation in the history of the world. It is true, as was so well said by the poet whose loss we are all deploring, that "the weary Titan staggers under the too vast orb of his fate." But if we face our obligations, if we perform our duties well and faithfully, the honour and the credit will be proportioned to the sacrifices that we may make; while the abandonment of those duties would be as fatal to our material prosperity as it would be discreditable to our national character and our national honour. (Cheers.)

South African Affairs

CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB, LONDON,

APRIL 22, 1896

On April 22, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain was entertained by the Constitutional Club at a complimentary dinner, presided over by the Earl of Kintore, G.C.M.G. After referring to the Unionist victory at the recent General Election, and the Government programme, Mr. Chamberlain proceeded to deal with Colonial affairs.

IN my own department I gladly recognise the support and the assistance which I have received from opponents as well as from friends in the very difficult situation with which I have had to deal. I think you will perhaps expect that I should say something about that matter. You will, however, understand that anything like an exhaustive discussion of it is impossible at the present time. But the policy of Her Majesty's Government is a policy about which I venture to say there is no obscurity, and the objects we seek are open to all the world. I think I can make that clear to you in a few sentences.

There are two governing factors in the South African question: the first is that Great Britain is, has been, and must continue to be—(loud cheers)—the paramount Power in those regions. (Cheers.) Our interests there are superior to those of every one else, and I believe I speak the opinion of the nation when I say that, at all risks and at all costs—(cheers)—we will resist any foreign interference. (Loud and prolonged cheers, many of the guests rising and waving their handkerchiefs.)

That is the first condition. But the second condition arises out of the peculiar situation of our own possessions in South Africa. In South Africa two races—the English and the Dutch—have to live together. At the present time the Dutch are in a majority; and it is therefore the duty of every statesman, of every well-wisher of South Africa, to do all in his power to maintain amicable relations between the two races. (Cheers.) In our own Cape Colony the Dutch are in a majority. There are tens of thousands of Dutchmen in the Cape Colony who are just as loyal to the Throne and to the British connection as, let me say, our French-Canadian fellow-subjects in the Dominion of Canada. But, at the same time, these Dutch fellow-subjects of ours very naturally feel that they are of the same blood as the Dutchmen in the two neighbouring Republics; and they sympathise with their compatriots whenever they think that they are subject, or are likely to be

subject, to any injustice, or to the arbitrary exercise of force.

Gentlemen, these are the two propositions which I hope will be universally accepted: that we are, and will remain, the paramount Power—(hear, hear)—and that, at the same time, we will use every exertion, and exhaust every means, to secure a good feeling between the Dutch and the English. (Cheers.)

Let us apply these conditions to the situation in the Transvaal. What are the facts? The South African Republic, at the present time, stands alone among civilised nations in refusing to the majority of its population, the majority to which it owes all its prosperity, the commonest rights of citizenship; and, because it refuses those rights, this majority is subject to injustice and to abuse. The administration is defective. The preservation of order, the administration of the police, and the departments of State are subject to just criticism. These are real grievances; they are admitted to be so by everybody who has impartially considered the subject. The contemptuous rejection of the reasonable claims of the majority has been the cause of difficulties in the past, and, if it is persisted in, it must of necessity be the cause of further difficulties in the future.

Now, as the paramount Power, we cannot be indifferent to a state of things which involves injustice to our own subjects, and which involves danger to the peace of South Africa; but, as a Dutch Government ourselves, as well as an English Government, it

ought to be our object, in endeavouring to secure the redress of these grievances, to carry with us our Dutch fellow-subjects. (Cheers.) Up to a recent date, the sympathy of the Dutch population at the Cape, in the Orange Free State, and even of progressive Dutchmen in the South African Republic itself—the sympathy of all three was with the Imperial Government and with the Uitlanders in endeavouring to secure the redress of grievances. (Hear, hear.) There has been a revulsion of feeling since from causes which are well known; but I do not despair—in fact, I have a confident hope—that we shall be able, in the course of no lengthened time, to restore the situation as it was before the invasion of the Transvaal, and to have at our backs the sympathy and support of the majority of the Dutch population in Africa. If we have that united opinion, it will constitute a force which no power in Africa can resist. (Cheers.)

That is the policy—the South African policy—of Her Majesty's Government. (Cheers.) It requires, believe me, the exhibition of patience as well as of firmness. (Hear, hear.) There are some of our friends in the Press, and some hot-headed and enthusiastic persons in the House of Commons, who seem to imagine that a state of things which is the result of long years of past administration can be set right in a few days or a few weeks. I do not believe that even a Heaven-born Minister could secure such a result. (Laughter and "Hear, hear.") We have

to look beyond the immediate present. We have to look, not to a temporary success, but to the future of South Africa as a whole; and, convinced as I am that the happiness and the well-being of all the people of South Africa depend on the removal of the race prejudices which have hitherto existed, I am determined, so long as I have the honour to hold my present position, to exhaust all the forces of persuasion, of argument, and of negotiation, in order to bring about an object which I firmly believe is as desirable in the interests of the South African Republic itself as it is important to the peace and welfare of the whole of South Africa. (Cheers.)

My lords and gentlemen, before sitting down I should like to say a word or two about another matter which naturally occupies public attention and has caused a great deal of public anxiety—I refer to the rising in Matabeleland of the native tribes in that country. Of course, it is a matter which is entirely distinct and which must be kept entirely separate from the question of the Transvaal. Her Majesty's Government are alive to the serious character of this insurrection, and they have taken, and are taking, every step which local experience, local authority, local knowledge can suggest for the purpose of repressing this revolt. At the same time we believe that the repression of a rebellion of this kind is a matter mainly, and, in the first instance, for local resources. We do not intend, therefore, unless some quite unexpected emergency should arise, to

send large detachments of the British Army to South Africa in order to put down the Matabeleland rising. Experience shows that the British Army is not by its organisation, by its system, by its economical arrangements, the best suited for work of this kind; and we hold that it is altogether inconsistent with the principles upon which the British Empire has been created and maintained to employ the British Army for such a purpose. What is the history of the British Empire? Upon my word, I sometimes think there must be a degeneration of the British character when I find people shrieking out almost in hysterics because a rising has taken place in some distant part of our dominions. Our Empire was created by the enterprise and resource of pioneers, who trusted to their own strong arms and brave hearts, and never thought of calling for a *corps d'armée* every time they were threatened with danger from the savages into whose regions they had penetrated. And, bear in mind, it is not our fellow-subjects in danger who are making this claim; it is made for them by friends, who, very badly, as we think, represent their feelings and their interests, and who exhibit fears to which those who are in danger are strangers. There is no part of the world in which this feeling of self-reliance is stronger than it is in our South African dominions; and, while our fellow-subjects expect, and rightly expect, that we shall defend them against any civilised foreign foe, I think they will resent the imputation that they are

unable to take care of themselves in the presence of a native rising. (Cheers.)

The only difficulties are the difficulties of transport and of distance. The letters which I receive cause me to believe that there are people who think that troops can be sent to Matabeleland as quickly as we send a telegraphic message. They do not know, apparently, that it takes probably two months to go from Capetown to Bulawayo—I do not mean by the mail, and by day and night relays, but two months for an organised military force. I believe, however, that at the present moment our brave fellow-subjects in Bulawayo are holding their own, and will hold their own. In the meantime there are thousands of men in South Africa who are ready and willing to go to their assistance as fast as transport can be provided for them. (Cheers.) I ask from you, and from the country at large, that you will show, in the presence of difficulties and even of dangers, which are necessary incidents in a world-wide dominion such as ours, that calmness, that reserve, which are evidence of conscious strength, and which I believe we rightly consider as among the best characteristics of the British race. (Prolonged cheers.)

The Progress of South Africa

SOUTH AFRICAN DINNER, LONDON,
MAY 21, 1896

On May 21, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain presided at the South African Dinner which was held in the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Métropole. The gathering is an annual one of gentlemen connected with South Africa, and this year, in consequence of recent events, more than usual interest was taken in the reunion. The morning newspapers of this date contained information of the commutation of the death sentence which had been passed on four of the Johannesburg Reform leaders, and the imposition of terms of imprisonment and fines on them and their fellow-prisoners which were considered to be altogether excessive. Mr. Chamberlain, on rising to propose "Prosperity to South Africa," was received with loud and prolonged cheering!

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—I have now to propose to you what is called the toast of the evening, "Pros-

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perity to South Africa." (Hear, hear.) I believe that this task has fallen on several occasions to my predecessors in the office that I now hold, and I confess that I am inclined to envy those who spoke under happier circumstances, and probably with less restraint and reserve than I think is indicated for me under present circumstances. (Hear, hear.) When I accepted the invitation of your committee some months ago the position was one of considerable anxiety; but, at the same time, I hoped that long before this banquet the clouds might have rolled away, and South Africa be once more basking in the sunshine of its extraordinary prosperity. (Hear, hear.) Unfortunately this is not the case. The causes of discontent and of unrest in South Africa still remain, and very little progress, I am sorry to say, has been made towards that reconciliation of the two great races, the Dutch and the English, which I am assured is felt to be of as great importance in Pretoria as it is known to be in London. (Cheers.)

I cannot pretend that I regard the information which was published in the papers this morning as entirely satisfactory. (Loud cheers.) I fear that it may not tend to the speedy realisation of our objects. I regret it, and I confess that I am the more disappointed because I have expressed my belief in the magnanimity of President Kruger. (Hear, hear.) I have believed that with him "the quality of mercy was not strained," and that he would be the last person to be animated by anything like vindictive feel-

ing towards the men, who, whatever mistakes they may have committed—and we all think that they have committed grievous errors—(hear, hear)—are nevertheless the men who have created, by their energy and their enterprise, the prosperity of the State over which the President presides. (Cheers.)

You will understand that I do not think that this is the time or the occasion for public discussion of the present situation. (Hear, hear.) There is the less necessity for that, because, at all events, the policy of Her Majesty's Government has been clearly and definitely expressed, and will not be changed. (Prolonged cheers.) We intend strictly to fulfil our legal obligations. (Hear, hear.) We intend also strictly to maintain our legal rights. (Cheers and "Bravo.") We do not at all abandon the hope that we may be able to do something to bring together the two races that have been temporarily separated by recent events, and to secure a complete and satisfactory understanding; but I cannot conceal from myself that the prosperity of South Africa depends to-day less upon its marvellous natural resources, upon its agriculture, and its mining industry, than it does upon the statesmanship, the wisdom, and the moderation of the men who are mainly responsible for its political destinies. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, political disturbances are not the only misfortune which we have had to regret recently in connection with South Africa. We have to lament that aggravated outbreak of rinderpest, which is

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really a most serious event, threatening the prosperity of large districts, especially those inhabited by our native allies and subjects; and we have also to regret the rising in Rhodesia, which I cannot help thinking was connected with the slaughter of the cattle which took place in consequence of the outbreak of disease.

As regards the first of these two misfortunes, the Government are doing what they can to prevent the worst results. We have given authority to take any steps which may be necessary to preserve the people who are suffering from starvation, and, if possible, to give them the opportunity of employment, and you may rest assured that this matter will be most carefully watched during the next few months.

As regards the rising in Rhodesia, I think we may congratulate ourselves that this outbreak, in resisting which I know the Dutch and the English, forgetting all their differences, have been fighting side by side with equal bravery—(cheers)—I say that we may congratulate ourselves that this outbreak has been successfully suppressed; for, indeed, I think we may feel assured that the back of the rebellion has been broken; and, although there has been a lamentable loss of life and a great loss of property, still it is some compensation to us to find that the settlers in that remote region, left as they have been to their own resources, without any organised military force, and without the hope of succour for many weeks, have risen to the occasion, and have, without assistance, dealt with the matter with signal success. (Cheers.)

We shall not forget in this connection the names of Clifford, of Duncan, of Selous, of Napier—(cheers)—and of all the others who have accepted the responsibility, and have behaved as Englishmen always do under similar circumstances, who have justified our faith in our fellow countrymen whenever they are exposed to danger and peril, and are thrown in this way upon their own resources. (Cheers.)

I think now that we may hope that peace will speedily be restored, and that then the active development of the country may once more proceed. (Hear, hear.) What has happened in the past in this vast new territory is sufficiently striking. Twenty years ago—I might almost say ten years ago—the country was practically unknown. It was known only to be inhabited by a savage tribe, and to be governed by a cruel and barbarous ruler, and it seemed to be entirely removed from civilisation; and yet now Bulawayo is in daily and hourly communication by telegraph with London. The capital has its churches, its chapels, its schools, its banks, its clubs, and, of course, its newspapers—(cheers)—and all the incidents of a great and organised community. (Hear, hear.) In a very short time two great main lines of railway will connect it, one with Capetown and the other with Beira; and really Bulawayo and Salisbury will be as near to us as Scotland, for instance, was to our ancestors. Well, this is a wonderful result, and now that naturally so much ill is thought and so much ill is spoken of chartered companies, I think we ought

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in common fairness to remember to their credit this extraordinary proof of their energy and enterprise. (Cheers.)

My lords and gentlemen, on occasions of this kind it is, I believe, customary to quote an encyclopedia of statistics. I cannot help thinking that it is a practice which is more honoured in the breach than the observance. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Statistics have always seemed to me to be a somewhat indigestible dessert to a good dinner—(laughter)—but, although I will not trouble you with many figures, I will call your attention to one or two facts which, after all, are based upon figures. I find, for instance, that in the last ten years, between 1884 and 1894, which is the last period for which I have the official statistics, that the trade—the export and import trade—of Cape Colony has a great deal more than doubled—(cheers)—while the export and import trade of Natal has increased by over one-third; and this progress is still going on. (Renewed cheers.) I think there are very few markets, especially the large markets, of which anything like that increase can at the present time be predicated. (Hear, hear.) I find that in 1894 the total imports of South Africa were over fourteen millions sterling, which, of course, is no small fraction of the total of our export trade, and to this, also, I desire to call your attention. Of the fourteen millions, more than twelve millions come from the United Kingdom and from the British possessions. (Cheers.)

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Gentlemen, I do not think that we grudge ^{to} foreign competitors the two millions which remain to them—(laughter and cheers)—and I do not think that the progress of this colony, or of any of the great dominions of the Crown, ought to excite their jealousy and their hostility. What they sometimes seem to forget is that every colony of the British Empire, and every new country which is brought under civilisation and under the British flag, are open to them, and open to all foreigners, just as freely, and with as little restriction, as they are to our own subjects. (Cheers.) Is there any one of them that can say the same? (No.) Under these circumstances I confess I cannot understand the feeling with which the spread of British influence is in some quarters regarded, because I maintain that the spread of British influence is a gain not merely to Great Britain, but to the whole of the civilised world. (Cheers.)

In any case, gentlemen, whatever may be the difficulties, and even the dangers of the present, I have not lost confidence in the future. (Cheers.) I believe in the determination of the people of this country to maintain at all risks that position which they have earned with so great an expenditure of blood and treasure. (Cheers.) At the same time, I believe in their desire to stand well with all men, and to adopt a conciliatory policy, especially with regard to our Dutch fellow-subjects. (Cheers.) I have received this morning a copy of an address to Sir Hercules Robinson on the day, I think, that he left Capetown,

from which I will venture to read you a passage or two. It is signed by sixty-five members of the Cape Parliament, all of whom are either Afrianders or represent Afriander constituencies; and after acknowledging, as they deserve, and in the highest terms, the services which Sir Hercules Robinson has recently rendered to South Africa and the empire—(hear, hear)—they go on to say: “It would be superfluous to give your Excellency the assurance that there need be no apprehension whatever on the part of Her Majesty’s Government of any spirit of hostility in the minds of ourselves, the Afriander people, against England. If South Africa be left to work out its own destiny, we feel convinced that such a course must at no distant date result in the complete restoration of the good understanding between the great European races who have adopted Africa as their home, which to a marked extent was disturbed by recent lamentable events. We would further avail ourselves of your Excellency’s visit to England to request you to kindly inform the Secretary of State for the Colonies that, while we are convinced that he will continue to guard the interests of the empire in South Africa, and to uphold the reputation of British statesmen for high-mindedness and fearlessness in the execution of their duty without regard to persons or classes, we at the same time humbly hope that he will with unabated energy continue to resist all efforts which may be made to induce Her Majesty’s Government to depart from that policy of

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moderation and conciliation which can alone secure the real progress and true happiness of South Africa and its people." (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, those are wise and moderate and patriotic words. I do not doubt that the great majority, at any rate, of the people of this country are impressed by similar sentiments. (Hear, hear.) We must have patience—we can afford to wait. (Hear, hear.) Time is on our side, and I do not doubt that its healing hand will close the wounds that have been so brutally opened, and will remove all the obstacles in the way of the prosperity of South Africa.

Our Rights and Obligations in South Africa

Café MONICO, LONDON, MARCH 27, 1897

On March 27, 1897, Sir Alfred Milner, Governor-Designate of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa, was entertained by his friends, at a farewell dinner at the Café Monico. In proposing the health of the chairman (Mr. Asquith), the Secretary of State for the Colonies said:—

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—I have been permitted to propose to you the next toast, the only other toast upon our list this evening. It is, of course, the health of our chairman, Mr. Asquith. (Cheers.) I cannot doubt that it has been to him a great pleasure to preside over such a meeting as this, the like of which, I believe, could not have been held in any other country, and which, as he has told us, is, even in our own, exceptional in its character and its composition. (Hear, hear.) We fight our political battles in this country with great energy, and some-

times, perhaps, with too much vehemence; but, fortunately, there is a large space in the field of politics, and a still greater space in our social life, which is altogether free from any taint of party bitterness. Foreigners tell me that what has struck them most in their experience of this country is the fact that political opponents, even in the midst of the bitterest controversy, can still remain firm personal friends.

To-night we have an example of what I have been saying. Here are all shades of opinion, animated, for this occasion at any rate, by a common sentiment; and I think that Sir Alfred Milner may well be proud, as he has told us he is proud, to go to the most difficult task to which the command of the Queen has called him, and to which, I may say, he has also been called by the almost unanimous opinion of his fellow citizens, with the assurance of the hearty good-will of all sections of his fellow countrymen. (Cheers.) I am to be asked shortly in the House of Commons to lay upon the table such written instructions as I may have given to Sir Alfred Milner. (Laughter.) I will not anticipate the secrets which I may have to disclose in answer to that novel request—(more laughter)—but I am confident that, independently of all instructions, Sir Alfred Milner has imposed upon himself, and carries within his breast, the duty of maintaining the rights, the interests, the obligations, and the honour of Great Britain. (Cheers.)

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He goes, as I have said, to the performance of a difficult task. We will not condole with him; for a man of resolution, of resource, and of ability, finds his best opportunities in the difficulties which he has to encounter. Although the situation which is present to our minds is not free from anxiety, or even from danger, yet I am sanguine enough to believe that the problem before us, and before Sir Alfred Milner, is not an insolvable problem. For what is it? It is to reconcile, and to persuade to live together in peace and goodwill, two races whose common interests are immeasurably greater than any differences which may unfortunately exist. (Cheers.)

This is a question which has been presented more than once in the history of this country. Sir Alfred Milner has alluded to the case of Canada. In Canada, in some of the West Indian islands, and in the Mauritius, we have seen the question solved in the most satisfactory manner, and the Queen has no more loyal subjects than the French population in the Dominion of Canada, and in the islands to which I have referred. (Cheers.)

In South Africa, at first sight, at all events, it would appear that the question is encompassed with even fewer difficulties than those which have arisen in other parts of the world; for here the differences of manners, of customs, of blood, and, what is, perhaps, more serious than all, of religion, are much less than in the cases which I have recalled. I say, then, under these circumstances, we have reason to hope. In the

Cape Colony, in Natal, and in the Orange Free State, we find that these differences have been no bar to social intercourse, to intermarriage, and to co-operation in all good work. On many occasions, and notably in the case of the recent insurrection in Rhodesia, the burgher of the Transvaal and the British citizen have fought side by side, and shed their blood upon the same field, in the same cause and against the same foe. (Cheers.)

In these circumstances, what has been proved to be possible in so many cases, must surely be possible in all. As we, on our part, are ready, at all times, to extend to our Dutch fellow-subjects, with open hands, all the privileges which we enjoy ourselves, and, as we have shown again and again by our declarations and by our actions, that we have no intention and no desire to interfere with the independence of neighbouring States, we may entertain the hope that the Government of the Transvaal will come to see that it is its duty to fulfil to the letter the obligations which it has voluntarily assumed in connection with the London Convention, and that it will, in time, extend the hand of fellowship to the large number of foreigners who have contributed so largely to the success and to the prosperity of the State. (Cheers.)

There is, however, one other condition which has to be fulfilled. I mistake very much the mind of my countrymen if they are not, at this moment, determined to support the present Government, or any Government which may be in its place, in maintain-

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ing in their integrity the rights which we have under the Convention, and our position as the paramount Power in South Africa. (Loud cheers.) It may be true, as we have recently had it suggested to us, that there are eminent persons in South Africa who have aspirations for an independent federation of States, in which Dutch influence would be predominant, and which would look for sympathy and support rather to the Continent of Europe than to this country. If such an aspiration exists, in my opinion it is incompatible with the highest British interests—(cheers)—it is incompatible with our position at the Cape itself, one of the most important strategic points in the Empire, the possession of which is absolutely necessary to us as a great Eastern Power. (Renewed cheers.) It is an aspiration which cannot be accepted by the people of this country, and until it is frankly abandoned there cannot be a final and satisfactory settlement. (Cheers.) But, short of this, we are ready now and at all times to give the fullest and most favourable consideration to the wishes and sentiments, even to the prejudices of all parties in South Africa, and to co-operate with them in all measures for the good of the whole community.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—I know that I have wandered from the subject of the toast. It is a habit contracted in the House of Commons—(laughter)—but I am quite sure that you will to-night gladly recognise the ability with which Mr. Asquith has presided over these proceedings, and the grace with

which he has proposed the toast of the evening, and has expressed our sentiments towards our distinguished guest. We are met here united by the common desire to do that guest honour, and it would be altogether out of place if I were to dwell upon the differences which separate us elsewhere; but this, at least, I may say, that while we know that any party is fully justified in regarding Mr. Asquith as a most brilliant and powerful leader, we, his opponents, are also glad to recognise in him an honourable, although a formidable, foe. (Cheers.) We all, to whatever party we belong, rejoice in the position which he has achieved for himself, and which his attainments and character fully deserve. (Cheers.)

Imperial Policy

A Year's Work

BIRMINGHAM, JANUARY 30, 1897

Mr. Chamberlain attended the ninth annual dinner of the Birmingham Jewellers' and Silversmiths' Association, on January 30, 1897, and responded to the toast of "Her Majesty's Ministers."

ON behalf of my colleagues and of myself, I thank you for the way in which you have received the toast which has been so sympathetically proposed by my friend Mr. Lord. I have often attended your gatherings—"Hear, hear," and applause)—since this association was first formed. I begin to think that you may consider that it is degenerating into a habit—(laughter)—but the fact is that I look upon this annual banquet as an institution which I should greatly regret to miss, since it gives me the opportunity, not only to exchange greetings with my friends and constituents, but also of saying something upon the political situation, in which we all have a common interest. (Applause.) I do not know that it adds to the interest of what I have to

say that upon such occasions as this I am not tempted to make a party speech. I address those who differ from me in politics as well as those who agree, and I am led into that portion of the political field which is common ground for the moderate men of all parties. (Hear, hear.) I think I may, however, be justified in the belief, after your cordial reception of the toast, that you consider that Her Majesty's present Ministers are earnestly desirous of upholding the honour and the interests of this country—(applause)—and that these have not suffered in our hands. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Lord referred to the twelve months that have past since I last addressed you. As he says, it has been a time of great anxiety, and even danger. There have been on more than one occasion periods when a false step might have led to a collision, and might have brought this country into a conflict the issue of which no man could foresee. It is something to be able to say that the danger, if it has not entirely disappeared, has at all events receded, and that the result has been accomplished without any loss of our proper influence, and without any derogation of the great primary objects which the Government and which the country have had in view. (Applause.) Mr. Lord has referred in feeling terms to the universal sentiment which was aroused in this country on the occasion of the massacres of Christians in the Turkish Empire. Lord Salisbury, by his patience, his firmness, his resolution, has convinced the Powers of

Europe—always, I am sorry to say, inclined to suspicion where England is concerned—he has convinced them of our disinterested desire for peace, and at the same time of our determination, as far as our power and our influence extend, that the misgovernment of which we complain, and which has been a scandal to Europe, shall be brought to an end. (Applause.) It is difficult to be sanguine of the future in a case like this, where there are so many conflicting interests; but I think that we may now entertain something like a sanguine hope that the concert of Europe has been re-established, and that it will be effective to prevent the recurrence of anything like those outrages which have shocked the conscience of the civilised world. (Cheers.)

Mr. Lord referred to another matter, which is one for unmitigated congratulation. That cloud of which I remember speaking when I last addressed you, which overshadowed our relations with the United States of America, has been dispelled—(cheers)—dispelled by mutual concessions which are honourable alike to the statesmen of both these great countries; and now, for the first time in the history of the world, a treaty of arbitration has been signed between two great Powers, each of them proud, each of them sensitive, each of them properly confident in their own strength and resources—(hear, hear)—by which it is sought at any rate to make war in future absolutely impossible between them. (Loud cheering.) Gentlemen, that is an achievement worthy of the

Jubilee of the Queen! (Cheers.) For while I believe that we all desire to be on the best terms with all the Powers, it is something more than a desire, it is almost a religion, with us to preserve constantly feelings and relations of the most friendly and cordial character with our kinsmen on the other side of the Atlantic. (Cheers.) It is not for me to predict the fate of that treaty. I do not know what course may be taken by that distinguished body, the Senate of the United States, in whose hands its confirmation rests. I have had some experience. Nine years ago I was myself instrumental in making a treaty by which the then Government of President Cleveland, and the then Government of Lord Salisbury, agreed upon terms by which a long-standing fishery dispute was settled. (Cheers.) But that treaty, as you know, was rejected by the then Senate of the United States. But, although the treaty was rejected, the negotiations were not fruitless, for the *modus vivendi* which accompanied that treaty, which was intended only to occupy a temporary place until the treaty was ratified, has since been renewed again and again, so that the quarrel, which at one time threatened to embitter our relations, has been allowed peacefully to slumber ever since. (Cheers.) And so I am encouraged to believe that even if the Senate should reject this latest treaty, which I hope they will not do—(hear, hear)—still these negotiations also will have their effect, and the common sense, and the sense of justice, and the Christian sentiment of the people of the United

States will support that effort for peace which we, at all events, have shown our earnest desire to maintain. (Cheers.)

Sir, there is another event which has taken place in the past twelve months, and to which I refer with satisfaction. I allude to the brilliantly led, and the splendidly successful, expedition to Dongola—(cheers)—by which a great fertile province has been rescued from a barbarous tyranny, and has been restored to prosperity and to civilisation. That is something of which we as a country may be proud, in spite of the sneers of our foreign critics—(cheers)—and I hope that this policy, which I believe has the support of the vast majority of Englishmen, may be carried to its legitimate conclusion—(cheers)—and that before very long we may see the tyranny of the Khalifa destroyed, and the security of Egypt established by giving to that country the practical and substantial control of the great river upon which its existence depends. (Cheers.) We have heard much of the moral obligations of this country in regard to Armenia. We have been told that it was our duty to protect this unfortunate population. There is a school amongst us—not, indeed, a very numerous or a very influential one—which calls itself the “Forward Party,” and which is, in my opinion, so retrograde in its policy that it would carry us back to a period of universal war in pursuit of its views and its theories; but I am ready to go so far with them as to admit the existence of this moral obligation, although

I must add that it is limited by our power and by our resources, and by the probability of useful interference. (Hear, hear.) But we have a moral obligation which is equally incumbent upon us in regard to the Soudan, and that is an obligation which is well within our power and our resources. (Hear, hear.) We have an opportunity, if we seize it, which comes seldom to any civilised nation, of reducing in an almost incalculable degree the sum of human misery and human suffering in the world. (Cheers.) I do not believe that the Government will be backward in fulfilling this obligation, and I do not believe that our countrymen will be backward in their support. (Cheers.)

I say, then, that the three events to which I have referred—the establishment of the concert of Europe in order to put an end to misgovernment in Turkey; the treaty of peace and arbitration with the United States; and the expedition to Dongola—form altogether a record of which no Government need be ashamed; and I admit I was a little surprised, although, I perhaps more than most people, should make allowance for election speeches—(laughter)—because I have made more than most people—(renewed laughter)—I was a little surprised to find that a very distinguished friend of mine—Mr. John Morley—the other day took a general view of what he called the political drama, and found everything bad—everything without a redeeming feature. (Laughter.) Now, speaking in that spirit which I

desire to preserve on such an occasion as this, and speaking to reasonable men, does not that appear to be rather a dyspeptic view of affairs? (Laughter.) I dare say that Mr. Morley was thinking chiefly of our domestic controversies; and, if I might venture to say so, I would add that this is a mistake which the leaders of the Radical party are constantly making. They forget, in the attention which they give to these domestic controversies, which, after all, whichever way they are settled, are of minor importance—they forget the great part which the country has played, and is called upon to play, in the history of the world. I say that this is the fatal mistake which alienates from men, otherwise influential and worthy of admiration, the sympathies of the great masses of their countrymen. (Hear, hear.) Because, let the little Englanders say what they like, we are a great governing race, predestined by our defects, as well as by our virtues, to spread over the habitable globe, and to enter into relations with all the countries of the earth. Our trade, the employment of our people, our very existence, depend upon it. We cannot occupy an insular position, and we cannot occupy ourselves entirely with domestic matters—(hear, hear)—and therefore foreign affairs and colonial affairs will continue, as long as our country exists, to be the greatest and the pre-eminent interest to the people of the United Kingdom. (Applause.)

After dealing with various questions of domestic policy, Mr. Chamberlain proceeded as follows :

I do not want to make any invidious comparisons, but is there any Government of recent time—the late Government for instance—which has done so much in so short a time? I put this before you in all humility, but at the same time with a certain inner consciousness that when the balance is struck it will be on the right side. (Hear, hear.) But whatever may be the opinion formed of our policy and of our programme, there is one thing which must not be left out of view. What is the alternative? It is not enough to criticise; it is not enough to destroy. You must be prepared to offer a substitute for the policy which you condemn; you must be able to construct a programme of your own. Now it seems to me that the policy of the Opposition would be to leave undone all those things which we have done, or proposed to do, and to do many things which we have not the slightest intention of doing. They would, for instance—and I am taking my opinion entirely from their own speeches—they would abandon Cyprus, which we intend to develop and to make a prosperous possession of this country. (Applause.) They would retire from Egypt, which we intend to restore and make secure. (Applause.) They would cut down our Imperial dominion in proportion to the smallness of our army. We propose to increase our army in proportion to the greatness of our empire. (Cheers.)

They would destroy the union of the United Kingdom, which we are pledged to maintain—(hear, hear)—and I gather that they would lay additional taxation upon the people of England to the extent of two millions and a half per annum, in order to start Ireland fairly as an independent country—as what they call a separate entity. Gentlemen, if these be the two policies, and I think I have stated them fairly—I am perfectly content to leave the choice to you and to the people of the United Kingdom.

Now, before I sit down, there is one other matter which is connected indirectly, at any rate—directly, I think I may say—with my own department. (Applause.) The present year is the sixtieth year of the reign of the Queen—(applause)—and you will agree with me that the date marks an absolutely unparalleled chapter in the history of our country. (Hear, hear.) No monarch in England has reigned so long; no monarch has reigned so well and so wisely. (Loud applause.) None have enjoyed so continuously and so increasingly the love and the respect of their subjects. In no previous reign has there been such progress, especially in all that conduces to the prosperity and the happiness of the masses of the population. (Hear, hear.) In no period of like extent has there ever been so great an extension of this empire of ours. Gentlemen, a commemoration of a reign so remarkable should surely be exceptional also. (Hear, hear.) We have had commemorations, we have had loyal demonstra-

tions on previous occasions. On previous occasions, as no doubt now, representatives of foreign countries have come here to testify to the feeling of respect which is entertained for the personal qualities of our Queen. Our great dependency of India on previous occasions, and again now, will give evidence of the loyalty of its population to the Empress, who has always shown such a marked interest in their welfare and happiness. But those things have happened before. But what has not happened before, what has never happened in the history of this country, has been to secure a personal representation of the empire as a whole—(applause)—of that great empire with its more than eleven millions of square miles of territory, with its three hundred and fifty millions of people, with their different religions, their different constitutions, their separate manners and customs, all united solely by the bond of allegiance to the Queen of these realms. (Applause.)

You will have seen, gentlemen, the proposal that has been made, and is being carried out, to secure such a demonstration, and that an invitation has been addressed to the Prime Ministers of all the self-governing colonies of the empire to come to England and to take part in this unique ceremonial. I have every reason, from the replies I have already received, to believe that the invitation has been gratifying to the colonies, and that it will be received in the spirit in which it has been tendered. These gentlemen will come here as the guests of the nation. (Applause.)

And who are they? They are the rulers of kingdoms, almost all of which are manifold larger than the United Kingdom itself, and all of them inhabited by considerable populations, that are destined to become at no distant date great nations, animated, as I hope and believe, by affection and regard for the great motherland that has given them birth, and that has instilled into their hearts those sentiments of equal justice and ordered liberty which have hitherto accompanied their progress as independent and self-governing States. (Applause.) Gentlemen, I hope that we shall have the opportunity, not merely in London, but in our great provincial centres—(hear, hear)—of welcoming these rulers of States beyond the sea, these men who, under the Queen, are the constitutional heads of the communities, which, by a free choice, have selected them to preside over the destinies of these provinces of a great empire. We shall have them; we shall have at the same time a representation of the great Crown colonies, with their infinite variety of climate and of production; and in this way we shall secure a demonstration that no other country can make—(cheers)—a demonstration of power, of influence, and of beneficent work, which will be a fitting tribute to the best and the most revered of English Sovereigns. (Cheers.)

It is my belief that great good will result from this gathering, that a meeting between those who represent in so marked a degree the interests of the great colonies and the members of Her Majesty's Govern-

ment, will lead to an interchange of ideas about matters of common and material interest, about closer commercial union—(hear, hear)—about the representation of the colonies, about common defence, about legislation, about other questions of equal importance, which cannot but be productive of the best results. (Hear, hear.)

But, after all, this is the great motive which influences the Government. We want to show to these gentlemen, we want to show to the colonies that they worthily represent, that the days of apathy and indifference have long ago passed away. (Cheers.) We want to prove to them that we are as proud of them as we believe that they are proud of us. (Cheers.) We want to show them that we have confidence in their future, and hope in their closer union with ourselves, so that in the time to come the British Empire, founded upon freedom, buttressed by the affection of its several members, fortified by mutual interest, shall stand impregnable and unassailable "four-square to all the winds that blow." (Loud and prolonged cheering, amid which the right honourable gentleman resumed his seat.)

The True Conception of Empire

ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE DINNER,
MARCH 31, 1897

The following speech was delivered on March 31, 1897, at the Hotel Métropole, when Mr. Chamberlain presided at the annual dinner of the Royal Colonial Institute :—

I HAVE now the honour to propose to you the toast of "Prosperity to the Royal Colonial Institute." (Cheers.) The Institute was founded in 1868, almost exactly a generation ago, and I confess that I admire the faith of its promoters, who, in a time not altogether favourable to their opinions, sowed the seeds of Imperial patriotism—(hear, hear)—although they must have known that few of them could live to gather the fruit and to reap the harvest. (Cheers.) But their faith has been justified by the result of their labours, and their foresight must be recognised in the light of our present experience.

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It seems to me that there are three distinct stages in our Imperial history. We began to be, and we ultimately became, a great Imperial Power in the eighteenth century, but, during the greater part of that time, the colonies were regarded, not only by us, but by every European Power that possessed them, as possessions valuable in proportion to the pecuniary advantage which they brought to the mother country, which, under that order of ideas, was not truly a mother at all, but appeared rather in the light of a grasping and absentee landlord desiring to take from his tenants the utmost rents he could exact. The colonies were valued and maintained because it was thought that they would be a source of profit—of direct profit—to the mother country.

That was the first stage, and when we were rudely awakened by the War of Independence in America from this dream, that the colonies could be held for our profit alone, the second chapter was entered upon, and public opinion seems then to have drifted to the opposite extreme; and, because the colonies were no longer a source of revenue, it seems to have been believed and argued by many people that their separation from us was only a matter of time, and that that separation should be desired and encouraged lest haply they might prove an encumbrance and a source of weakness.

It was while those views were still entertained, while the little Englanders—(laughter)—were in their full career, that this Institute was founded to protest

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against doctrines so injurious to our interests—(cheers)—and so derogatory to our honour; and I rejoice that what was then, as it were, “a voice crying in the wilderness” is now the expressed and determined will of the overwhelming majority of the British people. (Loud cheers.) Partly by the efforts of this Institute and similar organisations, partly by the writings of such men as Froude and Seeley—(hear, hear)—but mainly by the instinctive good sense and patriotism of the people at large, we have now reached the third stage in our history, and the true conception of our Empire. (Cheers.)

What is that conception? As regards the self-governing colonies we no longer talk of them as dependencies. The sense of possession has given place to the sentiment of kinship. We think and speak of them as part of ourselves—(cheers)—as part of the British Empire, united to us, although they may be dispersed throughout the world, by ties of kindred, of religion, of history, and of language, and joined to us by the seas that formerly seemed to divide us. (Cheers.)

But the British Empire is not confined to the self-governing colonies and the United Kingdom. It includes a much greater area, a much more numerous population in tropical climes, where no considerable European settlement is possible, and where the native population must always vastly outnumber the white inhabitants; and in these cases also the same change has come over the Imperial idea. Here also the

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sense of possession has given place to a different sentiment—the sense of obligation. We feel now that our rule over these territories can only be justified if we can show that it adds to the happiness and prosperity of the people—(cheers)—and I maintain that our rule does, and has, brought security and peace and comparative prosperity to countries that never knew these blessings before. (Cheers.)

In carrying out this work of civilisation we are fulfilling what I believe to be our national mission, and we are finding scope for the exercise of those faculties and qualities which have made of us a great governing race. (Cheers.) I do not say that our success has been perfect in every case, I do not say that all our methods have been beyond reproach; but I do say that in almost every instance in which the rule of the Queen has been established and the great *Pax Britannica* has been enforced, there has come with it greater security to life and property, and a material improvement in the condition of the bulk of the population. (Cheers.) No doubt, in the first instance, when these conquests have been made, there has been bloodshed, there has been loss of life among the native populations, loss of still more precious lives among those who have been sent out to bring these countries into some kind of disciplined order, but it must be remembered that that is the condition of the mission we have to fulfil. There are, of course, among us—there always are among us, I think—a very small minority of men who are ready to be the

advocates of the most detestable tyrants, provided their skin is black—men who sympathise with the sorrows of Prempeh and Lobengula, and who denounce as murderers those of their countrymen who have gone forth at the command of the Queen, and who have redeemed districts as large as Europe from the barbarism and the superstition in which they had been steeped for centuries. I remember a picture by Mr. Selous of a philanthropist—an imaginary philanthropist, I will hope—sitting cosily by his fireside and denouncing the methods by which British civilisation was promoted. This philanthropist complained of the use of Maxim guns and other instruments of warfare, and asked why we could not proceed by more conciliatory methods, and why the impis of Lobengula could not be brought before a magistrate, fined five shillings, and bound over to keep the peace. (Loud laughter.)

No doubt there is humorous exaggeration in this picture, but there is gross exaggeration in the frame of mind against which it was directed. You cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot destroy the practices of barbarism, of slavery, of superstition, which for centuries have desolated the interior of Africa, without the use of force; but if you will fairly contrast the gain to humanity with the price which we are bound to pay for it, I think you may well rejoice in the result of such expeditions as those which have recently been conducted with such signal success—(cheers)—in Nyassaland, Ashanti,

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Benin, and Nupé—expeditions which may have, and indeed have, cost valuable lives, but as to which we may rest assured that for one life lost a hundred will be gained, and the cause of civilisation and the prosperity of the people will in the long run be eminently advanced. (Cheers.) But no doubt such a state of things, such a mission as I have described, involve heavy responsibility. In the wide dominions of the Queen the doors of the temple of Janus are never closed—(hear, hear)—and it is a gigantic task that we have undertaken when we have determined to wield the sceptre of empire. Great is the task, great is the responsibility, but great is the honour—(cheers); and I am convinced that the conscience and the spirit of the country will rise to the height of its obligations, and that we shall have the strength to fulfil the mission which our history and our national character have imposed upon us. (Cheers.)

In regard to the self-governing colonies our task is much lighter. We have undertaken, it is true, to protect them with all the strength at our command against foreign aggression, although I hope that the need for our intervention may never arise. (Hear, hear.) But there remains what then will be our chief duty—that is, to give effect to that sentiment of kinship to which I have referred and which I believe is deep in the heart of every Briton. We want to promote a closer and a firmer union between all members of the great British race, and in this respect we have in recent years made great progress—so great that I

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think sometimes some of our friends are apt to be a little hasty, and to expect even a miracle to be accomplished. I would like to ask them to remember that time and patience are essential elements in the development of all great ideas. (Cheers.) Let us, gentlemen, keep our ideal always before us. For my own part, I believe in the practical possibility of a federation of the British race—(loud cheers)—but I know that it will come, if it does come, not by pressure, not by anything in the nature of dictation from this country, but it will come as the realisation of a universal desire, as the expression of the dearest wish of our colonial fellow-subjects themselves. (Hear, hear.)

That such a result would be desirable, would be in the interest of all of our colonies as well as of ourselves, I do not believe any sensible man will doubt. It seems to me that the tendency of the time is to throw all power into the hands of the greater Empires, and the minor kingdoms—those which are non-progressive—seem to be destined to fall into a secondary and subordinate place. But, if Greater Britain remains united, no empire in the world can ever surpass it in area, in population, in wealth, or in the diversity of its resources. (Cheers.)

Let us, then, have confidence in the future. (Hear, hear.) I do not ask you to anticipate with Lord Macaulay the time when the New Zealander will come here to gaze upon the ruins of a great dead city. There are in our present condition no visible

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signs of decrepitude and decay. (Cheers.) The mother country is still vigorous and fruitful, is still able to send forth troops of stalwart sons to people and to occupy the waste spaces of the earth ; but yet it may well be that some of these sister nations whose love and affection we eagerly desire may in the future equal and even surpass our greatness. A trans-oceanic capital may arise across the seas, which will throw into shade the glories of London itself ; but in the years that must intervene let it be our endeavour, let it be our task, to keep alight the torch of Imperial patriotism, to hold fast the affection and the confidence of our kinsmen across the seas, that so in every vicissitude of fortune the British Empire may present an unbroken front to all her foes, and may carry on even to distant ages the glorious traditions of the British flag. (Loud cheers.) It is because I believe that the Royal Colonial Institute is contributing to this result that with all sincerity I propose the toast of the evening.

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