

(April 10)

Imperial Co-operation.

BY SIR JOSEPH WARD.*

ADDRESSING the Canadian Club upon the subject, "Imperial Co-operation," Sir Joseph Ward, Prime Minister of New Zealand, said:

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I desire to express to the President my warmest appreciation for the kindly way in which he has been good enough to introduce the stranger to you, but not in a foreign land. Those of you who have had the opportunity of crossing the Pacific and visiting those important islands in the Southern Seas will realize, as I do, that wherever one goes throughout the great Dominion of Canada he meets the typical representatives of the British race, and consequently he feels very much at home. In that distant country, which I have the honor to represent, it may not be a surprise to you to hear that we are in the truest sense of the term very, very British. Ninety-eight and a half per cent. of our population is British. We are endeavoring in that distant country to preserve for the generations that are to come a class of people that will at least be free from as many disabilities of the older world as it is possible for the legislators and people of to-day to preserve for them, and to build up a portion of the British dominion that will be at least not discreditable to it, and we are trying to avoid as far as possible the mistakes that have occurred in older lands. We are trying, as you in your Dominion of Canada, to profit by the mistakes of our elders.

I know enough of public life, Mr. President and gentlemen, to avoid the mistake of alluding, either directly or indirectly, to the great public matters of what I may term an internal character in the Dominion of Canada; and I have enough experience of troubles in my own official position in

*Sir Joseph Ward, Premier of New Zealand, has been prominent as an Imperial statesman for several years. He attends the Imperial Conferences in London and is sincerely desirous of bringing the various parts of the Empire closer together. His other great interest as a public man is in the progressive legislation of his Island Dominion, which for its care for the poor, its conservation of health and its adjustment of labor troubles, in many ways leads the world. Sir Joseph Ward is in the prime of life, a fine type of the rugged Englishman who faces problems with high dignity and singular courage.

my own country to see that it would be a great mistake to even allude to any of these problems which are exercising the keen and ripe intellects of the public and business and social life of this country.

But there is a matter with which you are all concerned—you want to create a more lasting bond between the various portions of the British Empire; we want to do the same. And we have already commenced in a practical way, following in that the steps of the Dominion of Canada, by extending to your great Dominion preferential trade, and receiving at your hands preferential trade. And we are doing that to various portions of the British Empire, with the idea of building up within our own territory as far as it is possible for us to do—a trade with British people, in preference to trading with people outside. Under the preferential tariff of New Zealand, British countries, including the Dominion of Canada, receive concessions. We are conceding 12.56 per cent. of the tariff or revenue upon nearly one-half the items of Customs tariff of the Dominion of New Zealand. And that would, in your terms, amount to \$2,500,000 per annum by way of concession to those who are trading with New Zealand from British territory beyond our own shores. Thus in this part of the territory where we are now, if you were to go through the length and breadth of New Zealand, you will find Toronto almost as plainly before your eyes as if you were in the immediate territory of Toronto itself, showing practically that it is quite evident that this Dominion is trading considerably with New Zealand. And I hope that as the years go on it will increase. Its utility is so important I hope it will go on developing to your satisfaction and to ours.

The other day we landed in Vancouver. Passengers who left Auckland on the 16th of March arrived at Vancouver on the 2nd of April. We could have, if we so desired, passed on to the great City of London, and been there, from New Zealand, in the comparatively short period of twenty-five days. I ask you to remember the fact that your statesman in this portion of the British Empire—your leading statesman, Sir Wilfrid Laurier—is urging, as we are doing from our country, the establishment of what we refer to as the 'All-Red Route'; and I believe, before many years, it will be possible for a person to cross the Atlantic, to travel across Canada, and then to sail over the Pacific to the Southern Islands, on British highways. As a rule we say trade follows the flag. That may be so, but in practice trade follows the steamer. You have recently established two lines of steamers trading to the

Southern Seas, Australia, and New Zealand—one by the Atlantic, the other by the Pacific—and by these you hope to bring about a closer connection in the matter of trade.

And I will add this far more important result: You will help to weld the links of Empire, to tie the knots of kinship more closely, and enable the people of England—I mean of the British Isles—and those of Canada and in the countries away across the Pacific—I speak for New Zealand—to arrive at a better understanding in connection with the importance of having a system of defence, external particularly—because we can all look after our internal defence without interference from anybody—which must go for the greater solidarity of the Empire, which we are all so much concerned at seeing welded into a great and imperial empire in the truest sense of the term.

A conference is to take place in the Old Country next month which is undeniably very important. At that conference representative men from different portions of the Empire will discuss questions freely and fully, without any fear of giving offence, either to the representatives or the people of the countries; freely and independently, in some cases in committee possibly, so far as the weaknesses of the position are concerned.

Going into the important question of the defence of the Empire as a whole, I have no hesitation in saying there is no matter to-day of such importance to you people in Canada, to those of us who are in distant New Zealand, to those in Australia, in South Africa, and in India, and, above all, to the people of the British Isles, as having a free interchange of ideas on all affairs and conditions, bringing out these ideas with a view to arriving at and using some system of building ships to prevent great nations outside of the British Empire from causing trouble. We in all parts of it may be able, as a result of taking time by the forelock, by the exercise of those traits of the British race wherever it exists, and having the system established—we shall be enabled, you in Canada and we in New Zealand, to co-operate on a practical basis in the event of trouble rising, and to ensure the deferring of that trouble. And that ought to impress on other countries the determination of a people who have a duty to perform, separated by seas as the majority of us are, and happily so, for it is a good thing that the Supreme Being kept these countries well separated, though it has disadvantages. It is a good thing from the fact that you are building up an independent race, an independent people in Canada, as we are in New Zealand,

and South Africa, and Australia, and India, as associations; for in different forms it makes for the whole defence of the British Empire, side by side with that rapidity of development which is going on in outside countries and is visible for any thinking person.

This calls for co-operation, or at least for an effort being made to have unity of action; and, above all, it means, in my opinion, that if the statesmen of this portion of the Empire are able to agree and show to the outside world that they are ready to be one in action and one in preparedness, with a view to action should it be found to be necessary, it means preserving the peace of the world for many years. And it is the peace of the world those of us who are anxious to see built up a great system of defence upon the seas—it is the peace of the world we are working for. Not with the idea of creating the impression that we are jingoists, to the neglect of the requirements, but for cohesion on land and sea.

So I know, better than you can tell me, that your statesmen and your people of Canada have been as in the past, as alive and alert to the events as the statesmen and people of any other portion of the British Empire. But it is a good thing that one is afforded such an occasion as this of knowing that when even feebly giving utterance to the thoughts running through one's mind when passing through this great, free country of Canada in connection with the Imperial Conference which is to take place in May, one is sure to have at least your good-will; to have it, at least, irrespective of the political opinions of the gentlemen present, and to have at his side the statesman who is his political colleague (Hon. Dr. Findlay) upon the eve of their departure for that conference of so much importance to the whole British Empire.

We crossed from the Rockies under very bad auspices—there was snow in every direction. We lost sight of snow only half an hour away from Toronto. There must be great activity in the vicinity of your City of Toronto! In New Zealand we go from end to end of it, winter and summer, and we look for snow many miles away from the busy haunts of men. A man who is economically disposed can live in portions of New Zealand where he would require neither light nor fire for cooking purposes, nor would he need to boil water for any domestic requirements. (Laughter.) You can get into hot water in New Zealand without any difficulty. And you can pass away from the hot water region and in about an hour or two you can find about as cold water as in the Rocky Mountains, without the concomitant of snow.

But it does not do for anyone to talk about the beauties of his own country. (Laughter.) I mean the natural beauties. (Renewed laughter.) But, may I tell you here, we have some extraordinary things there. One is "Pelorus Jack." Upon the arrival of every steamer there appears a fish, which is neither a whale, a porpoise, nor a shark, but something like all of these creatures. It takes special interest in every steamer, appearing on the surface when some distance out, and swimming along near it for miles. This has gone on for the last thirty years. Most people believe it is a fairy tale, but I have seen it myself more than a score of times. (Laughter.) That is only one of the remarkable things of my country, but it is one of the best known, because we find that with all the tourists from the Dominion of Canada crossing to New Zealand, one of the first things they want to know is whether this Pelorus Jack, which is protected by an order-in-council, is fact or fiction. Not very long ago some people on one steamer crossing, who were unkindly disposed or skeptical of its existence, threw something over to it, and from that day it never came near that particular steamer. And I think I am safe in saying to those of you before me, because I realize that I am right away out of my own constituency, I believe that statement. They were all members of the Opposition in New Zealand. (Renewed laughter.) Otherwise such an untoward event could not possibly have taken place.

But, seriously, we are very proud of your Dominion of Canada. We know a great deal about it—in your public life, your institutions, the aims and aspirations of your people—and we know a good deal about the laws that govern the people. In turn, I have little doubt, you know something of the public life of New Zealand. We have advanced laws. We own up to aspirations to make life better and happier for the people. During the last half-century we have done so much towards the social life of the community, but no laws can help people unless they make up their minds to help themselves.

We go for preserving the infants—seeing that everything possible is done to ensure the infant reaching 21 years of age. We value the life of the infant that successfully comes to 21 years at \$1,500. We go for helping the mother in maternity on the back block as well as in the centres. We give \$30 to enable a medical man to be sent to a case of need, and give assistance to the mother in her time of need. We make provision for the mother for the sustenance of herself and her children at an important time such as that is.

We spend \$2,000,000 per annum on old age pensions, helping men and women who have lived for twenty years in the

country, and who have led sober lives for five years. We give £26 per annum to free them from the charity of their own relatives or people outside. If they slip or fall by the way, when this has been ordered under the law of our country, it is for the time being cancelled. We don't allow the resources of our country to go to dissipation.

We go for helping the masses of the people to improve their position, and sometimes one sees in the press of other countries that we are an experimentalizing country. Ninety-eight and a half per cent. of our people are British, and seventy per cent. of them are New Zealand born. To-day you won't find in New Zealand any man in public life who would go for repealing one law of those which are sometimes in other countries, without knowledge of them, condemned.

We come along to another great sister dominion—Canada—and we find a people who look contented, who look happy, who in some respects work out their destiny in a different way; but we recognize that local circumstances have to be considered by the people who are responsible. We appreciate at least the disinterested services you have been enabled to render to your country.

When I pass away from Toronto I can thank this large company for the honor you have done me as the representative of the people of a dominion that wishes your people well. We wish the Dominion well; and I sincerely hope that when I meet the honored representative of your Dominion at the Imperial Conference—for the great and distinguished representative of this country will be there—that he will, as he has done in the past, lead the way in many respects for the betterment of the Empire, and among these in establishing in the forefront of the leaders the great sister, Dominion of Canada.