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ABSTRACT

THE FOURTH EARL GREY AND IMPERIAL FEDERATION

British Politics and the Empire, 1880-1917

by Neil B. Lyon

The 4th Earl Grey (1851-1917) was one of the most ardent imperialists of his generation. As a close friend of Cecil Rhodes, as Governor-General of Canada, and as President of the Royal Colonial Institute, Grey devoted his life to preaching the gospel of closer co-operation between Britain and each of its Dominions.

This thesis examines Grey's ideas for stronger political, economic and military ties within the Empire. These ideas are analysed by reference to the wider contemporary debate about Imperial Federation in the years 1880-1917. What distinguishes Grey is that he believed formal ties were inadequate by themselves unless an enthusiasm for the Empire was evoked in the hearts of all Dominion subjects. Grey's personal endeavours to promote this necessary imperial sentiment were remarkable, and as Governor-General he did more than any other senior imperialist to promote Imperial Federation.

Attention is given to the question of why Grey became an imperialist, and the extent to which personal financial gain may have been an incentive. Grey believed that Imperial Federation might bring numerous benefits both to the United Kingdom itself, and to the world as a whole. Grey came to share Rhodes's conviction that the British Empire was potentially the greatest means of promoting civilisation that the world had ever known. For Grey, as for Rhodes, Imperial Federation was but a forerunner to the even greater goal of a federation of English-speaking peoples throughout the world, including the United States.

An understanding of Grey's ideas will provide the reader with a useful case-study for assessing both the established and the current interpretations of imperialism in the period 1880 to 1917.

THE FOURTH EARL GREY AND IMPERIAL FEDERATION
British Politics and the Empire, 1880-1917

by

NEIL BARCLAY LYON

Department of History

University of Durham

1992

Submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the University of Durham

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CONTENTS

- 6. INTRODUCTION

- 14. CHAPTER ONEImperial Federation: The Background

- 33. CHAPTER TWO.....Influences on Earl Grey

- 58. CHAPTER THREE.....Political Federation

- 73. CHAPTER FOUR.....Economic and Military Federation

- 92. CHAPTER FIVE.....Imperial Sentiment

- 111. CHAPTER SIX.....United Kingdom Federation

- 131. CONCLUSION

- 142. NOTES

- 158. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Any errors in this thesis are entirely the fault of my contemporaries in Hatfield College, who sought constantly to distract me from my labour!



John. L. Sargent

1910

ALBERT, 4th EARL GREY

(1851-1917)

ALBERT HENRY GEORGE GREY : CURRICULUM VITAE

Born: 28 November 1851

Parents: General Charles Grey, younger son of 2nd Earl Grey; and
Caroline, daughter of Sir Thomas Farquahar, Bt.

Education: Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge

Succeeded to the earldom in 1894

Liberal Member of Parliament, 1880-1886

(South Northumberland, 1880-1885)

(Northumberland Tyneside, 1885-1886)

Director of the British South Africa Company, 1889-1904

Administrator of Rhodesia, 1896-1897

Vice-President of Company, 1898-1904

Governor-General of Canada, 1904-1911

President of the Royal Colonial Institute, 1912-1917

G.C.M.G., 1904; G.C.V.O., 1908; Privy Counsellor, 1908;

G.C.B., 1911; M.A., LL.M. (Cantab.), Hon. D.C.L. (Oxon.),

Hon. LL.D. (Cantab.)

Died: 29 August 1917

INTRODUCTION

History usually spares little time for failed schemes or ideas. The relevant source material is soon consigned to the waste bin, with perhaps just a vague sense of speculation about what might have happened if that particular idea had come to fruition. It is generally accepted that 'failure' is a suitable label for the notion of Imperial Federation - because all the calls for closer union among the self-governing colonies of the British Empire were ultimately to no avail. Yet any study of British history between 1880 and the end of the First World War is certainly incomplete without some understanding of what Imperial Federation amounted to, since it was a key factor in British political, imperial and constitutional thinking at that time.

Imperial Federation was a loosely-defined phrase in popular use among imperialists throughout the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. It was used as a collective description of the various ideas for strengthening links between Britain and its self-governing colonies in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. To some it meant a strict form of political reorganisation on federal lines, while to others it implied a vague form of closer imperial unity or sentiment. Calls were also made for closer co-operation in economic and military affairs. Imperial Federation is regarded in this thesis as a synonym for the imperial consolidation of what is termed the 'White Empire', those colonies where there was substantial British settlement: it does not relate to India, or to most colonies in Africa

or elsewhere. These were considered by federationists to be bound to Britain only by ties of conquest, not kinship.

Imperial Federation undoubtedly failed as an idea. The British Commonwealth of Nations which evolved from the 1926 Imperial Conference established the Dominions as autonomous governments having equal status alongside Britain. This was the antithesis of the closer co-operation and organic union many earlier imperialists had sought.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, the position which the Imperial Federation idea had in the thinking and motivations of so many of Britain's foremost politicians and other leading statesmen, as well as its prominence in political thought between 1880 and 1917, was remarkable. It was Imperial Federation which prompted one of the shrewdest politicians of his generation, Joseph Chamberlain, to call for imperial tariff reform in 1903, even at the cost of the fortunes of the Unionist party in the 1906 election. The very existence of the Empire was intimately tied up with the affairs of Britain itself - its relative economic and military strength, the social welfare of its citizens, the role and effectiveness of parliamentary government, and the whole question of Ireland. In considering their country's condition, as well as its future, British statesmen could also not avoid debating the future of the Empire itself, in which Imperial Federation played a major part.

Because of its importance, original source material relating to Imperial Federation has generally escaped the waste bin. Collections of major statesmen abound with useful information, and historians have dwelt fully on the attitudes towards it of major imperialists such as Chamberlain and Lord Milner. Indeed, in most books about the Empire there will be some mention made of Imperial Federation, albeit usually briefly and dismissively. Amongst the surviving archive material, a considerable amount of relevant information may also be found. The Papers of the 4th Earl Grey are an excellent example. Earl Grey

(1851-1917), the grandson of the 1832 Reform Act Prime Minister, was among the foremost disciples of the gospel of Imperial Federation.

Grey's influence stemmed largely from his position as Governor-General of Canada from 1904 to 1911. The fact that he was actually out in the Dominions for seven years meant that he was one of the most senior advocates of Imperial Federation who could claim to have an intimate knowledge of Dominion sensibilities. Indeed, the fact that as Governor-General he intervened to an unusual degree in Canadian internal affairs arguably serves to rank Grey alongside Milner (High Commissioner of the Cape, 1897-1905) in having an exceptional understanding of both British and Dominion feeling about Imperial Federation. The extent of Grey's involvement in Canadian politics - never missing an opportunity to promote the imperial cause - is in itself of considerable importance.

Grey himself made various proposals for political federation within the 'White Empire', as well as closer economic and military co-operation. These are analysed in chapters three and four of this thesis. His proposals were not usually specific, but are nevertheless worthy of comparison with those advocated by the more widely known federationists. His perspective, coloured as it was by his being on the fringes of the Empire, often added a valuable contrast to the suggestions of those theorists who are often criticised by historians for rarely having stirred from their armchairs in Britain, and whose conception of Dominion feeling was shaped largely by the reports in The Times. Grey knew better than most that co-operation is a two-way process, and that nothing of value would ever be achieved in the Empire if the Dominions themselves were unwilling to offer the necessary support.

In order to overcome any scepticism or antipathy in the Dominions about closer imperial co-operation, Grey believed that a general feeling of sentiment and emotional attachment to the Empire

must first be stirred up among the colonial peoples themselves. Imperial Federation could not be imposed on them from above, whether by the British government or even their own legislators: loyalty must spring from the heart. In efforts to boost this feeling of imperial sentiment, Grey was unsurpassed, both as Governor-General and later as President of the Royal Colonial Institute (1912-17). No British imperialist did more than he in seeking to promote an interest in the idea of closer union within the Empire, which he correctly saw as a fundamental pre-condition to Imperial Federation. His efforts are considered in chapter five.

In explaining why it is that Imperial Federation failed, historians rightly stress that it was never properly promoted, because its advocates preached only to the converted and rarely won new supporters to their flock. At one extreme there were avowedly populist organisations, such as the Imperial Federation League, founded in 1884 to win over the populace both in Britain and the Dominions, while at the other extreme there were elite pressure groups such as Milner's Round Table, established in 1909, which sought only to win over the politicians and leaders of public opinion. Again, Grey is interesting, because he does not fit easily into either category of style. As Governor-General he personally led the crusade to preach the gospel of Imperial Federation to all Canadians, but in private he also made full use of his official position, as well as his considerable network of social contacts, to bring influence to bear on Westminster politicians and Fleet Street journalists alike.

Grey was not a natural leader of men, nor a contemplative theoriser. Nor did he fit easily into any of the particular schools of imperialist thought which abounded at this time. He was, however, as an individualist, an ardent preacher of what he believed. As will be shown, Grey was very much an idealist, with remarkably visionary notions, and his interest in Imperial Federation was based on the

highest principles. For him the Empire was not about the number of square miles painted red on a map, or a mere consequence of the need to secure a safe passage to India. It was a religion which transcended loyalty to party and even his country, and which he practised and preached with the utmost dedication. He saw the Empire as a means whereby peace, progress and morality could be spread throughout the world under the mantle of the Anglo-Saxon concept of 'civilisation'. To the modern reader such rhetoric may sound somewhat crude and pompous. Perhaps it is. Perhaps, though, the problem lies partly with the reader himself, in being too cynical and unprepared to accept that some people genuinely held such views.

Many imperialists besides Grey used similarly evocative language. Some have since been exposed as hypocritical even in their own time, concealing selfish exploits behind a veneer of fatuous, pseudo-philanthropic waffle. Such accusations are readily fired against men like Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes. Here it is contended that Grey should not be similarly condemned. Recently David Cannadine has repeated an accusation that Grey acted improperly in his involvement with the 1895 Jameson Raid, and has highlighted him as a classic example of what the economist and anti-imperialist, J.A. Hobson, labelled a prime agent of capitalistic imperialism.(2) To argue this is to ignore what Grey was really like. Grey was a genuine idealist, and his imperialism was utterly untainted by selfish, corrupt, or even materialistic thinking. In fact, Grey was at times remarkably naive in the extent to which he could be carried away by his enthusiasm for the cause of Imperial Federation - an ingenuous idealism which probably barred him from achieving success in high political office, but which none the less prompted in him a splendidly impassioned vision of what might be achieved by closer imperial union.

The extent of Grey's idealism is worthy of study itself. He came to see Imperial Federation as a panacea for every conceivable

problem - domestic, imperial, and even international - as will be shown in chapter one. The potential of the British Empire could be harnessed, he believed, to improve the welfare of the working classes in Britain, and even to prevent the outbreak of war between nations. For Grey, the possibilities were countless. In 1885 he declared:

The establishment of a great English-speaking federation drawing its strength from the four quarters of the globe, ready to risk something in the cause of humanity, freedom, justice and of peace, will prove the most potent instrument that the world has ever seen for bringing about the permanent and lasting regeneration of mankind.(3)

Perhaps only one man had a greater vision: Cecil Rhodes. As will be explained later, the kind of Imperial Federation which Rhodes contemplated exceeded the wildest dreams of even the most committed federationists. It is significant to reflect, therefore, upon the very close relationship that existed between Grey and Rhodes. Grey served under Rhodes in helping to establish the country that became known as Rhodesia, acted as its Administrator from 1896 to 1897, and later was appointed an original trustee of Rhodes's will upon the latter's death in 1902. It is reasonable to suggest that Grey, more than anyone else, was the successor to Rhodes's dreams, which he henceforth dedicated his life to fulfilling.

Such talk about visions and dreams might seem all rather ridiculous: but an appreciation of this remarkably spiritual conception is vital if one is properly to understand the nature of Grey's distinctive approach to the whole issue of Imperial Federation. Much current historical research about the Empire continues to revolve around much more mundane but equally speculative matters, such as the impact of Great-Power rivalries or the importance of financial interests, in seeking to identify the motivations for imperialism.(4) Since the time of Hobson, questions have been raised about the extent to which the prospect of obtaining a personal profit has really

determined the enthusiasm for the Empire. Cain and Hopkins, and more recently Davis and Huttenback, are among the present leading researchers in this field.(5) In chapter two, it will be argued that Grey stands out as an exception to these general theories.

As an impassioned imperialist, Grey placed the interests of the Empire at the forefront even when approaching most British domestic issues. One of his favourite phrases was indicative of this: 'What is my country? The Empire is my country. England is my home'.(6) One particular consequence was that, for a while at least, Grey's approach to the Irish problem was unique among all his leading contemporaries. Although bitterly opposed to Gladstone's two Home Rule Bills, in 1886 and 1893, Grey came to believe that some form of federal system of government for the entire United Kingdom was an ideal solution. More importantly still, he became convinced that United Kingdom federation was an essential stage to be passed before Imperial Federation could be achieved. Grey thus added a distinctly imperial perspective to the domestic arguments about Ireland's future, especially in the period after 1909. This had a singular impact on the debate about Ireland which largely dominated British politics in the period up to 1914. This is discussed in chapter six.

Grey's contribution to the subject of Imperial Federation is therefore of considerable importance. If the impression has been given that Grey was one of the principal imperialists, then that must be dispelled. He was only a second rank member, while the main team was usually selected from the foremost mainstream politicians at Westminster. Nevertheless, Grey's contribution is so unique that it is worthy of far more notice than hitherto has been given by students of imperialism. As Lord Milner wrote:

[Grey] may not fill a great space in the pages of history, but he will nevertheless have exercised a more far-reaching and enduring influence upon the future of our country and the Empire, than many

men whose names will be very conspicuous in those pages.(7)

This thesis attempts to assess that influence.

CHAPTER ONE

IMPERIAL FEDERATION: THE BACKGROUND

The essence of federalism is the creation of units of equal status, subordinate and responsible to one governing body. As a model for the British Empire, this proposal was considered seriously by very few imperialists in the period 1880-1917. The phrase Imperial Federation was for most of its advocates simply a label for any ideas which aimed towards strengthening ties among the various parts of the 'White Empire'. Before considering the exact proposals offered by Grey and others as to what shape any moves towards consolidation might take, it is necessary to explain why the calls for consolidation arose, and to analyse the atmosphere in which the Imperial Federation movement developed.

It is impossible to define what made someone an imperialist, or even to define simply what imperialism really means.(1) One can surmise, though, that as the rate of expansion of Britain's formal overseas commitments increased from the 1870s onwards, and yet as fears of this vulnerability also grew, anyone of intelligence could not fail to take a closer interest in the Empire, with which the fate of Britain itself was ever more closely entwined. Among the most influential statesmen in the country who were imperialists, there were some who were also ardent supporters of Imperial Federation, such as Lord Rosebery (Prime Minister, 1894-5) and Chamberlain at the top level, and Lords Curzon, Milner and Grey on the second rung. The consequence of this was that the advocates of Imperial Federation had

an impact on the guidance of the Empire's affairs in the period 1880-1917 out of all proportion to the real popularity of their cause.

The first call for Imperial Federation was made in the decade after 1765, in the wake of the furore in the American Colonies about the imposition there of a Stamp Tax. The idea was revived in 1837, when trouble arose among the Canadian colonists, and once more from about 1867, when Canada was granted responsible self-government.(2) Contrary to J.E. Tyler's assertion that Imperial Federation emerged as an idea alongside the creation of the Royal Colonial Institute in 1868, this body was just evidence of renewed interest in a long-established concept.(3) It may legitimately be argued that Imperial Federation was primarily a defensive response among imperialists to the fear that the Empire was in danger of disintegration, and that such disintegration would threaten Britain's particular interests just as much as those of the Empire itself.

In this chapter two arguments are advanced to explain the development of Imperial Federation. The 'Consolidate or Disintegrate' claim will be considered first, since this was what attracted most attention. There was, however, a second claim, that imperial unity was desirable as a goal in itself - an idealistic strand of thought which, although not held by many, certainly does much to explain the enthusiasm for Imperial Federation of men like Grey.

In 1918 the British Empire embraced 12,000,000 square miles of land and perhaps a quarter of the world population. Not since the height of the Roman Empire had there been such a dominant world power. Moreover, Britain had maintained total supremacy of the seas since the Battle of Trafalgar, and enjoyed unparalleled wealth due to its status as the first, and most advanced, of the industrialised nations. Yet it was vulnerable. A country at the height of its power has little to gain, and everything to lose. Anything which seemed to challenge British superiority, such as the troubles in Egypt (1882) and South

Africa (1880-1 and 1899-1902), sent a shiver down the spine of every imperialist. As Bernard Porter says: 'Fear probably made more people imperialists than anything else did'.(4)

It seemed inevitable that soon Britain's naval power, and ultimately its control of so much of the globe, would also be challenged. This fitted in with the general notions among intellectuals, politicians and journalists alike at that time, of a 'Darwinistic world of struggle, of success and failure, of growth and decline'.(5) Chamberlain, for example, declared that Britain had now become 'the weary Titan, [staggering] under the too vast orb of its fate'.(6) Under Bismarck the new German state was making rapid advances both economically and militarily, and was clearly looking to develop an empire for itself. The United States continued to grow as a nation, as it expanded westwards across to the Pacific Ocean - and its sense of national self-importance also grew, reflected in a growing American involvement in the Caribbean and South America, which seemed to threaten British interests there. The possibility of a clash between Britain and the United States over Canada was rarely forgotten, either. Russia, meanwhile, still seemed to be a severe threat to India, and proved a constant challenge to British interests in the Persian Gulf.

Once one started to search for evidence of decline, one found it everywhere - and the British have long had a fascination for this subject. As the first industrialised nation, Britain had much to fear from competition as other nations developed. In 1860, the relative share of world manufacturing output was: Britain (19.9%), United States (7.2%), Germany (4.9%). In 1900 the figures were: United States (23.6%), Britain (18.5%), Germany (13.2%).(7) By 1913 Britain was in third place, 'not because it wasn't growing, but because others were growing faster'.(8) Overall, British industrial production grew at an annual rate of 3%, 1840-70, but only at 1.5%, 1875-94. While

Germany (1879), Russia (1881), France (1882) and the United States each protected their own burgeoning industries behind tariff barriers, Britain found itself less able to compete in European markets. A solution, increasingly advocated by politicians and businessmen alike, was for Britain to trade more with its colonies than with Europe, since the colonies offered guaranteed markets for its manufactured goods and were potential sources of cheap raw materials and food.(9)

The challenge to Britain's military power was another source of fear. The threat of invasion was recurrent in the nineteenth century. The rise of German military power posed a new threat, especially if a Franco-German alliance were to emerge. Whereas in 1860 Britain boasted 347,000 military personnel, and Germany 201,000, by 1880 the figures were 248,000 and 430,000 respectively.(10) As Germany's industrial growth continued, the threat to Britain's supremacy of the seas also seemed challenged: whereas in 1896 Britain could boast 45 battleships, Germany 21, Japan none and the United States 5, just ten years later the figures were 61, 31, 11 and 15 respectively.(11) Britain no longer ruled the waves.(12)

Imperialists believed that Britain must expand into Africa, in order to maintain its position as a 'living' nation, and must consolidate its existing Empire. A large empire could help sustain the British economy, which was vital if Britain were to be able to withstand any military assault in the future. So, suggests Porter, imperial expansion in the 1880s, and the calls for Imperial Federation, were primarily 'a reflection not so much of Britain's growing power in the world as of her slow decline, or at least the anticipation of it'.(13)

A further highly significant point for advocates of Imperial Federation was that Britain's main rivals - Germany and the United States - were both nations comprised of various smaller states merged together. It seemed ironic that while they grew stronger by

consolidating, usually through a federal system of government, Britain was in danger of allowing its colonies to drift away. Internal self-government had been granted to Canada in 1867, Cape Colony in 1872, and Australia in 1901, although Britain had retained control of all external relations.

These fears about Britain's future were brilliantly portrayed by John Seeley, Professor of Modern History at Cambridge from 1869 to 1895. In The Expansion of England, published in 1883, Seeley sketched out two scenarios for the future of the Empire. Either the self-governing colonies would become independent, leaving Britain

considerably weaker than the other major powers, or else England may prove able to do what the United States does so easily, that is hold together in a federal union countries very remote from each other. In that case England will rank with Russia and the United States in the first rank of states, measured by population and area, and in the higher rank than the states on the continent.(14)

Seeley was saying little that was new, but he gave an authoritative seal to these ideas by portraying the future of the Empire in the context of history, and offering an enticing mixture of imperialist and patriotic rhetoric. His book was widely read, selling 80,000 copies in the first two years, and received favourable reaction from imperialists such as Rhodes, Chamberlain and Rosebery.(15) Another reader was Grey - who, as a History and Law undergraduate at Cambridge in the early 1870s would have come into contact with Seeley on a formal basis. Expansion was recommended to him by his friend Alfred Lyttelton (Colonial Secretary, 1903-5) as 'one of the most brilliant and suggestive little books written for some time'.(16) Wormell says that Seeley was credited by many with having transformed British public opinion about the Empire from a state of indifference to one of attachment, and that he achieved this largely because he stressed how much the Empire could affect the fortunes of Britain

itself: he thus appealed to basic patriotism. Historians such as H.A.L. Fisher and R.K. Ensor have likewise acknowledged the profound impact which Expansion had on the political thinking of the nation, by rejecting an insular approach to British history.(17)

Seeley's book established him as 'the figurehead of the Imperial Federation movement'.(18) It was a great source of inspiration to the Imperial Federation League (of which Seeley was a founder member), established in July 1884 to advance the aim of consolidation.(19) It was launched with a meeting of public figures 'favourable to the permanent unity of England and the Colonies, to discuss the means of securing such union by some form of political organisation and also the expediency of bringing the question more prominently before the public'.(20) W.E. Forster chaired the meeting, which was attended by more than forty prominent politicians, including Rosebery and Chamberlain, as well as some colonials and lesser politicians like Grey, then Liberal M.P. for South Northumberland.

From the outset, the League saw itself as a propagandist movement rather than a policy-making body, and like Seeley it opted not to advocate particular schemes of consolidation. This conveniently meant that it could talk in general terms about the merits of such a proposal, without embroiling itself in the controversy of detail. Forster suggested that the word 'federalism' was itself inappropriate, since no federal system like that in the United States was intended for the Empire, while Rosebery warned the League not to be too hasty in its proposals, since most ordinary British and colonial people were still largely indifferent to the Empire except where patriotism or self-interest were stirred up - perhaps by a colonial war. It should be the first task of the League, as Seeley had advocated, to teach these people of the benefits that Imperial Federation might bring.

If Imperial Federation were ultimately to succeed, the initiative would have to be taken equally by Britain and the Dominions. Activity just by Britain might appear to the colonials to be little more than an attempt towards British centralisation, and to threaten the local autonomy which they were establishing for themselves. It could not just be a British idea. Branches of the League were set up in the Dominions themselves, therefore, and in Canada they achieved a reasonable momentum under George Parkin, a Canadian enthusiast who had been at Oxford with Milner.

The League soon attracted a large membership throughout the Empire, aided by its journal, Imperial Federation. Yet as a movement it was weaker than it appeared. Arguing that the Empire was a jolly good thing was easy, but the ideas of its membership about how to maintain and strengthen imperial unity were so diverse that the League could remain united only while it avoided suggesting anything specific.

The most extreme type of Imperial Federation proposed was a complete federal system of government, such as had been established in the United States in 1787, and copied in Canada (1867) and Germany (1871). Most members of the League considered this proposal to be inappropriate for the British Empire, which was avowedly leading its senior colonies - in Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand - to local autonomy. Moreover, the notion of other units in the Empire having equal status to Britain in deciding imperial affairs in the central body was too radical for most British politicians, who might tolerate the idea of colonials having some say in imperial economic policy, perhaps, but certainly not an equal power in determining fundamental issues of foreign policy. Herein lay a key contradiction about Imperial Federation: the British called for closer co-operation between the colonies, and yet they still expected it to be the British

who had the final say. They urged the Dominions to join the team, but expected the captaincy to remain undisputed.

The major achievement of the Imperial Federation League came in 1886, when it persuaded Lord Salisbury to host a colonial conference in the following year, to discuss ways of bringing the Colonies together.(21) A large reason for the government agreeing was doubtless that, of the M.P.s. active in the League, the vast majority were Conservative or Unionist.(22) Rosebery, who had succeeded Forster as chairman upon the latter's death in 1885, suggested that such conferences were the best way to advance their cause, and hoped that the idea might be repeated.(23)

In 1887 this first Colonial Conference was held, conveniently at the same time as the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations were being held and senior colonial representatives were in London. Similar conferences were later held in 1897, 1902, 1907 and 1911. The meeting was addressed by Salisbury, who suggested that any scheme of Imperial Federation was 'a matter for the future rather than for the present'.(24) The conference achieved little. It should not be seen as the start of the succession of periodic colonial conferences, as it was never intended that it be repeated. Nevertheless, it did provide a unique experiment in imperial co-operation.(25)

In 1891, under pressure from the government as well as its membership, the League sought to produce a definite plan for promoting imperial consolidation. Its response was a proposal for a central council in London, with one representative from each self-governing colony, which would help advise the Cabinet on imperial policy. It omitted to define the council's powers, but did suggest that it should involve itself in common defence policy and an imperial tariff system. Such a proposal was hardly revolutionary, and was certainly not designed to launch a federal system of imperial government, but it was nevertheless sufficient to upset the League's membership, some of

which considered it too radical, others that it was woefully inadequate. The idea was formally presented to the government in 1893, but by then the Liberals had resumed power - and Gladstone, who had long dismissed as spurious the claim that the only alternative to disintegration of the Empire was consolidation, was far too involved in the question of Irish Home Rule to consider the scheme, despite the fact that Rosebery, his Foreign Secretary, had been Chairman of the League until 1892.

The Imperial Federation League collapsed in turmoil, and dissolved itself in November 1893, basically for three reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, the membership split on the question of defining what federation should mean - whether there should be centripetal federal union, whereby most power was retained in the centre (as Seeley recommended), or alternatively devolution of power to the federated states (as Rosebery recommended). This was a key point, about which federationists were to disagree for the next thirty years. To a considerable extent it also explained why the League membership, and indeed all imperialists, divided over a second issue - the desirability and nature of Home Rule for Ireland.(26) Whereas Seeley, for example, was strongly opposed to any Home Rule, a substantial minority of League members welcomed it. Rhodes too was a keen supporter and Rosebery was a reluctant supporter, while Chamberlain, Milner and Grey were hostile. The third, and equally contentious point, that later split the Unionist party, was whether a system of imperial trade preference should be introduced, even at the expense of the hallowed doctrine of Free Trade.(27)

So far in this chapter, much mention has been made of the enthusiasm of imperialists for Imperial Federation, without acknowledging the fact that they were not the only group with opinions about the Empire. Most people, if asked, were probably perfectly satisfied with the existing, laissez-faire, approach to imperial

affairs, of peaceful co-operation between Britain and its self-governing colonies. There were also several very vocal opponents who, although not demanding the immediate dismemberment of the Empire, were certainly opposed to Imperial Federation.

A leading critic was Goldwin Smith.(28) In reviewing Seeley's Expansion in 1884, he pointed out that it was not in the interests of the self-governing colonies to join into closer association with Britain, lest they found themselves drawn into European wars with which they had no concern. Smith also showed that federationists treated all the self-governing colonies as if they were alike, whereas in fact they all had different internal problems and different perspectives: a federal system in Canada had failed to reconcile the conflict between the English and French settlers, for example, and there was no reason to suppose that the latter would any more welcome a grand scheme of federation throughout the Empire.(29)

In 1863 Smith had urged in his book, The Empire, that the existing colonial system entailed little strategic or material advantage for Britain, and that any benefits were easily outweighed by the costs and risk of rivalry with other powers. He declared himself in favour of 'colonial emancipation', and urged instead an informal partnership - a union of spirit, not formal consolidation.(30) Smith's scepticism was shared in part even by James Froude, a prominent imperialist, who recognised that no matter how admirable a scheme of Imperial Federation might be, most colonists did not want to be formally bound to Britain, as they considered the existing semi-formal links to be more than adequate.

The vast majority of British people were never particularly interested in the Empire, and fewer still in Imperial Federation. Imperialism was fundamentally an upper and middle class phenomenon, and even then it only mattered because it was submerged in a greater form of patriotism. Public opinion was most excitable about the

Empire when an atrocity occurred which happened to be a colonial escapade - such as General Gordon's death in Khartoum in 1885. In particular, public opinion was far less imperialistic than the press, which revelled in discussing the perceived threats facing Britain and its overseas possessions. Nevertheless, imperialists were largely unaware of what most people thought.

One such imperialist was Joseph Chamberlain, who was determined that the cause of Imperial Federation should not be abandoned just because the League had collapsed. Initially, in the early 1890s, the prospects were not encouraging. The domestic depression had receded, there were no colonial wars in progress anywhere, and so general confidence was high. Imperialists, moreover, were concentrating not on the disintegration but rather on the expansion of the Empire in Africa - in which people like Grey were involved through the British South Africa Company and the Imperial British East Africa Company. Not until it became obvious in the latter part of the decade that Africa would not render forth an immediate abundance of raw materials or easily accessible markets did the gloom return, exacerbated by the failure of the Jameson Raid in 1895, the trouble in the Sudan, and then the confrontation with France at Fashoda in 1899. Once more Imperial Federation was revived as the remedy for all ills.

The difficulties facing Britain inspired in Chamberlain an awareness of the growing magnitude and complexity of imperial responsibilities, as well as of the development and great potential of the established colonies. He conceived two principal aims: to bring the self-governing colonies closer together with Britain; and to develop the resources of the Empire. He sought to realise these aims by means of Imperial Federation and tariff reform. Chamberlain - who could have taken any senior position in the Cabinet in 1895 but instead chose the hitherto lowly Colonial Office - now made Imperial Federation his main target in political life.

His first opportunity came at the 1897 Colonial Conference, which he chaired, and which was designed to coincide with the visit of colonial premiers for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Chamberlain envisaged one supreme, imperial parliament, in which the self-governing colonies would share equal responsibility with Britain for imperial foreign policy and defence. As a step towards this he proposed an imperial council with limited executive powers, designed to co-ordinate laws and communications and to move towards reciprocal tariffs. Once a body could be created to regulate trade, it would consider the protection of trade. Once it assumed responsibility for defence, moreover, it 'would be little, if at all, distinguished from a real federation of the Empire'.(31)

Chamberlain's proposals for an imperial council failed to attract support from any colonial premier except Seddon of New Zealand, and even he would not accept the idea of a colonial representative in England being delegated the right to make decisions on behalf of his own government.(32) The rest were not prepared to accept a body in which their number of delegates was chosen in accordance with the size of their population, since Britain would automatically be able to outvote them all. Moreover, Laurier of Canada declared himself perfectly happy with the imperial relationship as it stood.(33) Chamberlain was thus thwarted for the moment, but was to revive his plans at the next conference five years later. He refused to accept that Imperial Federation was impossible; yet he was to be equally disappointed by the result in 1902. It is also worth noting that Chamberlain's proposals probably met with little support even among his own Cabinet colleagues, who doubtless felt that the schemes were too ambitious.

Chamberlain was not the only senior politician to be committed to Imperial Federation, however. In the Liberal party Rosebery had been a leading federationist since the time of his visit to Australia

in 1883-4, which convinced him of the desirability of much closer links within the Empire. In a speech in Adelaide he argued that, just because Australia was a country in its own right, this did not make inevitable its separation from the Empire. 'There is no need for any nation, however great, leaving the Empire, because the Empire is a Commonwealth of Nations', he proclaimed.(34) However, despite serving as chairman of the Imperial Federation League for six years, and hailing its mission as 'the dominant passion of [his] life',(35) unlike Chamberlain he never troubled himself to offer any detailed suggestions as to what this concept might entail. Nor did he encourage Imperial Federation during his brief premiership in 1894-5.

While the Unionist party under Salisbury and then Balfour was always strongly supportive of imperialism, if not actually Imperial Federation, the Liberals under Gladstone and Campbell-Bannerman were somewhat less ardent enthusiasts. Those who were keen formed themselves into a group called the Liberal Imperialists, headed nominally by Rosebery, but centring mainly around Asquith, Haldane and Edward Grey (a cousin of the 4th Earl). They were particularly active from about 1895 onwards, and took a keen interest in the possibilities of closer co-operation in military matters especially after the Boer War. All this was in striking contrast to Campbell-Bannerman himself, who openly opposed the Boer War.(36)

Despite their association with Rosebery, none of these young, up-and-coming Liberals aspired to any specific form of Imperial Federation. As the eruption in the Unionist party was to show in 1903, making an issue of radical reform was not usually the best way for any ambitious politician to advance his career, especially when the electorate was indifferent or even hostile to the idea. Significantly, none of the Liberal Imperialists except Rosebery supported Chamberlain's call for an imperial preference in trade, and in fact it was Asquith who emerged as its most effective critic. Thus

even the Liberal Imperialists had doubts about some notions of Empire, and put free trade before the cause of imperialism.

In this period after 1900, imperialists of both parties were being swayed by a different, but equally ominous, symbol of national decline: the condition of the British people. The appalling physical state of many of those who had volunteered to fight in the Boer War sent shockwaves throughout the country. Liberal Imperialists, Fabian Socialists, and even collectivist Unionists embraced a new notion, 'National Efficiency', which Rosebery defined as 'the condition of national fitness equal to the demands of our Empire - administrative, parliamentary, commercial, educational, physical, moral, naval, and military fitness'.(37)

In its crudest form, its leading advocates urged compulsory military training, temperance, and even that all school children throughout the Empire should salute the Union flag each morning.(38) Baden-Powell's scouting movement, established in 1908, was another consequence of this, as was the mass of social welfare legislation introduced by the Liberal government after 1905.(39) On a different level, Liberal Imperialists called for the establishment of more Standing Committees in Parliament, to alleviate what was seen as the inadequacy of the British system of government to cope with the burden of running a great Empire.(40) In every aspect of life, it seemed, great effort needed to be made to improve standards if Britain were to retain its status as a great power.

While the link between domestic social conditions and Imperial Federation was not immediately apparent even to most imperialists, those who were already federationists were adamant that the empire could provide a vital cure. One solution was to encourage the mass migration of people from the overcrowded cities to the empty plains of Canada, Australia and Southern Africa, which would have the beneficial

effect of strengthening still further the feeling of unity within the Empire.

Against this, Goldwin Smith pointed out that the colonies could not absorb unlimited numbers of emigrants, and were far from keen to receive the dregs of British society. Even Australia was no longer prepared to be a human rubbish dump. Moreover, as he observed, most emigrating Britons opted not for the Empire but the United States - which would do nothing for Imperial Federation.(41) Yet the calls for migration continued, especially while newly-established colonies such as Rhodesia cried out for British settlers to help realise their potential. Grey too was convinced that emigration from Britain to the colonies could both alleviate Britain's domestic decline and also boost Imperial Federation. Indeed, as President of the Royal Colonial Institute he was to become one of the leading exponents of emigration schemes.(42)

A further reason why Imperial Federation was favoured was that many saw the Empire as a good thing in its own right, and deserving of preservation. Such justifications are interesting in themselves, since they provide a fascinating insight into the minds of some of the key advocates of Imperial Federation, and not least Earl Grey.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, imperialism was justified because it enabled the British to bring to ignorant people across the world the benefits of the Christian gospel, peace and prosperity, stable government, and what the British chose to define as civilisation. In India in the first part of the century it became a widely recognised goal to europeanise the subcontinent in every way possible, a mission hailed by William Wilberforce as the 'greatest of all causes'.(43) The British had a supreme and unabashed confidence in the virtue and righteousness of their 'civilising mission' in the world. Grey's uncle, the 3rd Earl, who was Colonial Secretary from 1846 to 1852, declared that no one could doubt that, if the West

Indies were left to themselves, 'civilisation would be thrown back for centuries'.(44) This sense of the moral worth of the British Empire was rarely questioned in the nineteenth century.

While this does much to explain justifications for imperialism, the connection with Imperial Federation is not so obvious. A few imperialists, however, and especially Rhodes and Grey, held a profound belief that the Anglo-Saxon race, as the most successful and therefore apparently superior race in the world at that time, had a positive duty to spread its values of civilisation throughout the world - to all nations, and not just its own colonies. Rhodes said of the British:

We happen to be the best people in the world, with the highest ideals of decency and justice and liberty and peace, and the more of the world we inhabit, the better for humanity.(45)

While many imperialists - such as Chamberlain - liked to point out that the British were better at governing than other people, few went so far as Rhodes did in claiming that they were superior in every respect.(46) Indeed, some like Seeley disparaged all talk of an Anglo-Saxon 'race' or destiny, and even rejected the moral worth of Empire.(47) For those like Rhodes, Grey and Milner, who did believe in the innate superiority of the British, this was considered to be a deeply cultural, but not a biological trait. So the subject of eugenics is not at issue here. It was simply that tradition made the British the best race in the world. As Grey later declared:

England should be proud to lead the world's march of progress. At the centre of a vast Empire it is her duty to lead the van of civilisation. She must always be ahead of other nations....To her, more than any other country, it seems to me that the fortunes of God are committed.(48)

From this firmly-held viewpoint, it is easy to understand why Grey saw it as essential that the Anglo-Saxon race should maintain a sense of collective unity, in order to withstand corruption and defeat

by 'lesser' races such as the Southern Europeans - whose own interpretation of civilised values appeared visibly lower in the ways they treated African natives in their colonies.

For Grey, as for Rhodes, Imperial Federation was not the ultimate goal, but rather a stepping-stone to the greater objective of a vast Anglo-Saxon consolidation, embracing both the British Empire and the United States. They both went so far as to urge that these two great power blocs should come back into some form of association. Such a vast political, military and economic union, combined with what they believed to be the self-evident cultural and moral superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, would make for the greatest moral and physical force for good that the world had known since the time of the Roman Empire. This would render obsolete forever the threats of Japanese, Russian or German aggrandisement, or the problems of barbarism in Africa and Asia. A higher notion of civilisation, a Heaven on Earth, thus seemed possible, and Imperial Federation was a vital step towards this.

Other imperialists, like Chamberlain, often lauded the pre-eminence of the Anglo-Saxon race, but none - not even Milner, one of the foremost 'race patriots' - took it to quite such extremes.(49) It is clear that Grey was inspired in this respect entirely by Rhodes, who in 1877 had envisaged:

the ultimate recovery of the United States of America as an integral part of the British Empire; the consolidation of the whole Empire...and the foundation of so great a power as to hereafter render wars impossible and promote the best interests of humanity.(50)

As Grey himself claimed, since English-Speaking people everywhere shared a common ancestry and a common culture, and hence were practically one people, some sort of organic union between them all was not only highly desirable but perfectly logical.(51)

With this object in mind, Rhodes devoted the bulk of his legacy towards the establishment of a scholarship fund, available to scholars from both the Empire and the United States, as well as Germany (whom, as Teutons, he considered sufficiently culturally similar to Anglo-Saxons to be acceptable). The original trustees, nominated in 1899, included Rosebery and Grey: and it was Grey, more than anyone else, who understood the intensity of Rhodes's desire to strengthen links with the United States.(52) Upon his mentor's death in 1902 Grey expressed the hope that United States representatives might be present at the funeral in Rhodesia, and that whilst there they and their counterparts from the British Empire might resolve 'to undo the folly of George III, and by so doing pave the way towards the federation of mankind'.(53) The Rhodes scholarships would, he believed, prove an effective stepping-stone towards the eventual attainment of that consolidation which both Rhodes and Grey saw as the chief hope for the future of mankind.

It was Grey who stood alongside Rhodes when he first visited the Matopos Hills near Bulawayo, where the latter was later buried;(54) and it was Grey who unveiled the Rhodes memorial in Capetown in 1912, proclaiming:

Those who were admitted to his hopes are aware that his soaring spirit looked forward with feelings of glowing enthusiasm to the time when people of the United Kingdom and of the self-governing dominions should act together as joint trustees with the people of the United States, for the protection and expansion of the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic civilisation, in which is involved the hope of future peace, and the realisation of the highest attainable ideals.(55)

Grey spoke of Anglo-Saxon consolidation as if it were divinely-inspired. Imperialism was for him a religion, to which he devoted much of his life. It must be stressed that no senior figure after Rhodes's death held quite such strong views as Grey; but that is

no reason to dismiss them as folly. Grey was, after all, shortly to become the Governor-General of the most senior colony in the 'White Empire', bordering the United States, and therefore his own personal motives were inevitably to be of crucial importance in the way he chose to define his role as proconsul there. It was this highly moral and visionary zeal, moreover, which explains why Grey was surely more dedicated to, and certainly more passionate about, the cause of Imperial Federation, than any except Cecil Rhodes. ✓

CHAPTER TWO
INFLUENCES ON EARL GREY

Background

'To understand imperialism, it is necessary to understand the imperialists', wrote Kirk-Greene.(1) Why did men like Grey devote so much energy to the service of the Empire? The standard reasons offered are that it became a fashionable thing to do among members of the same social circle; or that they believed in the cause of Britain's 'civilising mission'; or that they simply wished to make a financial profit either for Britain or themselves, or both. Perhaps imperialists were motivated by a variety of these reasons - the 'philanthropy plus five per cent' maxim attributed to Rhodes being an example.

This chapter assesses why Grey became interested in the Empire. It considers the importance of his background and upbringing, his interests when a Member of Parliament, and his early involvement with the Imperial Federation League. It then proceeds to demonstrate how, once he fell under the influence of Rhodes, Grey became one of the most ardent champions of the imperial cause, truly 'a Paladin of Empire'.(2) It seeks also to provide a description of Grey's personality and to explain why he was so visionary in his appraisal of the Empire, since it is only by appreciating his idealistic, somewhat unworldly, character that one can properly understand what motivated Grey in his love of the British Empire and the cause of Imperial Federation. He was speaking from his heart when he declared in 1880:

England could well afford to use her powerful interest abroad on behalf of freedom, of justice, and of right - ambitious not to

conquer nations or extend her territory, but ambitious only to spread civilisation, and to put down barbarism in every quarter of the globe.(3)

Some thirty years later, Grey's opinion was stronger still, when he stated that 'the belief that the British Empire stands for the highest attainable ideals makes the maintenance of the British Empire a religion'.(4)

For anyone interested in public affairs, concern about the future of the Empire loomed increasingly large in the political milieu of the 1870s and 1880s. The Grey family was typical in this respect. Albert Grey inherited a family tradition of service to the Empire and also grew up in both social and intellectual circles where concern for the Empire was strong. As a young man, he learned of his family's distinguished service, and became mindful of those duties which lay before him too. The 1st Earl Grey had served in the Army during the American War of Independence, and achieved great, if short-lived, success as Commander-in-Chief in the West Indies in 1794. His grandfather, the 2nd Earl, had been Prime Minister of the Whig ministry from 1830 to 1834, securing the passage of the Reform Act of 1832. His father, General Charles Grey, was a Liberal M.P. for six years, 1831-7, and later became private secretary to the Prince Consort (1849 to 1861) and then Queen Victoria (1861 to 1870).

A major influence on Grey as a young man was his uncle, the 3rd Earl (1802-94), who had been Colonial Secretary from 1846 to 1852, and who became his guardian upon General Grey's death in 1870. In earlier years, the 3rd Earl had spoken of Britain having a moral duty to maintain and develop the Empire as a permanent entity: 'By the acquisition of its Colonial dominions, the nation has incurred a responsibility of the highest kind, which it is not at liberty to throw off', he wrote.(5) As Colonial Secretary, he promoted the growth of responsible government in Canada, although not elsewhere -

since he considered none of the other colonies to be sufficiently mature. This policy reflected his desire to lessen the responsibilities and expenses of the mother country, not a disdain for imperial loyalty; on the contrary, he regarded the possible severance of colonial ties as a 'grievous calamity, lowering by many steps the rank of this country among the nations of the world'.(6) Clearly the 3rd Earl did not regard colonial self-government as amounting to autonomy from Britain.

Even when he retired from office in 1852, the 3rd Earl's keen interest in the future of imperial relations persisted, despite the fact that he never returned to active politics for his remaining forty-two years, nor maintained any real influence in political circles. He remained a keen publicist of closer imperial union, and wrote several pamphlets, as well as a ceaseless flow of letters to The Times, in an attempt to win over public opinion. His mature reflections on the Empire were expressed in an article written in 1879 for the Nineteenth Century, entitled 'How shall we retain the Colonies?' In this he argued that, as the colonies progressed towards self-government, the need was arising for some paramount authority in London, vested with sufficient powers to ensure that in matters of common interest each colony would co-operate with one another, especially with regard to defence and commercial policy. The colonies must recognise that alongside the privilege of responsible self-government lay the duty of contributing to their own protection: but if they were to pay, they deserved some say in policy-making.

In suggesting what shape any such paramount authority might take, the 3rd Earl called for a Committee of the Privy Council, composed of the senior London representatives of each self-governing colony alongside various chosen politicians, which would have the right to discuss all colonial issues and help advise the Colonial

Office. Although this committee would have no executive power - and ultimate responsibility would still rest with the British Cabinet - it would be able to play a vital role in furthering the influence of the colonies in imperial policy, as well as helping to explain these policies to all colonials across the seas.(7)

Even as a young man, Albert Grey shared his uncle's interest in the Empire. It is known that, when an undergraduate at Cambridge from 1870 to 1873, he was a member of the Trinity College group which 'received from time to time a general epistle from Chinese Gordon, and each member of which pledged himself to take a lifelong interest in the moral and political welfare' of the Empire.(8) This must have done much to broaden his horizons, as doubtless did his trip to India in 1875.

Albert Grey shared many of the interests of the 3rd Earl, besides the British Empire, such as an enthusiasm for temperance and proportional representation. As a young man, he also devoted considerable attention to reform of the Churches of England and Wales, and to the Co-operative movement - which strove for the promotion of mutual assistance in the workplace. These issues all reflect a common theme in his personality - a desire to overcome trivial and counter-productive divisions, and to promote unity and cohesion, whether in domestic politics, the Empire, the Church or in industrial relations. Thus Grey's interest in Imperial Federation was symptomatic of an overall desire to promote co-operation in all human affairs, and cannot properly be understood apart from his other interests at this time. ✓

In this sense Grey was clearly idealistic. He was seeking to create Heaven on Earth, promoting righteousness and justice in every aspect of human life. This often led him to adopt unpopular causes, or to approach conventional issues from a particularly unconventional standpoint. Grey's approach to domestic politics is illustrative of

this, in that he was never able to accept the constraints of party political dogma. In this respect he inherited a strong family characteristic. His family were Whigs by tradition: but his uncle had abandoned politics at the age of fifty partly because he could no longer tolerate being part of a political faction, and General Charles Grey had soon left politics for service in the Royal Household. Grey himself remained a Liberal M.P. for just six years, until 1886, and thereafter never again found himself able to affiliate with either main political party (although he did label himself a Liberal Unionist).

Grey was not just a believer in , but a passionate advocate of, co-operation in human affairs. Perhaps because he inherited something of the personality of his mother, who has been described as evangelical,(9) Grey applied to all his endeavours a quasi-religious devotion, sometimes bordering on fanaticism, even if to most men the ideas he supported seemed impracticable. Grey considered his gospel of human co-operation to be so important, in fact, that he commissioned Harold Begbie to record his views on his deathbed, so that his testament might be preserved for posterity and thus extend beyond the grave. This does much to explain why some of his attitudes may appear nowadays to be simplistic or even naive, and why he was so open to manipulation by someone like Cecil Rhodes - who preached much the same sort of visionary gospel as Grey, but perhaps for less noble reasons. In all matters Grey's idealism was firmly based on a definite Christian morality, and he possessed a 'moral earnestness' beneath his warm and charming exterior.(10)

Grey's interest in the Co-operative movement brought him into contact with Arnold Toynbee, a social radical, who introduced him to the writings of the Italian nationalist, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-72) - and especially his book the Duties of Man, which Toynbee described as 'the most simple and passionate statement published in this century of

man's duties to God and his fellows'.(11) At first glance this seems surprising. Mazzini devoted his life to challenging the established authority of monarchy and aristocracy in the Italian States and elsewhere: he was a keen supporter of nationalism (but a nationalism which transcended national limits), and no eulogiser of imperialism. Yet Grey became attached to Mazzini's strong advocacy of peace and co-operation in the workplace, arguing as he did that, until employers and labourers worked as associates rather than enemies, progress was an impossible goal.

Interest in Mazzini was common in the 1850s and 1860s, especially among British evangelical protestants and liberal academics (such as Benjamin Jowett, A.V. Dicey and T.H. Green), as well as politicians such as James Bryce and John Morley. Mazzini's advocacy of loyalty to 'the nation' was based on the belief that the nation could give a moral basis for an ideology of co-operation rather than narrow self-interest. This morality appealed strongly to evangelicals at this time, who saw rich and poor as equal before God, all part of a common humanity.(12) It fitted in well with Grey's own thinking, and his moralistic, evangelical view of mankind. One particular passage in Mazzini's Duties of Man had a great significance for Grey throughout his life, and which he called 'The Object of Life':

We must convince men that...to struggle against injustice and error, wherever they exist, in the name and for the benefit of their brothers, is not only a right but a duty; a duty which may not be neglected without sin, the duty of their whole life.(13)

Initially, Mazzini's philosophy was applied by Grey only to his domestic concerns, specifically in the task of improving the conditions of the working classes. Throughout his life he remained a vocal supporter of the Co-operative movement, and became involved in the Garden City movement for the same reason, digging the first sod in Letchworth in 1903. Once he became actively involved in the Empire,

however, he strove to apply those same Mazzinian principles to the whole cosmos of his imperial thinking, and there was an obvious parallel between Mazzini's conception of nationalism and Grey's views about all English-speaking people throughout the world being one race - effectively one nation, 'Greater Britain'. Likewise, he came to see the British Empire as a panacea for many of Britain's social domestic ills, a splendid example of how all his interests were interdependent. In conversation with Begbie, Grey explained the connection:

I have had two great passions in my life, the Empire and the welfare of the working classes. The Empire has been my religion. I believe that it contains the world's greatest promise of peace. I think it can settle all our domestic problems. Rescue this vast Empire from being at the disposal of the party system, give our working classes an intelligent conception of what it means, and you will transform the working conditions here at home.(14)

Of course this interest in the working classes was mirrored by the whole 'National Efficiency' movement in the period after the Boer War. Moreover, similarly colourful, moralistic phraseology was used by many imperialists, not least Chamberlain and Rhodes, men whose real interest in Empire has been attributed by critics such as Hobson and Hobsbawm to personal avarice or interest in Britain's economic welfare. In the case of Grey, however, the morality which underlaid his imperialism was not mere rhetoric. He was aware of the financial benefits available but, as will be argued later, this was not an overriding factor. He shared the same belief as many of his contemporaries, that the British had a clear duty to spread the gospel of civilisation. This was vaguely in line with Mazzini's espousal of nationalism - as not a geographical but an historical phenomenon. As Mazzini wrote:

Nationality is the share that God has assigned to the given people in the progress of humanity. It is the mission which each people must fulfil, the task it must do, on earth, that the divine idea

may attain its full expression; it is the work which gives a people a right to citizenship in the world.(15)

Grey interpreted this view to understand and justify the activities of his fellow countrymen across the world; and it seemed logical that the continuation of the British Empire should be the ideal means to achieve this dream of Heaven on Earth.

Grey as a Member of Parliament

When Grey was Liberal M.P. for South Northumberland from 1880 to 1885, and then for the Tyneside Division until 1886, his imperialism was still just one of many interests, the varying nature of which aroused some surprise among his contemporaries. Hugh Egerton wrote of him later:

No one was more catholic in his interests. Agriculturalist, traveller, and sportsman, he was also a social reformer and a champion of unpopular causes; so that there seemed some risk lest his energies, diverted into such varied channels, might run to waste.(16)

Grey's considerable enthusiasm was matched by his political ambition at this time, which started well when Gladstone asked him to move the Address in the House of Commons in May 1880. The Prime Minister remarked that it would be appropriate that this be done by 'a grandson of Lord Grey who has given such promise both of walking in his steps and of sustaining the fame of his family'.(17)

Almost from the outset, however, Grey found himself uncomfortable in politics, disliking as he did the restraints of party discipline. He was always an individualist, who did not fit comfortably into groups or associations much more easily than his uncle, and who almost invariably put principle before expediency. Once Grey began taking an independent line in the 1880s, references to the family reputation of political unorthodoxy were not infrequently

made. Edward Hamilton, Gladstone's private secretary, recorded in his diary:

It is deplorable that Albert Grey should so constantly be a defaulter. He has, I fear, got all the Grey 'crankiness' in him. Mr. G. was regretting that a young fellow like Albert Grey should be throwing away his political career in the way he does. It is difficult to have patience with a fellow who does not ride off on small issues and trifling hobbies but is always electing crucial questions for the occasion on which to desert his party.(18)

Grey's main desire was to stem the tide of Radicalism in the Liberal party, and as early as 1881 he hoped that the Whig Committee might split away to form a new party, as a counterbalance.(19) In much the same vein, the 3rd Earl had publicly supported the Conservative, not the Radical, candidate for North Northumberland in the 1880 election. Likewise, in October 1885 Grey expressed his hope that Gladstone would soon retire in favour of Goschen, a moderate who would be able to attract Conservative support and thus promote inter-party harmony.(20)

Grey was both anti-party and anti-Radical, both at this time and for the remainder of his life. The first trait was not uncommon - both Rhodes and Milner felt much the same. In part it stemmed from a contempt of adversarial politics, where national interests were subordinated to party politics, which were themselves determined increasingly by the whims of an ill-educated and ill-informed electorate. Those who held this view considered that such a system of government was totally unworthy to run a great Empire. In the 1880s, and again when Governor-General of Canada, Grey deplored the fact that governments, dependent on the support of the Irish Nationalists for a Commons majority, seemed quite ready to ignore the interests of the Empire, since the Irish lobby in his view displayed only apathy towards any non-Irish issues.

Grey's patience with the political system snapped when Gladstone introduced his Irish Home Rule Bill in April 1886. He was one of the first to condemn the measure, arguing that it was the result of the Radicals pressurising Gladstone, and that the Irish were not responsible enough to rule themselves. Equally, he equated Home Rule with 'dismemberment of the Empire'.(21) There could be no chance of imperial consolidation if it were seen that Britain could not control just four million people within thirty miles of its coast, even with one million loyalists there. In addition, Home Rule would probably soon be followed by a unilateral declaration of independence, and the Irish would then be free to express freely their longstanding hostility towards the English people.

In his election address in 1880, and again in 1885, Grey had declared that he would fiercely oppose any Home Rule measure. He accepted that some reforms were necessary - such as the relief of agricultural distress - but believed that there was an insufficient number of Irish landowners who were competent enough to manage their own political or economic affairs.(22) Now he spoke out strongly against Home Rule, and in the House of Commons debate on the issue exhorted Hartington and Chamberlain to do their utmost to protect the Union against this radical measure.(23)

Grey's position in the Liberal party became untenable when Hartington and Chamberlain were defeated in the battle for control of the Liberal party. He busied himself with the work of the newly-formed Liberal Unionist Committee, of which he, Craig Sellar and Milner were the most active members, under the patronage of Goschen.(24) At the ensuing election he stood as a Liberal Unionist, but was defeated in the heavily Gladstonian Tyneside constituency. Thus the 'doctrinaire politician with rigid principles',(25) from a family which had long been the embodiment of Whiggery, finally abandoned the Liberal Party. He now joined his uncle, who also had

long been opposed to Home Rule of any type, in the political wilderness of Northumberland: for he remained always a Whig, and could never reconcile himself to the Conservatives' lack of compassion on social issues (as he perceived it).

Reaction among other Liberals who were also imperially-minded was similar, with forty of his fellow M.P.s. adopting the Liberal Unionist cause - among them Goschen and Chamberlain (the latter was an acquaintance but not yet a close friend). Men like Seeley and Milner also left the party in protest.(26) Of all the main Liberal imperialists, only Rosebery remained within the Liberal fold, arguing as he did that he preferred Home Rule to coercion or separation.(27) However, Rosebery was later to oppose the third Home Rule Bill, in 1911, once he too concluded that such a scheme damaged any hope of Imperial Federation.

It is fair to say that Grey's opposition to Home Rule was stimulated as much by domestic political considerations as by concern for the Empire. Yet it is important to understand that once Imperial Federation became his overriding interest, his opposition to Home Rule only hardened, not because he was totally opposed to change of any type - his promotion in later years of 'Home Rule All Round' (for England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland) was proof of his flexibility - but because he became ever more convinced that Imperial Federation and Irish Home Rule were totally incompatible. He considered that Irish Home Rule would invariably lead to separation and independence. Although by temperament a good-natured man, he expressed his views strongly in a letter to Chamberlain in June 1898:

If Gladstone had been in the prime of his [life] when he died, and in the full gallop of his Home Rule policy I would rather have been shot than honour by my presence the side of his grave.(28)

In 1884 Grey became a founder member of the Imperial Federation League, an indication of his growing interest in the Empire even

before he fell under the influence of Rhodes. In July of the following year he deputised for Rosebery at the inaugural meeting of a new branch of the League in Liverpool. Nevertheless, at this time imperialism was not his paramount concern, and he continued to concentrate more on domestic issues. He was not elected to the League's committee in December 1884, and he made little mention of imperial matters in his election address of the following year.(29) It can be said that the Empire became his passion only in 1889, once he was no longer in Parliament and had accepted Rhodes's invitation to become a director of the newly-formed British South Africa Company. Grey's involvement with the Imperial Federation League was thus but a stage in the development of his imperial fervour.

Grey and the British South Africa Company

In 1889 most European countries were steadily expanding their spheres of interest in Southern Africa. Spurred on by the 3rd Earl, who as a strong humanitarian had long expressed concern about the well-being of the native population there, Grey now took an interest in the region, and joined with other humanitarians and Empire-minded politicians (such as the Rev. John Mackenzie, H.O. Arnold-Forster and Chamberlain) to form the South African Committee. This was a pressure group, aiming to persuade Salisbury's government to take 'such action as may be necessary for the preservation of British interests in South Africa, and the protection of South African native populations'.(30) In other words, they sought to achieve two implicitly-linked aims⁴ to promote British strategic and economic interests in the region over those of its European competitors (especially Germany and Portugal), while simultaneously ensuring that the natives were treated humanely. The 3rd Earl was emphatic that both these aims were compatible, but that the British government had wantonly failed to ensure that the region would come within the British domain.

It should be noted that Grey appears not to have shared his uncle's deep humanitarian interest in the welfare of the African natives in quite the same way. What mattered far more to Grey was the prospect of establishing Southern Africa as a land fit for British settlers as soon as possible, and thus creating another 'white' colony. He did not ignore the welfare of the natives, because he argued that British settlement in the region would have the advantage of introducing 'civilisation' to the natives; but it would be true to suggest that whenever he spoke about the Empire as an instrument of progress he had his own countrymen in mind as the principal beneficiaries, not the Africans. Whereas the 3rd Earl's humanitarianism led him to urge direct help for the natives, the 4th Earl's methods were more indirect.

One can cite as evidence certain remarks made by Grey in 1899, that the natives in Rhodesia be 'induced to seek spontaneously employment at the mines', and that a hut tax of one pound per native should be levied as an incentive to work - since they could afford to pay this tax only if they worked in the mines, which was the only moderately adequate source of employment available.(31) Grey thus aimed both to keep the mines worked and to introduce the natives to what he defined as 'civilisation'. Grey's reasoning was that the natives currently believed paradise meant two wives and a mud hut, and so if they were taught by the British that they ought to be craving for a higher standard of living they would realise they could obtain the necessary income only if they sought industrial employment. Thus the Empire would benefit directly, and the natives indirectly.

Radical press opinion in England was not slow to liken this to a call for industrial slavery in Southern Africa. The Co-operative News called attention to the strange discrepancy between Grey's compassion for the welfare of (white) workers in England and his apparent lack of concern for those in Africa (black).(32) Another

example of a possible hypocrisy in his logic might be how, in the House of Lords debate four years later, on the use of Chinese labour in the Transvaal, he urged full support for Milner. He argued that the best hope, for the Empire and natives alike, was if Southern Africa 'turned white'. In the 1904 debate Grey said that the only hope for the success of this dream lay in attracting so large an influx of British settlers as to make it impossible for South Africa again to be the scene of race conflict between Briton and Boer. White workers were not prepared, however, to settle in the region to do the poor (but necessary) jobs, such as mining. Yet since the economic well-being of British interests in the country depended on the mining industry, and since black natives were unwilling to do the work, the use of asiatic labour was the only alternative.(33)

All this may sound spurious, if not actually unhumanitarian. Certainly the 3rd Earl would not have adopted such an approach. For Grey himself, though, the reasoning was perfectly logical: imperial interests demanded that the mineral resources of the area be exploited, and he was convinced that the natives (or immigrant labour) could be deployed to satisfy this need in a manner which was morally acceptable and even personally advantageous for them. This may perhaps appear to be a naive view, but nevertheless it was genuinely held by Grey.

The South African Committee members were mindful that if Britain were to maintain its hold over the Cape of Good Hope, it must be able to protect its hinterland, whether from other Europeans or the Boers. More importantly, they believed, as did most people, that the potential economic wealth of Africa was considerable. This potential was appreciated certainly by Rhodes, then a mining magnate in the Cape, who hoped to form a company to develop the area of Matabeleland and Mashonaland (now Zimbabwe) to the north of the Transvaal.

Before he met Rhodes, Grey had shared a widely-held scepticism of his intentions, believing him to be nothing more than a creature of greed and ambition. He feared that if this company were formed, it would seek only to exploit the mineral resources and do nothing to establish the area as a British colony.(34) This antipathy towards Rhodes, with which the 3rd Earl and Mackenzie wholeheartedly concurred, did not last long. Just one week later, Grey was swayed during a talk with Sir William Mackinnon, a keen imperial expansionist in Tanganyika, who convinced him that Rhodes could do much for the imperial cause, and should not be hindered.(35) By the end of June, as Germany and Portugal continued to make plain their interest in expansion north of the Transvaal - and yet the British government still refused to become involved itself - Grey concluded that the only chance of Matabeleland becoming British was if it were handed over to a private company.

Because Rhodes and his South African colleagues did not inspire confidence among most potential British investors, Lord Salisbury had urged Rhodes to find British directors of 'social and political standing' before applying for the Charter.(36) Rhodes therefore sought to win over such people, and duly secured the services of the Dukes of Abercorn and Fife. In July 1889, acting on the advice of W.T. Stead, editor of the Pall Mall Gazette and a mutual friend, he also persuaded Grey to join the board of his new venture, the British South Africa Company, as one of its life directors.(37)

Reaction to Rhodes's intentions was varied. Salisbury, for example, by stating that the government would not involve itself in the region, happily left the area open to Rhodes. Chamberlain, however, disliked the idea of direct control being exercised by a company, and tried to persuade Grey not to accept a directorship. It is interesting that Rhodes considered it most important that he gain Grey's support: for Grey, as a critic hitherto of all that he was

supposed to stand for, was a potentially troublesome opponent to his quest for a royal charter for the company. Although barely forty, Grey's idealism and sincerity was already known and widely respected:

To have gained Grey...was one of the best bits of work Rhodes ever did for himself and his great ideas; for in after days, when doubts arose about Rhodes's motives, the staunchness to his cause of such a transparently honest man reassured many.(38)

Once he won Grey over to his side, Rhodes gained a lifelong admirer, supporter and friend. The extent and significance of this adulation was such that Rhodes's views on Southern Africa and the Empire became those also of Grey. It was not that Grey was a weak or spineless man, but rather that he was captivated by the appeal of Rhodes's imperial vision.

The British government was prepared to accept the claim for a royal charter for the British South Africa Company because Rhodes would be helping to secure their goals for the region without it *(the firm)* having to pay anything.(39) The government saw the charter as a means of strengthening British hegemony over the Boers once the various colonies in South Africa were federated: thus British Matabeleland and Mashonaland would counter-balance the economic and political rise of the Boer Transvaal. The charter was granted for a twenty-five year period, until such time as the colonists were ready to govern themselves and join a South African federation.(40)

Rhodes was much in accordance with this aim of federation: and so too was Grey, even before 1889. In later years he recalled receiving a letter from Sir Bartle Frere (Governor of the Cape, 1877-80), prophesying to him that if only the various states of South Africa had a fair chance given to them, a united South Africa might gradually develop into a rival with Australia and the United States as a home for educated Englishmen. By 1894 Rhodes was advocating a system of collective federation of all the states in Southern Africa,

and was receiving advice from Grey of treatises on similar federal schemes in Canada.(41) South African federation would help bring the dream of Imperial Federation one step closer to reality.

In an 1898 speech Grey proclaimed that the Company had created for England a state which would secure her supremacy in Southern Africa, and that all the colonies there could unite 'on the basis of Mr. Rhodes's position of equal rights for every white man'.(42) What he meant by this was that all whites, whether English, Dutch, French, German or Scandinavian, were welcome in a British Southern Africa so long as they accepted British rule. The resident Boers posed a problem, however: Grey, alongside other imperialists, recognised war was inevitable in order to vanquish the Boers once and for all, to end their opposition to the spread of British hegemony. Kruger and his colleagues could not be allowed to thwart the spread of progress and civilisation as represented by the British Empire. As Grey proclaimed:

An intuition thrills the Anglo-Saxon world that the federation of South Africa...which will follow the war, is only the precursor of the federation of Canada, Australia and South Africa with the British Empire; and, in fulness of time, of the federation of the whole English-speaking race.(43)

Grey's antipathy to the Boers was widely shared by many of his fellow countrymen - as reflected in the circumstances surrounding the Jameson Raid of 1895. Grey was deeply involved in the conspiracy: he was one of the few directors in the Company to be told in advance of the Raid, since he was used by Rhodes as an emissary between himself and Chamberlain. On 1 August 1895, it is believed that Grey told the Colonial Secretary of Rhodes's intention to assist an Uitlander uprising, but that the latter then 'declined to receive this information' officially.(44) The crucial question is whether Grey told him that Rhodes intended to initiate, or simply assist, an uprising, because if he had said the former then Chamberlain would

have been made aware of a plan which was blatantly illegal and yet which he failed to stop. Chamberlain later insisted that he had not been thus informed. Grey confirmed this, probably in an attempt to help Chamberlain escape censure. In an open letter, he declared:

I most certainly can confirm you [Chamberlain] when you say that you did not know and could not know of any plan or intention of Mr. Rhodes which could possibly lead to such an invasion of the Transvaal in time of peace as was perpetrated by Dr. Jameson for I did not know of any such plan or intention myself - our whole object was to place Jameson in a position which could enable him to assist a revolution at the right moment. That he should attempt to initiate a revolution by an invasion of the Transvaal in time of peace never so much as entered into my imagination".(45) [my emphasis]

Did Grey know of the real intentions of Rhodes and Jameson? Historians such as Cannadine suggest that he did, and Cannadine actually uses Grey's involvement in the Jameson affair as a classic example of corrupt behaviour by the aristocracy in the nineteenth century.(46) This is an unfair accusation, however, since Grey was universally acclaimed as a person too honest and upright to be able to lie over such a matter. Just so that he did not say too much, however, it suited both Rhodes and Chamberlain that he should be appointed the Administrator of the Company territory in succession to Jameson, in March 1896, which meant that he was not available for the parliamentary inquiry on the Raid. This was their decision, it must be stressed, not Grey's. He could have been summoned, like Rhodes was, and it is surprising that this did not happen: but no one on the committee of inquiry suggested this, not even the sceptical Labouchere. W.V. Harcourt, another member, suspected that Grey had been in the midst of the plot;(47) but not even he asked that Grey be summoned, once Rhodes in his evidence had refused to admit that Grey knew anything beforehand of the Raid.(48)

Perhaps Grey was naive in being duped by a man whom he considered his close friend. Yet even if Grey would have been shocked by the exact details of the Raid, its overall purpose was for him perfectly justifiable. Since the Boers would not listen to reason, and continued successfully to oppose all that the British Empire stood for, their power had to be destroyed. Consequently, the idea of the Company assisting a rising seemed quite reasonable to him, but he probably did not anticipate that Jameson would be rash enough to make a pre-emptive strike. Stated quite bluntly, the Boers, like the Nationalists in Ireland, had challenged the authority of the British Empire in areas regarded by people like Grey as strategically vital. That could not be permitted.(49)

The likelihood of Rhodes's deep involvement in the conspiracy did nothing to lessen the esteem in which Grey held him. On the contrary, he regarded the whole affair as a further illustration of Rhodes acting nobly in the interests of the Empire while the government sat passively on the sidelines. His devotion to Rhodes continued to grow, and upon his death in 1902 Grey became 'a jealous guardian of the reputation and tradition of Rhodes'.(50) In 1903 he declared:

[Rhodes] was, in truth, a most strenuous lover of his country, the most single-minded and the greatest man I ever met. During his life he gave all his energies and all his wealth to the services of the Empire.(51)

Grey later donated his entire profit from his quota of free Company shares, about £3,000, towards the erection of a reproduction of G.F. Watts's Statue of Physical Energy, as a memorial to Rhodes in Bulawayo (the original is in South Africa).(52)

It was as a personal favour to Rhodes, and at considerable inconvenience to himself, that in 1896 Grey accepted the post of Administrator of the Company territory (then known as Rhodesia) in

succession to the disgraced Jameson. In his fifteen months in this position he was unable to do much constructive work of any significance, however, since the Shona and Matabele tribes had taken advantage of Jameson's absence to rise in rebellion; and the Company devoted all of its energy, under Rhodes's personal leadership, to controlling the natives. Gann makes no mention of Grey in his History of Southern Rhodesia, while Cannadine hails his administratorship as 'distinctly unimpressive'.(53) Upon his return home, Grey remained a director of the British South Africa Company, and served as its Vice-President from 1898 to 1904. In his view the Company was involved in transforming a waste into a garden, a garden capable of becoming a white man's country - and a major element in any future British federation in the region.

Personal profit as an explanation of Grey's imperialism ?

One possible reason for Grey's interest in the Empire which must be considered was the financial incentive - whether Grey was an imperialist simply because he saw the colonies as a potentially lucrative source of income for individuals such as himself. According to Hobson, in his classic work Imperialism, most of the imperial expansion in Africa before 1895 could be attributed not to humanitarian or visionary impulses, but simply to personal greed. Rhodes, and hence Grey too, might be said to fit perfectly into this argument, through their involvement with the British South Africa Company. A thin veneer of respectability was provided for the Company by the talk about its work in bringing civilisation to its territory, while its real aim was just to make a profit for its shareholders.(54) Hobson's argument has been a recurrent theme among later historians, as it has become customary to explode the contemporary Victorian myth about humanitarianism being the driving force behind the Europeans' 'Scramble for Africa'. Whereas Robinson and Gallagher asserted in the

1950s that the British Empire expanded into Africa because of the need to protect its strategic interests - such as the sea routes to India, and while Fieldhouse later restated the view that it was non-economic motives that were paramount, more recent historians have written in support of the argument, starting with Platt in the 1960s.(55)

This argument was further developed by the publication in 1986 of Davis and Huttenback's Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire, in which it is noted that empire-building was a costly undertaking for the British government, whereby a small wealthy elite could make large private profits at the expense of the taxpayer - since the government was subsidising the activities of companies like the British South Africa Company.(56) They noted that: 'the British as a whole certainly did not benefit economically from the Empire. On the other hand, individual investors did', although admittedly from 1890 onwards the profits available from imperial investments generally were substantially below those available at home.(57)

Cain and Hopkins, meanwhile, have argued that it is not possible to distinguish between political/strategic motives and economic motives in explaining the actions of men like Rhodes and Grey.(58) They have described the significance of gentlemanly capitalists - 'the powerful landed interest which combined...the prestige of inherited social position with progressive market orientated ambitions', a class which dominated the politics and culture of the late nineteenth century. They say that these individuals helped determine British policy in this period, in a manner designed to benefit and boost Britain's financial and commercial interests in the continent, as well as its strategic interests, and argue that the 'costly decision' to bring the Boer Republics under British control in the 1890s can only be understood in this context.(59)

Hobson's argument may well apply in respect of some industrialists, such as Alfred Beit, Barney Barnato and Hercules Robinson, who were capitalists first and foremost. Perhaps it applies also to Rhodes, Galbraith arguing that he 'professed devotion to the advancement of "Anglo-Saxondom", but he demonstrated devotion to the advancement of self'.(60) Another historian has suggested that it was primarily Rhodes's substantial stake in De Beers which determined his desire to expand northwards in search of new profits.(61) Yet such arguments dismiss too easily Rhodes's evident devotion to the imperial ideal. Rhodes did want to make a personal profit, but he also wanted to benefit the Empire.

There is thus a narrow, but vital, distinction to be drawn between the sceptical views of certain historians and what really inspired imperialists like Rhodes and Grey, who saw personal profit and imperial gain as two goals which were perfectly compatible. This is definitely not the same thing as arguing that they were imperialists purely for selfish reasons. It must be emphasised that Grey's prime reason for becoming a director of the British South Africa Company was in seeing Southern Africa developed as a full part of the British Empire, with all the necessary communications and facilities. For him the aim of the Company making a profit was but a means to that end, and any personal profit was a coincidental benefit.

It is true that Grey did benefit considerably from his substantial involvement in the Empire. As a director he was entitled to an allotment of 9,000 shares at par; and with profits rising by 300% between 1889 and 1895, this represented no small sum.(62) He was always anxious to invest in the Empire, however, rather than elsewhere abroad, since he saw imperial investment as positively advantageous for the Empire as a whole. For example, on the advice of Robin Benson, his wife's brother-in-law and a London merchant banker, Grey bought a fruit farm of 720 acres in British Columbia, having been

loaned the necessary £10,000 from his maternal aunt, Lady Wantage. He wrote to her:

If you can help me to purchase this farm, you will do these two things: you will be taking out your dividends in sound imperialism...and you will be helping me and my family.(63)

Surely Grey had just as much right as anyone else to make a bit of extra money. He happened to seek his fortune by investing in the Empire, while others, such as Labouchere, sought it in Boston Consolidated Mines.(64) Grey also had strong and justifiable reasons for wanting to make some money: in 1894, when he had succeeded to the earldom, he had also inherited a mortgage of £200,000, and hence every effort had to be made to rescue the family and the estate at Howick from the dire financial position which it had been in since the time of the 2nd Earl.(65)

Despite these difficulties, Grey was still prepared to accept the post of Administrator of Rhodesia, even though this barred him from receiving any further income from any form of private enterprise in the Company's territories. Moreover, in order not to prompt a collapse in Rhodesian shares, he asked his fellow director Alfred Beit to sell various of his shares privately, rather than on the open market, despite the fact that this reduced their value by up to 10%. As he commented to Beit: 'My coming out here is going to lose me a lot of money which I can ill afford to lose'.(66)

The story was little different in 1904, when he was appointed Governor-General - a post he was able to accept only because Lady Wantage was willing to act as his patroness and to subsidise heavily his official expenses.(67) Cannadine says that a major attraction for poor men like Grey in being a proconsul was the pay (£10,000 in 1910), which enabled them to enjoy, at someone else's expense, a grander style of living than they themselves could enjoy at home.(68) He proceeds to reject the claims of Grey and others that the official

salary was inadequate for all the entertaining which they were expected to undertake, and that hence they returned home poorer than ever, by pointing out that any loss incurred was not as great as the cost if they had stayed at home and been obliged to maintain their houses in London and elsewhere without their official salaries. In part this is true, but in Grey's case it ignores the fact that if Grey had not gone to Canada he would have been able to retain his various directorships - which in 1915 were to bring in £3,000 per year.(69) So Grey was right to complain that his imperial duties cost him dearly. By the time of the First World War, moreover, the mortgage on the Howick estate still stood at £137,000, the house there had been shut up and most male servants dismissed, and the family was obliged to live in the humblest way in its London house.(70)

Conclusion

It is contended here that the various explanations currently given as to why one generally might have become an imperialist in the nineteenth century do not apply to Grey. Porter notes that 'capitalists in general do not mind where they make their wealth':(71) but Grey did mind very much, and was anxious to invest only in schemes which might be of benefit to the Empire, such as those in Canada and Rhodesia. Some of his investments turned out to be disastrous, in fact, and by 1916 he was obliged to sell all his shares in Canadian fruit farms at only half their original value: his imperial enthusiasm had overridden any financial judgment.(72)

As has been demonstrated in this chapter, Grey's imperialism was based on idealistic and not materialistic, benefits - an idealism shaped especially by the influence of his uncle, the 3rd Earl, and the writings of Mazzini. From then onwards, his contacts with Rhodes served both to nourish his beliefs and to direct his energies towards the realisation of one particular goal - Imperial Federation. What he

understood that concept to mean, and how he intended that it should be realised, forms the basis of the next three chapters.

CHAPTER THREE
POLITICAL FEDERATION

In July 1885, when Grey addressed the inaugural meeting of the Imperial Federation League in Liverpool, he made his first public call for the political federation of the Empire. He spoke generally about the desirability of a common defence policy and fiscal policy, as well as adapting the House of Lords into an imperial council by the introduction of colonial life peers. He did not, however, offer any specific details about what each change might entail.(1)

After making that speech, Grey's involvement with the Imperial Federation League waned. Nevertheless, through his involvement with the British South Africa Company he remained keenly aware of the desirability of consolidation. At the 1902 annual dinner of the Royal Colonial Institute he suggested that the changing relationship between Britain and its self-governing colonies demanded the ultimate adoption of some form of Imperial Federation, even if this meant a partial loss of political autonomy and freedom of action on both sides. The Times claimed: 'Most Englishmen now hold with Lord Grey that we are tending towards Imperial Federation by a process of "irresistible evolution"'.(2) It was not until his appointment as Governor-General of Canada, in 1904, however, that Grey began to make a significant contribution to the debate about political federation.

In much the same spirit as Seeley and the League, Grey never concerned himself with the precise details of any scheme. When his son criticised him for vagueness, he responded:

He would be a bold and foolish man who would attempt at this time of day to define the exact shape and marking and colouring of this flower now in the bud.(3)

The reason for Grey's reluctance was partly because he considered it dangerous to present controversial plans before one needed to - as shown in the way the League split in the 1890s. It can also be said, though, that Grey rarely cared for details: his mind was often too active to settle to such mundane tasks. This was not due to any lack of intelligence: his talents, as he well knew, lay elsewhere - in seeking to boost the necessary feeling of imperial sentiment as a pre-condition to political federation.

When pressed to be more specific, Grey either suggested that this task should be left to a Royal Commission,(4) or else talked vaguely of an Imperial Parliament or Legislative Council. In 1909-10, when he was promoting the idea of a federal system of government for the United Kingdom, he did propose that each of the dominions might also send their own representatives to this new assembly.(5) He did not pursue the idea, however, once he recognised that the Dominions would never consent to send their representatives to what would be little more than the parliament of just another federation.

Grey envisaged instead an assembly - which confusingly he sometimes described as an Imperial Council when in fact he meant a parliament with legislative powers, not the merely advisory Imperial Council advocated by imperialists such as Milner. Grey's assembly would be representative of the various federations, and responsible for determining the external relations and defence policies of the Empire. It would assess also how much each of the Dominions should contribute to the cost of their joint defence - although, most importantly, in order not to infringe Dominion self-government, it would not have the right to dictate the methods by which that revenue should be raised. Nor would it even consider the more controversial

question of an imperial tariff.(6) Later he added the suggestion that this Council would in due course take over responsibility for the dependencies of the Empire, including even India.(7) This latter proposal highlighted Grey's general lack of interest in the special relationship between Britain and India, in stark contrast with many other imperialists, such as Curzon, who not only viewed India as the *raison d'être* of the Empire but saw it as being entwined in a unique way with Britain, quite separate from the 'White Empire'.

While Grey sat on the periphery of the Empire, talking in general terms about the need to boost imperial sentiment, a group of ardent imperialists was forming in London under the aegis of his colleague Milner, committed to the task of working out a detailed scheme of political federation. The group, established in September 1909 as the 'Round Table', was largely composed at first of those young men who had worked under Milner when he had been High Commissioner of the Cape Colony, where they had been known as 'Milner's Kindergarten'.(8) Including Oliver, Lionel Curtis, Philip Kerr and (to a considerably lesser extent) Grey's own son, Lord Howick, these men had carried through Milner's plans for the federation of South Africa, successfully established in 1910. They had now returned home to Britain, seeking to formulate similar proposals for the 'White Empire' as a whole, working under the same basic assumption as most imperialists, from Seeley to Chamberlain, that the Empire must either consolidate or disintegrate.

A major contribution to the thinking of all imperialists, Grey and the Kindergarten members alike, had been provided by the publication in 1906 of Oliver's Alexander Hamilton, a pro-federalist tract which The Times later described as having probably more influence than any other political work of that decade.(9) In highlighting the success of the introduction by Hamilton of federalism in the United States as an excellent means of reconciling localist

loyalties with centralist cohesion, Oliver's book struck an immediate chord with many. Hamilton's federalism did indeed seem an ideal system of government - so long as the central focus of unity was given sufficient power to prevent a civil war.

Milner, unlike Grey, was 'dedicated less to ideals than to systems', (10) as were his two most active lieutenants, Curtis and Oliver. What the Round Table sought to achieve, and what it preached, was not unique, but the extent of its considerable energy and its intellectual ability made it a principal source of inspiration for Imperial Federation in the years leading up to the outbreak of war in 1914.

Unlike the Imperial Federation League, the Round Table did not attempt to be a populist organisation, believing instead (in contrast to Grey) that there was no point in trying to stir up public interest for Imperial Federation until there were enough politicians in Britain and the Dominions who were ready to consider the issue. Thus it aimed to direct its proposals at the leaders, not the led, while avoiding any connection with one particular party lest its message be seen as partisan rather than disinterested. It did, however, encourage the formation of Round Table groups in Britain and the Empire, and produced what became an influential journal, Round Table, under the initial editorship of Oliver.

In accordance with Milner's opinions, the Round Table argued that the system of colonial conferences was insufficient as a means of encouraging consolidation since it did not allow for a continuous flow of communication between Britain and the Dominions. In the autumn of 1909 Curtis and Kerr set out on a mission, to discover the extent of imperial sentiment in Canada, and to meet Grey. (11) Both were depressed that even those Canadians who called themselves keen imperialists seemed to have an inadequate appreciation of the urgent need for imperial consolidation. This raises an interesting contrast

to the view of Grey, who was much more convinced of Canadian keenness for the Empire. It was not that Grey was deluding himself entirely, but rather that he realised better than Curtis and the other Round Tablers that the people of Canada must not be rushed towards Imperial Federation until they were sufficiently convinced of its merits.

After returning home from a subsequent tour to Australia and New Zealand in 1910, Curtis produced a 'Green Memorandum' outlining the movement's initial views on what form Imperial Federation might take. It reiterated the view that there was no alternative between consolidation and disintegration, and called for an Imperial Parliament, to be responsible for the Empire's dependencies and foreign policy.

Reaction to the Round Table's initial proposal, at this stage only tentative, was mixed. While imperialists such as Lord Selborne (High Commissioner for South Africa, 1905-10) welcomed the call for an Imperial Parliament, others like Richard Jebb advocated a very different course.(12) Rejecting the claim that there was no alternative between the Empire consolidating or disintegrating, he argued instead for a form of imperial unity based on association rather than federation: he envisaged the 'White Empire' as a family of free nations, bound together by ties of loyalty and sentiment, as well as a system of imperial economic preference - an issue not addressed by the Round Table because it was contentious and potentially divisive.

Grey's ideas on political federation were very similar to those of the Round Table, and he maintained a regular correspondence with its prominent members (especially Milner and Oliver), even once his son's involvement had waned.(13) However, although 'one of the movement's most ardent supporters in Canada and later an intimate in London', Grey never joined the Round Table.(14) The possible reasons for this are that, as an individualist by nature, Grey felt

uncomfortable in any organisation dominated by someone else. He could hardly hope to be a leading figure in the Round Table, since he was across the Atlantic, and because most of its members were the starry-eyed apostles of Milner. Moreover, Grey was more interested in popularising than theorising, which did not accord with the Round Table's objectives. Finally, although Milner and Grey were fellow enthusiasts of Imperial Federation, Grey feared that Milner was sometimes too strong-headed to pay sufficient attention to Dominion sensibilities, and so risked offending those whose support was vital:

His fault is a want of sympathy which disables him from seeing the strength of other people's objections to a course which commends itself to his intellect.(15)

The prospect of clashing with this intellect held no appeal for Grey, any more than did the tedium of theorising backstage. Grey's preferred place was in the pulpit, not the theological college.

Grey in Canada

As Governor-General in Canada, which has been described as 'in some ways the least enthusiastic of the imperial daughters',(16) Grey took every opportunity to promote Imperial Federation. He faced enormous obstacles, though, and not just because there was a substantial French-speaking minority generally antipathetic to closer links with Britain. Canada had long been keen to assert its autonomy, and had been the first colony to be granted responsible self-government, under the Canada Act of 1840.

Since 1895 the Prime Minister had been Wilfrid Laurier, a French Canadian and Roman Catholic, who was widely known for his lack of interest in the calls for Imperial Federation, expressing himself perfectly satisfied with the existing relationship between Canada and Britain. In 1900 he declared:

I claim for Canada this, that in future, Canada shall be at liberty to act or not to act, to interfere or not interfere, to do

just as she pleases, and that she shall reserve to herself the right to judge whether or not there is cause for her to act.(17)

Two years later he spoke of the 'White Empire' as 'a galaxy of independent nations'.(18) For Laurier, the efforts of Grey and others to regiment the Empire into a federated and centralised system ran counter to the tide of history over the past sixty years, which had been towards responsible self-government and autonomy for Canada.(19)

Grey was not daunted by the apparent widespread lack of interest among Canadians in Imperial Federation, and ascribed it to a lack of understanding about the benefits of Empire rather than any positive anti-imperialism. All that was needed was for the Canadian people, and Laurier in particular, to learn of the many benefits of closer imperial association. Grey was quite happy to be the teacher. He soon developed a friendly and intimate working relationship with Laurier, and in their informal meetings at Government House each Sunday Grey would happily preach the gospel of imperialism.

Grey considered that political federation might more easily be attained if a separate department were established within the Colonial Office in Whitehall, devoted entirely to the concerns of the self-governing colonies. He knew that Canadian public opinion was infuriated by the way in which the Colonial Office seemed to regard Canada in the same condescending manner as it did the newest-acquired colonies in Africa. He concluded that change was necessary to remove this cause of ill-feeling, and hoped he could persuade Laurier himself to make the necessary proposal at the next Colonial Conference.

The whole question of inter-imperial relationships, including the role of the Colonial Office and the periodic Colonial Conferences, was in the early 1900s being considered by a self-appointed committee of about fifty 'interested persons', including Haldane, Milner and Parkin, under the chairmanship of Sir Frederick Pollock, an Oxford Law

professor. This committee, established in 1903 after the self-governing colonies had once again rejected Chamberlain's call for an Imperial Council at the 1902 Colonial Conference, now concluded that Imperial Federation was an impossible goal, and sought instead to strengthen the Conference system. In 1905 Pollock himself went out to Canada on a fact-finding mission. He failed to impress Grey, however, who disliked his unfortunate manner of antagonising everyone whom he met.(20)

The Pollock Committee reported its conclusions in 1905, suggesting the establishment of a special Committee of the Privy Council to include the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Premiers, served by a permanent secretariat.(21) Lyttelton supported this idea as an acceptable way of consolidating relations within the Empire, and then proposed to the Cabinet that the Colonial Conference be renamed the Imperial Council, chaired by the Prime Minister and served by a secretariat. These proposals met with widespread approval in London and most self-governing colonies. In Canada, though, the government expressed itself perfectly content with the relations between Britain and the colonies as they stood. Grey remained confident, none the less, that Laurier would not actually oppose Lyttelton's scheme if it were formally approved by the other self-governing colonies at the next conference (in 1907); and he insisted that Laurier's opposition was not to be interpreted as an indication of any underlying opposition to Imperial Federation.(22)

By the time of the next conference, the Unionists had been replaced in government by the Liberals. Lord Elgin, the new Colonial Secretary, was moderately sympathetic to the idea of closer imperial ties, but lacked the determination of his predecessor to challenge the vested interests of the Colonial Office and lessen its power by establishing a permanent secretariat alongside. At the 1907 Conference, therefore, in the absence of any strong leadership from

Britain, those Premiers in favour of closer ties - Deakin of Australia, Ward of New Zealand and Jameson of the Cape - failed to present a coherent plan, while Laurier failed to show any enthusiasm for change.(23) There were some developments, nevertheless, such as the decision to re-label the self-governing colonies 'Dominions', and to give both them and Britain one vote equally at future conferences. Although the call for a separate Dominions secretariat was rejected, a new department was established within the Colonial Office to fulfil broadly the same purpose.

By 1907 Grey also had lost his earlier enthusiasm for the idea of an Imperial Council, perhaps because he appreciated that Laurier's resistance to the idea was more deep-rooted than he had anticipated. According to Hallett, Grey had dutifully conveyed the spirit of Lyttelton's proposals to Laurier, 'but he did not pursue this matter with his usual enthusiasm'.(24) Although Kendle states that Grey 'aided and abetted Lyttelton in his attempt to win over Laurier', Grey's personal correspondence made little mention of the subject, which may suggest a possible lack of interest in this proposal.(25) Nevertheless, his enthusiasm for some reform persisted. Could he win over Laurier? In 1907, not yet: Grey had not been in Canada long enough to be sufficiently persuasive, but he remained hopeful.

Grey was pleased with the decision at the 1907 Conference to establish a separate Dominions department. While imperialists such as Jebb and Amery, as well as The Times, mocked this new body as but an extension of bureaucracy, Grey had incurable optimism that this would soon lead to a fully-fledged Dominions Office per se.(26) Hopwood, the new Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, thought Grey 'far too sanguine' for holding such hopes.(27) Barely a month later, after persuasion from Grey about how a totally new Dominions Office might do much to improve imperial relations, Laurier intimated that he might consider favourably any proposal for such an institution.(28)

Grey was delighted by this, and resolved to persuade Laurier to propose it himself at the 1911 Conference. Grey then advised his opposite number in Australia, Lord Dudley, how they might each advance this aim:

One way in which you and I can do so is by getting our responsible advisers to favour the proposal to separate the Imperial Department which has to do with the S.G. Dominions from the Colonial Department....Laurier thinks this should be done. He thinks the office of the Imperial Parliament should be under a roof of its own - quite separate from the C.O.

Once this had been accomplished, it would be advisable to house all the Dominion High Commissioners and Agents-General in London under one roof: and then, he maintained, 'the rest will surely follow', with the Imperial Minister giving a lead to the organisation of the common interests of the Empire on uniform lines.(29) Grey later pursued vigorously this idea of a central location in London for Dominion affairs, proposing the construction of a Dominion House (discussed in chapter five).

Milner agreed with Grey on the need for a Dominions Minister as a great advance towards Imperial Federation.(30) He too believed that it was vital to stir up Laurier's interest in Empire if their cause were to be advanced, and supported attempts to persuade the Canadian Prime Minister to make a proposal for a Dominions Office at the next Conference. Grey informed Crewe (who succeeded Elgin in 1908) that Laurier had already expressed some interest in this idea, while still remaining unconvinced of the benefits of an Imperial Secretariat or Council. Crewe, however, was worried lest Laurier were being pressurised unduly by Grey, and warned the Governor-General that he must be careful not to commit the British government in any way since even he himself would 'need a good deal of convincing that such a step, quite apart from questions of expense or of the multiplication of Offices, is anything but premature'.(31) Grey assured him that his

relationship with Laurier was such that he could make these suggestions as a friend, not as an official, but admitted that he was not averse to using Laurier to champion his own imperial causes:

In discussing these [imperial] questions with Sir Wilfrid Laurier I am careful to remember the dictum of the old Jesuit who pointed out that there was hardly any limit to what a man might accomplish if he would only allow other people to obtain the credit.(32)

Of course Grey was using this advice as a way of persuading Laurier to work through others to achieve his objectives: but the dictum applied equally to himself.

Crewe ultimately accepted the possibility of a separate Dominions Office, which ought certainly to have pleased Dominion sentiment even if it did not prove to be a step closer to Imperial Federation: but he waited in vain for news that Laurier would commit himself in any way. This was not through lack of effort on Grey's part, who warmly recommended the proposal to Laurier as 'the next step in the slow but sure growth of our Imperial evolution'.(33) Laurier's obstinacy was almost certainly because he had come to have doubts about the likely merits for Canada of any such scheme. Nevertheless, eventually he succumbed to the exhortations of his Governor-General, and, in April 1910, put the proposal before his Cabinet. His Finance Minister, William Fielding, objected however, believing that such a radical change was unnecessary, and Laurier, declining to act without the full approval of his colleagues, decided not to proceed with the proposal.(34)

This failure was a personal blow for Grey, who, like Milner, long believed that reform of the Colonial Office would advance the cause of Imperial Federation far more than any attempts to improve the system of colonial conferences, such as Jebb and Amery advocated. Grey shared the Round Table's scepticism about the conferences, considering them ineffective because they had failed to provide any

basis for permanent and meaningful consultation between the British and Dominion governments. Secondly, Grey was disappointed because he had failed in promoting the type of reform which he thought most likely to be acceptable to Laurier, one which did not threaten Dominion autonomy. He never sought to promote the proposals for an Imperial Council, since he knew Laurier considered these unacceptable, and instead talked only of the benefits of equal partnership which would accrue from a Dominions Office. Such an office was not established until 1925 in fact, by which time it was Amery, ironically, who was the Colonial Secretary.

In the summer of 1910, while Curtis was visiting Australia and New Zealand, the Prime Minister of the latter country, Joseph Ward, announced his intention to call for Imperial Federation at the next Imperial Conference. Ward's interest was inspired partly by the thinking of the Round Table, but largely by national self-interest. New Zealand, as a small Dominion, was less prominent in the minds of Whitehall than, say, Canada, and believed itself to be regarded as a second-class Dominion. It also felt increasingly threatened by the growing naval strength of Japan in the Pacific. By means of an imperial body in which all Dominions had an equal say alongside Britain, New Zealand hoped it could make its voice more clearly heard and exert more influence over imperial decision-making.(35)

On the first day of the 1911 Conference, Ward proposed an Imperial Council, containing popularly-chosen delegates from all the Dominions, as well as the various Dependencies (including India). This, he hoped, would be a forerunner to an Imperial Parliament. However, Ward failed to present his case coherently, even confusing the terms he used on occasions, and laid himself open to criticism from those unenthusiastic *for* a radical scheme, such as Asquith and Laurier. Thus the Conference only highlighted, rather than reduced,

the differences of opinion within the 'White Empire', and failed to promote any sense of consolidation.

The extent of Curtis's influence over Ward is not known. Certainly he sought to win him over to the proposals of the Round Table, and Ward's speech may have been based on his advice. Kerr had warned Curtis against offering an opinion of any kind, arguing that the time was inappropriate since neither the British and Canadian governments, nor their populace, were ready for such a proposal. Ward's failure caused serious upset to the Round Table's plans, and it was to be a further four years before sufficient momentum was restored for Curtis to produce any more specific details.(36)

As for Grey, he had lost interest in what might happen at the Conference once his hopes about the Dominions Office had been dashed by Fielding's objection. He was about to leave Canada after almost seven years in office, and was concentrating on the many difficulties facing Britain. Moreover, he knew there was no point in pressurising Laurier, who was in the midst of a domestic political crisis involving reciprocal trading arrangements with the United States. Grey did not fret about Laurier's objection to Ward's plan, regarding it as just another example of his longstanding opposition to any scheme which might challenge Canadian autonomy; and aware as he was, like Kerr, that the time for Imperial Federation was not yet ripe.(37)

Conclusion

Despite this setback, Grey felt that he had achieved some success in reducing Laurier's opposition towards the notion of any alteration in the political relationship between Britain and the Dominions, as illustrated by the fact that Laurier had been persuaded to put the proposal for a Dominions Office before his Cabinet in 1910. Recognising as he did that, to most Canadians, the existing relationship with Britain appeared to be perfectly satisfactory, Grey

did his utmost to convince Laurier of the benefits that a system of Imperial Federation might offer to Canada. He intervened in domestic politics to a considerable extent, which might have had serious consequences if Laurier had not been such an amenable man.

The position of a Governor-General was, according to Cannadine, an 'essentially ornamental employment [opportunity]', providing 'ideal jobs for second-rate statesmen and backwoods aristocrats'. His duty was to be the constitutional sovereign in the Dominion, guardian of imperial interests, and, before 1926, the prime means of communication between the British and Dominion governments.(38) Grey himself described being Governor-General as an exercise in 'walking on the tightrope of platitudinous generalities'.(39) Yet Grey was arguably one of the most interventionist proconsuls of the whole period, and certainly a marked contrast to his predecessor in Canada (Lord Minto, his brother-in-law), who was said to have a 'tactful manner, and a shrewd sense of the powers and limitations of his office'.(40) Grey put direct pressure on Laurier to consider Imperial Federation - political, military and economic - to such an extent that he was 'eventually to press his powers as Governor-General almost to the breaking point'.(41)

While Grey probably did have some success in offsetting slightly Laurier's natural suspicion about Imperial Federation, he deluded himself when he thought that he was actually managing to win Laurier's support. As an eternal optimist, Grey exaggerated the Canadian Prime Minister's enthusiasm for the Empire: despite Laurier saying 'I do not pretend to be an imperialist', Grey mistakenly believed that he needed only apply sufficient pressure to convince Laurier.(42) He was, of course, utterly wrong, and it is not surprising that those like Hopwood and Crewe were doubtful of Grey's opinion of Laurier.

In fairness to Grey, it has to be admitted that such over-confidence was a frequent misconception among federationists, who felt the correctness of their creed was so self-evident that so long as they stated it often enough they would eventually win over all except those who would never listen to reason. They all suffered from a common delusion that anyone who did not declare himself an avowed anti-imperialist must therefore be a potential convert. It should also be added in this particular case that Laurier had a very tolerant and easy-going manner, always favouring compromise, and hence he probably felt the easiest way to cope with Grey was to humour him.(43)

Overall, Grey failed to convince the Canadian government of the merits of political federation within the empire. His efforts of persuasion were extraordinary, nevertheless, and without parallel. Whether he had any more success in promoting some form of closer military or economic co-operation is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
ECONOMIC AND MILITARY FEDERATION

ECONOMIC FEDERATION

Background

The clamour for free trade had gained the political ascendancy in Britain from 1846, when Peel's government had repealed the Corn Laws, the argument being that both British trade and world trade would be best served if there were no tariff barriers between countries. Although Britain stuck to this doctrine for the next eighty years, other countries started to erect barriers in order to protect their own burgeoning industries - such as Germany (1879), Russia (1881), France (1882) and the United States (1890). As a consequence, some British businessmen in industries adversely affected formed themselves into a Fair Trade League in 1881, aiming at retaliation through the erection of tariff barriers in Britain.

As the British share of manufactured goods in the world market continued to fall in the 1880s, and British exports rose in value much less than imports,(1) it became evident that an easy solution was for Britain to concentrate instead on its colonial markets, where favourable trading arrangements might more readily be established. Canada, which in 1879 had created a tariff wall against British as well as foreign goods, was willing to offer distinct trade advantages to Britain so long as the gesture was reciprocated. Thus Fair Traders argued their case not only from narrow protectionist principles but also from the point of view of what might be more beneficial for the Empire. This gained increasing favour once it became apparent that

the acquisition of new colonies in Africa would not, in fact, prove overnight to be the necessary panacea for Britain's relative economic decline.

With the exception of New South Wales, all the self-governing colonies were already committed to protectionist policies, and the idea of establishing a lower tariff rate for goods from Britain would mean merely an adjustment of existing policies. The greater part of their trade was carried on within the Empire anyway. Britain, however, conducted 75% of its overseas trade with non-Empire countries. In addition, the doctrine of Free Trade was so deeply embedded in people's minds as the policy of fairness and cheap food that few dared challenge it openly; and it certainly helped Britain to be the chief supplier of shipping, insurance, investment and financial services throughout the world at this time.

Another difficulty was that the self-governing colonies and Britain had opposing interests at stake. The former arranged the Ottawa Conference in 1894, for the purpose of discussing Imperial Preferences, whereby each would establish tariffs for all imported goods, but with a slightly lower tariff for goods imported from within the Empire itself. What advocates in Britain preferred, however, was Imperial Free Trade - a system in which there would be no tariff barriers of any kind between members of the Empire. The colonies found this unacceptable, because the resulting loss of tariff revenue would affect them, and also because they were each trying to protect their own industries from the superior competition in Britain.

In the late nineteenth century the emotive attachment of most Britons to Free Trade was still far stronger than that to the Empire, and even the most ardent imperialists had divided loyalties. The Imperial Federation League, founded in 1884, skilfully avoided the issue of tariff reform for its first few years. Once, however, the Fair Traders began demanding the adoption of tariffs, the issue had to

be discussed, and was one of the major reasons for the League's collapse. While Froude, for example, was in favour of tariffs, Rosebery was equally emphatic that no fair or practicable imperial tariff could ever be established.(2)

Pressure for an imperial tariff remained strong, especially once Chamberlain had allied himself to the cause. As Colonial Secretary he tried hard at both the 1897 and 1902 Colonial Conferences to pursue schemes of political federation through an Imperial Council. Once he had concluded that such schemes were unlikely to meet with success, he turned to tariff reform, as an indirect means of enhancing imperial unity.(3)

The Tariff Reform movement

In the face of growing trade competition from foreign countries, Chamberlain argued that Britain had a right to retaliate with tariffs of its own. In launching the Tariff Reform League in the summer of 1903, he called for duties of 5% on imported foods and 10% on manufactured goods, but with no levy against colonial imports.

Tariff reform split the Unionist government, and caused the departure of five members from the Cabinet over the next three years, including Chamberlain himself. For many Unionists, and almost all Liberals, the attachment to Free Trade was as strong as ever, and it seemed that Chamberlain was interested more in protectionism than in imperial unity. Among Liberal Imperialists, for example, there was near unanimity on the issue. Asquith had vocally condemned Chamberlain's first clarion call in 1896, and Rosebery had maintained that it would succeed only in arousing world hostility.(4)

For those Unionist supporters who were against full protectionism but were ardent imperialists, the position was not easy. Certainly Grey was in this category. On 20 October 1903, barely a month after Chamberlain had resigned from the government to launch his

tariff campaign without the burden of office, Grey found himself chairing the annual conference of the North Riding Liberal Unionist Association in Newcastle. Eight days beforehand he wrote to Chamberlain a letter explaining that, while he greatly admired his action in working for the consolidation of the Empire, he could not associate himself with the advocacy of protectionism and retaliation as an end in itself.(5)

At the meeting, Grey proposed a resolution supporting Chamberlain, in which he declared: 'I like two good things, Empire and Free Trade, but if I must put up with (and my judgement tells me I must) one of the two, give me the Empire'.(6) Yet Grey could not bring himself to join the Tariff Reform League, since he continued to deplore any group which was so avowedly protectionist.(7)

As long ago as 1885, Grey had highlighted the importance of closer financial and economic ties within the Empire, and had pointed out that in the period 1878-1884 British exports to foreign countries had fallen by 8.5% while those to the colonies had risen by 14%.(8) Now, in 1903, he acknowledged that Imperial Free Trade would make the Empire, like the United States, self-contained and self-sufficient. However, he recognised better than Chamberlain that such a scheme was most unlikely to succeed in the short term, since the self-governing colonies could not afford to lose the revenue they gained from their tariffs. In January of the following year, therefore, he called instead for a system of inter-imperial preferential tariffs as a first step in the direction towards Imperial Free Trade, and also the erection of just a low tariff barrier in Britain against all foreign imports.

Initially Chamberlain's message seemed well received in the country, and his supporters won all three by-elections in December 1903 on the tariff issue. Thereafter, however, he lost the initiative, and the way that Asquith skilfully highlighted the

differences of opinion between him and Balfour resulted in poor election results throughout 1904. By concentrating on the local constituency organisations Chamberlain was gradually winning over the majority of Unionists, but barely anyone outside the party.

Certainly Grey remained convinced that Imperial Preference, and not a mixture of Imperial Free Trade and protectionism, was the more appropriate answer. In November 1905 he stated privately that the adoption of an Imperial Preference would be the first step towards organic union of the Empire. He declared: 'The case for the Preference appears to me to be so strong. I become more and more convinced that the adoption by the United Kingdom of the Preferential principle is necessary to save the Empire'.(9)

Up to the time the Unionist government resigned in December 1905, Balfour had tried not to let the issue of tariff reform come to the fore, and sat on the fence in order to maintain at least a semblance of unity. His favoured solution was that if the Unionist government were re-elected, a colonial conference would be held to discuss the issue of Imperial Preference: and if this were accepted, a second election would be held to allow the British electorate a final say. The degree of support among Unionist M.P.s. for tariff reform was so great by this stage, however, that Balfour was obliged to include the issue in the party manifesto. In January 1906 the electorate decisively rejected the idea, proving that Free Trade remained sacrosanct in the popular imagination as the cause of food being cheap.

Grey feared that the return of a Liberal government with such a large majority meant that some type of tariff reform - which he now believed was 'the surest foundation of our future organic union' - would be abandoned.(10) He wrote to the new Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, Winston Churchill (who had only recently defected from the Unionist to the Liberal party over the tariff reform

issue), urging him to consider the question from a Canadian angle - or rather, the Canadian angle as Grey perceived it:

There is a splendid feeling of loyalty throughout the Dominion towards the country which buys their produce, but the people here have been nurtured on the gospel of self-interest and if we continue to turn the cold shoulder to the offered hand, we must not be surprised if Canadian affection which is now centred on us is one day turned to our American neighbour who is already adopting the ways of a wooer.(11)

Churchill and the Liberal government remained unconvinced. At the Colonial Conference of 1907, a majority of the leaders of the Dominions, and especially Deakin of Australia and Jameson of the Cape, argued publicly for an Imperial Preference. Laurier expressed some interest in the idea, but he subordinated it to the absolute right of each Dominion, including the United Kingdom itself, to be entirely responsible for its own trading affairs, and so he would not intervene in what he regarded as a British domestic matter.

Grey, while delighted by the opinions expressed by Deakin and Jameson at the Conference, noted that Laurier was as resolved as ever to see the Dominions build up their own industries behind the necessary protection of tariff barriers. Yet he remained convinced that Laurier remained committed to Imperial Preference. He insisted to his friends in Britain that Laurier had tried to make the general commercial tariff rate as favourable to Britain as his party would tolerate, since the Canadian Budget in 1898 had fixed the tariff for British imports at 25% below that for all other countries, and that Laurier deserved credit, not criticism, from the British Press for his efforts.(12)

In November 1908 Grey developed his thoughts a stage further. He believed that once Imperial Free Trade was established the United States would wish to be included. A customs union between all the English-speaking peoples of the world was, he declared, 'the greatest

ideal yet put before men of British descent'.(13) While this could only be a dream at present, and while Canada certainly would not contemplate a system of free trade with the United States until her own population had grown enough to give her economy sufficient weight, nevertheless the likelihood of an Anglo-Saxon customs union was rapidly approaching, he believed, 'and when it does come the light of my ideal will be on the Mountain Tops'.(14) Once this had been achieved, the resulting economic bloc would be so powerful as to be able to hold a controlling influence over all other industrial and trading nations, thus guaranteeing world peace. The introduction of an Imperial Preference would be a step in the direction towards the long term goal of Free Trade throughout the Empire, which was itself a precedent to Imperial Federation and Grey's dream of ultimate Anglo-Saxon consolidation.(15)

This message embodied so many of his keenest interests: closer imperial co-operation, yet without a high wall of punitive tariffs against all other nations; a union of the interests of all the English-speaking peoples of the world, guided by Britain rather than the United States (for in any Anglo-American association, he intended that it be British views which predominated); and the use of trading power to prevent military conflict. Briefly, in 1910, Grey even suggested that if his scheme for the federation of the United Kingdom itself were enacted (a subject considered in chapter six), the Dominions might enter with each of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland into some vast Federal customs union, which again the United States might eventually join.(16)

Yet Grey preached this message for only a short while. Within just eight months he had changed tack again, and believed instead that each Dominion should have the complete right to levy its own tariffs as it wished. A uniform tariff was, he now thought, an unrealisable goal at that time.(17) He had been made brutally aware that most

Canadians and many in the other Dominions found the whole notion of Imperial Preference both unrealistic and unacceptable. It dawned on him that pursuing this idea would not only delay, but seriously disrupt, any plans towards political federation of the Empire, his fear being that the Dominions would feel aggrieved and antagonised. Above all else, the ultimate cause, (political) Imperial Federation, must take precedence: if plans for a Preference were going to be an obstacle, then they must be discarded.

It can only have been pressure from close associates in Canada, and especially Laurier, that caused Grey suddenly to alter his hopes. His Unionist friends at home generally remained fully committed to tariff reform, even though it had again proved electorally disastrous in the 1910 elections. Grey's own son had been soundly defeated on a Preference ticket when he stood as Unionist candidate for Bradford in the January election. In this, his final period as Governor-General, Grey had come to believe that the economic and strategic future of Canada within the Empire would be so significant that its views now must not be ignored.

Without any feeling of inconsistency Grey declared instead that the interest of the Empire demanded the immediate adoption of a common policy of defence and of foreign affairs, not a common tariff policy. The creation of an Imperial Preference, although still a most desirable objective, was not a sine qua non of Imperial Federation:

Inter-imperial Free Trade has always been to me the most attractive deal, but we must as practical men reject it as impossible of present attainment.(18)

By the end of 1910 Grey was saying that Imperial Federation, when it came, would most likely evolve from a Dominions Office, which might have powers over defence policy and foreign affairs, but which must not interfere in the rights of individual Dominions to impose their own levies or taxes.

A consequence of this new attitude was that Grey was totally untroubled when, in January 1911, the Canadian^s signed a Reciprocity Agreement with the United States. Unlike Milner, and indeed the Liberal government as well, he saw this measure as no threat to imperial interests. In 1908 he had described the offer of the United States to introduce a Preference with Canada as tantamount to substituting a policy of kisses after a lengthy pursuit of a policy of kicks.⁽¹⁹⁾ By 1911, however, he had known Laurier long enough to become fully convinced of his commitment to the Empire, and recognised that no snub was intended. In part, this reflects the fact that Grey was sometimes remarkably pragmatic, and that on some issues he was right in claiming he had a better appreciation of Dominion feeling than his contemporaries back in Britain. It is also true, though, that he saw this as an excellent way of boosting relations between the Empire and the United States, a step towards Anglo-Saxon consolidation. The Canadian people saw the subject differently, however, and felt that Laurier was wilfully leading them into the trap of American financial annexation.

In changing his mind about the importance of Imperial Preference, Grey showed himself capable of keeping pace with the latest developments in imperial thinking. On the one hand, most Unionists never wavered in their support for the idea, albeit more for protectionist than imperial reasons, and in 1913 both Bonar Law and Lansdowne insisted that the party reaffirm its support for tariff reform (which it duly did). On the other hand, a generation of new imperialists, and especially the younger members of the Round Table, quickly recognised the whole issue as a non-starter because the very idea of tariff reform was so contentious that it would distract public attention from the higher goal of Imperial Federation.

MILITARY FEDERATION

Background

Whereas the calls for a customs union ebbed and flowed during the period 1880-1917, the suggestion of a united imperial approach to defence policy was more longstanding. Even when the interest in a customs union reached its peak, calls for a joint defence policy were never abandoned: and once Germany embarked on its programme of naval expansion in 1898, the issue never left the minds of those interested in Britain's welfare.

The traditional Treasury view was that as the colonies came to assume greater autonomy, they should also assume responsibility for the cost of their own land defence; and that general imperial expenses, such as the cost of the Royal Navy, should be borne by all those who benefited from it. It was this opinion which had prompted the American Colonies to break away from the Empire in 1776, when the British government demanded that they pay something towards the cost of their defence from France and Spain. From fear of repetition of imperial disintegration, the Treasury did not retaliate even when most colonies later pointedly refused to pay even the full cost of their own defence, let alone donate towards the cost of the Royal Navy. It was never able to recover the full costs from the Cape Colony of its involvement in the Border War in the 1870s, and even colonies as small as Bermuda were able to refuse successfully the Treasury requests for a military contribution.(20)

During the 1880s there arose once more the fear of Britain being invaded from Europe. Salisbury advocated at the 1887 Colonial Conference some joint defence venture, but this met with little enthusiasm from the delegates. Subsequently Australia and New Zealand did agree to pay an annual subsidy of £126,000 for ten years towards the cost of an Australasian naval squadron, but all self-governing colonies remained reluctant to contribute to anything over which they

had no real control. They remained unmoved by the fact that the Royal Navy was protecting them as well as Britain, or that the defence costs borne by the British taxpayer were twice as great as those of France or Germany at that time.(21)

The Boer War of 1899-1902 prompted a mixed response from the Colonies. The Canadian government was far more reluctant than those of Australia or New Zealand to offer Britain any support, even though many Canadian people were enthusiastic, especially among the English-speaking community. In the period 1865-1914 the average annual per capita cost of defence for the British people was £1.14, while for Australians it was £0.12 and for Canadians just £0.09. When, in 1899, the Governor-General (Lord Minto) requested Canadian assistance towards the impending war effort in South Africa, Laurier replied:

The present case does not seem to be one, in which England if there is war, ought to ask us, or even expect us to take part, nor do I believe that it would add to the strength of the imperial sentiment to assent at this juncture that the colonies should assume the burden on military expenditures.(22)

Laurier maintained that imperially-organised schemes, whether military or economic, were obsolete now that Canada had assumed responsible self-government. He believed neither that there was any immediate military threat to the British Empire as a whole which demanded a costly defence scheme, nor that Canada could afford to make any useful contribution. He disliked the idea of Canada being told what to do by Britain, and being cajoled into a defence pact, insisting instead that 'she shall reserve for herself the right to judge whether or not there is cause for her to act'.(23) Ultimately, 17,000 Australians, 8,500 Canadians and 8,000 New Zealanders agreed to fight in the Boer War for the British: but the Canadian troops were there because of the enthusiasm of Canadian public opinion, not pressure from the British government.(24)

In South Africa, the difficulties which the British government faced in defeating just a few thousand Boers gave considerable cause for alarm. It seemed unfair that the self-governing colonies should be accepting the privileges of Empire membership, such as their guaranteed protection by the Royal Navy, while not offering adequate assistance in return. It appeared that they did not concur with the famous maxim of Admiral Fisher, that 'the British Empire floats on the Royal Navy'.(25) After 1902 the governments of Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony and Natal did all make small contributions, but Laurier remained unrepentant.

In 1902 Balfour established the Committee of Imperial Defence as an advisory committee on a permanent basis, flexible enough to call to its meetings visiting colonial statesmen and service chiefs who could offer their own opinions freely. This committee represented the first time that the self-governing colonies had been admitted to the inner sanctum of imperial decision-making. However, at the eighty-odd meetings of the C.I.D., 1902-5, the defence of India dominated the agenda at more than fifty.(26) In addition, colonial statesmen tended to distrust the Committee lest it imposed commitments on them not to their liking.

Even with the C.I.D. in operation, the problem remained of deciding what form of contribution would actually be of any real use. In the 1890s a major naval strategist, Admiral Mahan, had suggested that it was more important to have a few big ships with powerful guns than well-defended ports and lots of small gunboats. The subsequent adoption of this strategy by the British Admiralty seemed to suggest that if the self-governing colonies were to make a real contribution to imperial defence they must each provide a large battleship: yet few colonial governments could afford to do this and fewer still wanted to anyway. A land installation was obviously there to protect that particular country, whereas a Royal Navy ship would appear to most

taxpayers to be for the benefit of the British Isles rather than for themselves.

Grey's call for military federation

The question of imperial defence had not really troubled the Liberal Imperialists before the outbreak of the Boer War, but once conflict erupted they soon related it to the 'National Efficiency' argument. Haldane, as War Secretary after 1905, pushed for reforms in the War Office and army, and strongly supported Fisher's calls for a naval build-up. In comparison, Grey had outlined as early as 1885 the need for a common contribution from all self-governing colonies towards the cost of imperial defence.(27) This view was motivated not only by Grey's interest in Britain's strategic security, but also by his belief that Britain should remain sufficiently strong to fulfil that civilising mission which had been entrusted to the Anglo-Saxon race, and which depended upon a powerful and effective navy.

Grey was among those imperialists who were adamant that the self-governing colonies must accept their share of imperial responsibilities. In 1892 he thought that they should each add to their tariffs an additional 3% duty on foreign imports and donate the extra revenue to the British Treasury for the benefit of the Royal Navy. In this way, 'every part of the Empire contributes its quota to the maintenance of the fleet on which we depend for the maintenance of our Empire'.(28) Ten years later, he told a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute that, as the self-governing colonies matured and developed, so the relationship between them and Britain must adapt: in the matter of imperial defence, they should be given some direct influence over imperial policy, but they must also contribute towards the cost of the fleet.(29)

When Governor-General, Grey saw it as his task to convince the Canadian people of the benefits that accrued from an imperial defence

strategy based around a strong navy. He was not afraid to speak and act openly about this controversial issue, even though it deeply divided Canadians between those in favour of a strong imperial commitment, those against, and those like Laurier who were content with the status quo. Grey described Laurier to Crewe as by temperament a Little Englander, unwilling to look beyond the shores of his own country and afraid of Canada being dragged into the vortex of European militarism; but not incapable of persuasion, nevertheless.(30) Grey wrote:

We are at the parting of the ways and...unless the various portions of the British Empire pull together we may be destroyed in detail.(31)

In 1909 Admiral Fisher revealed that within four years Germany would be able to match Britain as to the number of the new Dreadnought battleships. Thus a perverse virility contest between two nations erupted, centred on numbers, which stirred the patriotic sentiment of British people everywhere. Grey wrote gleefully to Amery: 'I am most grateful to the Emperor William for the way he has poked up the British fire all over the world. Nothing is more useful than a good scare.'(32) Grey was by inclination a man of peace, but he well realised that this news would put pressure on Dominion governments everywhere to start helping the mother country at last.

Laurier was faced with a rising demand from the great majority of English-speaking Canadians to offer a generous gesture of support to Britain. He responded by proposing to build up the size of the Canadian navy, hitherto comprising just one gunboat on the Great Lakes - a measure which he felt would satisfy popular demand while yet serving Canada's own national interests first and foremost. This offer was, moreover, consistent with the views expressed at the Imperial Defence Conference earlier that year, when the idea of an imperial fleet as one unit was abandoned in favour of separate

Dominion naval units.(33) Unfortunately for Laurier, his response satisfied almost no one. The imperially-minded in both Canada and Britain saw it as a betrayal of British interests and a pitifully inadequate response, while the more nationalist-minded interpreted it as a sign of growing militaristic and imperialist tendencies which they considered wholly un-Canadian. Both these groups, the Conservatives under Borden and the French-speaking Nationalists under Bourassa, found it convenient to unite on this issue against Laurier's government.

Grey was one of the very few people supportive of Laurier's response, because he was so pleased that any response had been offered at all. It upset him to see Canada dividing itself on this issue, rather than uniting around the need for a co-ordinated imperial defence policy, and so he embarked on what Gordon describes as a 'confidential personal intervention' to persuade Conservatives not to attack Laurier in this way.(34) This direct involvement in domestic politics, most unusual for a non-partisan figure like a Governor-General but quite characteristic of Grey, had little effect. The Conservatives were not prepared to subordinate party interests to imperial interests if they had the chance to discredit Laurier.

Grey was also unusual for maintaining even now that a stronger Canadian Navy would be more useful than the gift of a Dreadnought by Canada to Britain. He believed that the possession of a navy would boost Canadian national sentiment and make Canadians more mindful of the far greater role played by the Royal Navy. As will be explained in the next chapter, Grey regarded colonial nationalist sentiment as perfectly compatible with efforts towards imperial unity. Hence he welcomed Laurier's response, and even told him that he would consider the gift of a Dreadnought or two from Canada 'a sop not a policy, a cheap and unworthy evasion of a National obligation'.(35)

Whereas the merits of an imperial customs union centred largely around mutual self-interest, those of a defence pact were based on sentiment as well. Grey argued that, in return for the privilege of being a 'dependent independency' with guaranteed protection from the Royal Navy, Canada and the other Dominions should accept that they had a duty to help pay for that Navy, or alternatively provide ships of their own. It was a simple message which he preached constantly, all part of his effort to educate Canadians in their imperial responsibilities. He was never so provocative as to demand that they should make a contribution immediately, but the implication was obvious that help very soon would be welcomed.(36)

Grey even went to the lengths of encouraging Canadian imperialists to join the new Navy Leagues being formed in their country, which aimed to boost the popular demand for a stronger naval force in a united imperial defence strategy. This was the most sensitive and partisan issue in which Grey involved himself while in Canada, which led Goldwin Smith to describe Laurier's proposals for a Canadian navy as largely the work of a 'mischief-making Governor-General'.(37) Bourassa, moreover, implied that by yielding to Grey's insistent imperialist demands of the past six years Laurier had lost all sense of national spirit. Laurier doubtless found this ironic, since he had spent so much of his time in fighting off indoctrination by Grey, and pursuing only those imperial policies which he felt to be also in the best interests of Canada.

Grey had long run the risk of upsetting Canadian nationalist sensibilities by his championing of imperialism, but generally his popularity had saved him from a nationalist backlash. On the issue of imperial defence, however, he intervened too much. Howick warned the Colonial Secretary that his father risked tarnishing his official position, as well as his personal prestige, by becoming embroiled in a major domestic controversy. He wrote:

There is no doubt that a section of the French Canadians ascribe the intensity of the Naval enthusiasm out west largely to my father. I do not think that that is quite a correct appreciation of the case. He has not created these enthusiasms. It would be more true to say that he has helped to remove the bushell [sic] under which the light was hid. But the point is that whether rightly or wrongly they blame him as the author, and since November he has been conscious of the fact that many people are on the look out to trip him up.(38)

Luckily for Grey, it suited the French nationalists and the Conservatives to concentrate their attack on Laurier himself, and he escaped any serious censure once attention turned to the Reciprocity Agreement signed between Canada and the United States. In March 1911 a senior Canadian counsel at those Reciprocity discussions, J.S. Ewart, took the opportunity to attack Grey for promoting blatantly political schemes by his enthusiasm for Canadian naval reform, and claimed that his dearest wish was to bind Canada politically and militarily to Britain. Henceforth Grey was much more discreet, but he still took the opportunity in a final speech in September 1911 to remind the Canadian people that the maintenance of their liberties and their prosperity depended entirely on British supremacy of the seas - a fact he claimed was so generally admitted as not to be controversial. When he sat down after that speech, however, Laurier in his response made no reference to the Governor-General's final imperial rallying cry, thus illustrating that this was all too clearly a controversial issue.(39)

Conclusion

In its assessment of Grey's performance in Canada, published upon his return home, The Times remarked that, despite his enthusiasm bordering on rashness, and his blatant banging of the imperialist drum, he had retained his popularity among most Canadians,

'notwithstanding that he has exercised a freedom of speech which was not attempted by his more cautious predecessors'.(40) The justification for Grey, of course, was that he saw it as his duty to help Canada prepare for the war that was looming on the horizon.

In the matter of economic federation within the Empire, Grey struck a markedly original and flexible line. In part, this was because he refused to let controversy about tariff reform become a stumbling block for the ultimate goal, political federation; and the fact that he modified his calls for Imperial Preference towards the end of 1910 is a splendid illustration of this. In large measure, however, Grey's thinking was shaped by the fact that he had an unsurpassed appreciation of how the grandiose theories produced by his friends in London were generally unacceptable in the Dominions.

Grey saw that Canada simply could not afford to lose the income produced by the tariffs against goods imported from Britain; and hence Imperial Free Trade was not a reasonable goal in the foreseeable future. He sought instead to win over both his colleagues at home and also Laurier in Canada to a compromise solution of Imperial Preference - until he became aware that, for the time being at least, even this idea was unacceptable in the Dominions. He thus showed a remarkable pragmatism in the way he abandoned the proposal until closer ties of sentiment within the Empire had been established to render economic federation more likely.

In attempting to persuade Laurier to make a positive contribution to the defence policy of the Empire, Grey again chose to involve himself far more deeply in contentious domestic issues than a Governor-General should have done. He convinced himself, and even Laurier too, that the establishment by Canada of a navy could satisfy both imperial and Canadian nationalist aspirations, without any resulting conflict of interest. The fact that Grey exceeded his constitutional prerogative is undeniable: and A.J.P. Taylor even

suggests that it was fortunate his term of office ran out just when the Conservatives took over in Ottawa, or else they would have asked for his recall.(41) Nevertheless, Grey was prepared to take the risk, since anything which stimulated imperial sentiment was, in his opinion, to be encouraged.

CHAPTER FIVE
IMPERIAL SENTIMENT

Imperial Federation was more likely to be championed by politicians in Britain and the Dominions if the populace in all of those countries fully recognised its merits. That the boosting of imperial sentiment everywhere was a pre-condition of Imperial Federation was a fact understood by most imperialists, but by none more so than Grey. In his various capacities - as a trustee of Rhodes's will, as Governor-General of Canada, and as President of the Royal Colonial Institute - Grey devoted his considerable energies and talents to promoting imperial sentiment, especially among citizens of the Dominions. He maintained that any resistance by them to Imperial Federation was simply the result of ignorance about its possible benefits, rather than anti-imperialism.

In his efforts, Grey was unparalleled both for his energy and his creativity. A charming personality, and great integrity, won him many influential friends in politics, journalism and elsewhere, at home and abroad, who listened to his ideas with respect and were not infrequently persuaded to lend him support, even though his large imagination and his single-mindedness sometimes caused him to pursue ideas which others might have rejected as fanciful.

Grey as 'teacher' of the Canadians

The post of Canadian Governor-General was for Grey 'the crown of his career....It was here for the first time that his imperialism had room to move'.(1) It also presented him with the opportunity to

awaken and nourish the spirit of imperial sentiment in Canada, so that it might become a leading advocate of Imperial Federation. A Governor-General was supposed to avoid party political issues: but that was easier said than done because it was sometimes hard for anyone, and certainly an imperialist like Grey, to differentiate between imperial questions and purely domestic ones.(2)

As will be seen, Grey stressed that imperial consolidation was not to be feared, and strove to create in Canada a sense of national identity - something which he considered to be totally compatible with imperialism. He confidently predicted, as did many Canadians themselves, that their population would rise to more than eighty million by the end of the century, and that as a result Canada would become the senior partner in the Empire.(3) It was vital, therefore, that Canada should feel united in itself, that it should remain a closely-knit member of the Empire, and that it should even become willing to take on an increasing share of imperial responsibilities. All that was required, Grey felt, was education: and he was quite prepared to act as teacher.

A substantial minority of Canadians, though, held the view that the next step for their country was full independence, rather than incorporation in some great federated enterprise. Even many of those who accepted the maintenance of imperial ties were keen to see the growth of Canadian nationalism, as a way of uniting the country by drawing together the different provinces, and also enabling Canada to establish itself as a significant power on the world stage. Colonial nationalism in all the Dominions had been growing since at least the 1880s, but nowhere more so than in Canada.

Carleton Hayes has described the New Imperialism of the late Victorian era as but a nationalist urge, a psychological reaction springing from an ardent desire to maintain or recover prestige.(4) In much the same spirit, Seeley spoke of imperial unity as 'some sort

of pan-Anglicanism' and compared the movement for closer union to the struggle for national unity in Italy and Germany.(5) Thus Grey, and those like him who were Anglo-Saxon race imperialists, were nationalists in another guise, aiming to preserve the Anglo-Saxon race's ideals of progress and civilisation by means of consolidation across the world. He was not prepared to let what he called parochialism in certain countries, adhered to by the Roman Catholics in Ireland, the French speakers in Canada or the Boers in South Africa, thwart the cause of Imperial Federation.

Grey did not see Imperial Federation and what he meant by colonial nationalism as necessarily incompatible. At a speech in December 1907, he declared that the danger which threatened the Empire was the spirit of parochialism. Where this spirit was not subordinated to national responsibilities and obligations, provincial impoverishment and parochial stagnation would ensue. History had taught mankind, he proclaimed, that national greatness, once achieved, quickly disappeared where local and individual selfishness made co-operative union for national objectives impossible.(6) For Grey, colonial nationalism was acceptable on the condition that the imperial link with Britain was never questioned.

While parochialism was dangerous, Grey saw the development of national pride as a necessary preliminary to closer imperial unity. He wrote to Laurier in 1909:

As a rule of course nationalism is a step towards imperialism, and it is the recognition of this truth which has made me, as a race imperialist, do everything in my power to promote Canadian nationalism.(7)

At first this opinion might seem somewhat baffling, but it becomes more understandable when considering his subsequent advice to Laurier on how to deal with the newly-settled western provinces in Canada,

which felt no loyalty either to the rest of Canada or the Empire as a whole:

The best and surest way to stimulate a passion for Canadian nationalism is through Imperialism. The recognition of the splendid destiny awaiting Canada as an integral part of the British Empire, will keep the West of the Dominion loyal to the East, and prevent it from developing centrifugal tendencies towards the [United] States.(8)

Grey was worried that people settling in the West, often formerly from the United States, felt little loyalty to Montreal or Ottawa. First and foremost they must develop a sense of pride in their nation. He sought to promote this by suggesting that Canada might one day be the most powerful Dominion in the Empire.(9) Once they could identify with their country, he believed, they would then be able to identify with the greater union to which they also belonged - the British Empire.

Grey's most visible attempt to boost imperial feeling through strong nationalism came with the Quebec Tercentenary Celebrations in 1908, which he transformed from a provincial into an imperial celebration. While he could not persuade the King to come over for the occasion, he did secure the presence of the Prince of Wales. Grey sought at the same time to purchase the Plains of Abraham, the battlefield where the British had defeated the French in 1759, and urged the governments of each self-governing colony to contribute \$100,000 towards the purchase cost. In a letter to the Governor of the Cape, Lord Selborne, Grey explained his ideas:

By the contribution of the relatively small sum of \$100,000 South Africa may, so to speak, run up her flag and keep it flying above the Plains of Abraham for all time - a cheap and pretty little bit of Imperial Federation sentiment entailing no responsibilities or obligations, but supplying a permanent symbol of that Imperial unity on the maintenance of which the prosperity of every part of the Empire depends.(10)

Grey lobbied extensively to stir up support for the Celebrations, and endeavoured to attract representatives from throughout the Empire to attend. Yet his scheme failed to capture the imagination of the self-governing colonies or Britain: although each Dominion sent a representative, only New Zealand made a financial contribution. Grey's Canadian extravaganza failed to equal Curzon's Durbar of 1902, illustrating how for most British imperialists the 'White Empire' lacked the mystique of the Orient.

For Grey, the Tercentenary Celebrations were nevertheless a qualified success. What he failed to recognise was that the enthusiasm of many Canadians for these festivities did not necessarily mean they were also keen on closer imperial unity. The opinion of MacKenzie King, at this stage an up-and-coming Canadian politician, provides a striking contrast to that of Grey. Although a close friend of the Governor-General, King distrusted all imperialists like him for being 'in danger of breaking down the very structure they were trying to create' through insensitivity to Dominion feelings. The Quebec Celebrations were, he felt, not a Canadian event but simply a party laid on for a child by its mother. Furthermore, he could not see how South Africa's love for Empire would be increased by asking Botha and the Boers to help celebrate an occasion marking the defeat of another race by the British.(11)

Grey was not alone in believing that colonial nationalism and imperialism were compatible, however: F.S. Oliver pointed out that Scotland is united with England and yet remains 'a proud and self-reliant nation....The meaning of Empire to a free people is not a stunting and overshadowing growth, but a proud and willing subordination'.(12) Yet Oliver and Grey were equally wrong in this supposition, and failed to understand that the growth of colonial nationalism could not be equated with any loss of autonomy in a federal political union. When Governor-General, Grey always spoke of

himself as a Canadian, but in assessing Canadian interests through English eyes he represented only a minority opinion in Canada. Likewise he was mistaken when he made suggestions about racial fusion and assimilation between the French and the English Canadians (and, indeed, between Boers and English-speaking South Africans), since such fusion was so unlikely to happen - and, indeed, has not happened.

Grey was not a racist in the sense that he believed there are biological differences between races, although in a letter to Rhodes he did recommend that Scandinavians be encouraged to settle in Rhodesia because 'they cross splendidly with the English'.(13) However, recognising what he believed to be the marked cultural and moral superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, he urged that the flood of immigrants from Asia to Canada, occurring in the early 1900s, be stemmed. He wrote:

It is obvious that Canada cannot allow [British Columbia] to become a yellow province, any more than Japan can allow any part of the 'land of the risen sun' to become white.(14)

Keeping each colour to its own sphere of influence would, he argued, be advisable in the interests of both peace and Anglo-Saxon consolidation.(15)

Neither was Grey particularly keen about the prospect of massive migration into Canada from the United States. He was appalled by the level of political and judicial corruption south of the border, which he believed arose from the flood of immigrants there from southern Europe, and feared that such corrupting influences might seep into Canada too. He was happy to welcome immigrants to boost the tiny population of Canada (still only 5,300,000 in 1900), but only if they were the right sort - from Northern Europe, rather than what he considered to be culturally and morally degenerate Southern Europeans.(16) Racial purity in this sense was essential to the cause of Anglo-Saxon consolidation. He wished to preserve the relative

racial purity of Canada, by urging Anglo-French fusion and protecting it from the sordid influences of modern American life, as well as from Asiatic migration.

Grey never considered the position of the Canadian Indians in the grand vision of his 'White Empire'. Neither did he address the question of how the millions of Southern Europeans and Hispanics who had already settled in the United States would respond to his dream of Anglo-American association. Probably he just assumed that, given time, they would share the same fate as the Boers and the French Canadians, in adopting the culture and morality of the 'superior' Anglo-Saxon race. This was a fundamental defect in the logic of all such race imperialists: perhaps they considered such matters a minor inconvenience, which could be left to a later generation to rectify.

When in Canada, Grey attached tremendous importance to the improvement of diplomatic relations between the United States on the one hand and Canada and the Empire on the other. Officially Canada's foreign policy was determined entirely by the Colonial and Foreign Offices in London, but the manner in which the 1903 Alaskan Boundary Dispute was settled had prompted so many cries in Canada of English pro-American bias that henceforth Whitehall interfered less in such matters. Nevertheless, Grey could not resist intervening, and between 1904 and 1911 the influence of the Governor-General upon Canadian external policy reached its zenith.(17) He developed a rapport with Root, the U.S. Secretary of State from July 1905, and together they worked hard to improve relations between the U.S.A. and Britain as well as Canada, successfully dispelling the tension of the 1903 dispute. When James Bryce, an old friend of Grey, became Ambassador to Washington in 1907, relations improved still further.(18) As H.A.L. Fisher wrote of Grey and Bryce: 'To each the friendship of the United States and the British Empire seemed one of the most desirable ends to be pursued'.(19)

Grey cajoled Laurier into being more conciliatory to Washington, which helped lead to the settling of numerous longstanding disputes - such as fishing and sealing rights and the boundary waters dispute. He also struck up a personal friendship with Theodore Roosevelt (United States President 1901-8), who seemed to share his interest in closer relations. Roosevelt wrote to him in 1905 of his desire to 'strengthen the ties between not merely the United States and Canada but all portions of the English-speaking world'.(20) Grey began describing him as the inheritor of Rhodes's vision: but it is inconceivable that Roosevelt had anything like an Anglo-Saxon world federation in mind when he uttered such platitudes to Grey.

In March 1906, before a distinguished audience of five hundred guests at the Waldorf Astoria in New York, Grey made a keynote speech as the senior representative of the British Empire on the American continent. In a characteristically inspired gesture, Grey announced that, as a symbol of the growing friendship between their two countries, he would return to the United States a portrait of Benjamin Franklin which the 1st Earl Grey had looted in 1777 in the War of Independence. To thunderous applause, he continued:

To those of us who believe that in the coming solidarity and unification of the Anglo-Saxon race lies the future peace and hope of the world, the signs of the times are most encouraging.

Anglo-Saxon civilisation, he continued, offered the hope of future peace and the realisation of the highest ideals attainable on earth.(21)

The Times, which upon his death was to describe Grey as 'exceptionally sympathetic with the United States', said that this speech gave invaluable help to the cause of Anglo-American friendship, and was very well received in the United States.(22) There was dissension, however, among the substantial minority of Americans who were not of Anglo-Saxon origin. The Gaelic American newspaper argued

in an article labelled 'Toadies and Sycophants slobber over Earl Grey' that Grey's talk of a common ancestry falsified history by ignoring the presence of so many Americans of Celtic and Gaelic origin, people from Scotland and Ireland rather than his beloved England.(23) This was a pertinent observation, highlighting an inaccuracy in the thinking of all imperialists at this time, and one which Grey never bothered to correct. The article expressed the fears of a small but significant section of the American population, who were absolutely opposed to the strengthening of links with the Empire which they had left behind.

Characteristically, Grey's mind never settled on this subject long enough for him to suggest any specific plans about how the United States and the Empire might be brought closer together. He talked vaguely about joint trading or defence arrangements, and praised the merits of the Rhodes Scholarships. Grey never admitted to himself the fact that the United States had not the slightest intention of surrendering any power of decision-making to the British Empire, or becoming embroiled in world affairs; and that his vision was, therefore, pure fantasy. His hopes were raised with the outbreak of war in 1914, since he believed this would prove correct the maxim of Goldwin Smith, that 'in enterprise and peril Anglo-Saxon will be the truest of comrades to Anglo-Saxon'.(24) The fact that the United States did not enter the war until 1917 provoked in him a feeling of betrayal, but still he believed that eventual consolidation was quite possible. He wrote to Bryce:

The coming in of America has lifted a great weight off my heart. I cabled to Roosevelt and to Choate and the excellent Page saying how greatly we all rejoiced at the fact that now and for ever henceforward the English-speaking nations would walk hand in hand as joint protectors of the rights of mankind.(25)

Encouraging migration to the Empire

Both as a way of boosting imperial sentiment and furthering the civilising mission of the Anglo-Saxon people, Grey was strongly in favour of British men and their families emigrating from their homeland to the self-governing colonies and Rhodesia. This would have the added advantage of helping to reduce the perceived overcrowding in Britain's cities, which he thought was leading to social unrest and discontent. Thus Grey advocated that emigration be actively encouraged by the British government, for the benefit of Britain and the Empire alike.

As a British South Africa Company director from 1889 to 1904, Grey was deeply involved in the attempt by Rhodes to repeat in the charter territories of Matabeleland and Mashonaland the process initiated in South Africa two centuries earlier - turning a black man's land white. Mass emigration to the region was vital if this goal were to be achieved and its economic potential realised, as well as to offset the influence of the Boers and thus establish the region as an integral part of the British Empire. The opinion of the native Africans was irrelevant, since they were ignorant savages who must not be allowed to thwart the march of progress.

It was emigration to Rhodesia and Canada which most interested Grey, believing as he did that the presence of more new blood from the mother country could not fail to boost imperial sentiment there. 'We have, as Kipling says, to keep on pumping in white men', he told one friend.(26) He resented the fact that, between 1821 and 1900, more than 6,800,000 people had migrated from the British Isles to the United States, rather than to the Empire. If only all United Kingdom emigrants in the nineteenth century had settled in the Empire, rather than the United States, he believed, the resultant manpower size and greater economic productivity would have been such that 'Germany would never have dared to challenge the British Empire'.(27) Grey appeared



to ignore the fact that if these people - many of whom were Irish and not his beloved Anglo-Saxons - had not chosen to settle across the Atlantic, then the United States would have been still more in the hands of those Italians and Hispanics for whom he had such contempt.

Size was all-important in this matter. The Empire had at that time a white population of sixty million, while in the United States the figure was one hundred million, and in Russia almost twice as many again. Grey's fear was that the Anglo-Saxon population of the Empire would diminish proportionately to these other two powers (not to mention the yellow perils of Japan and China), thus reducing Britain to the rank of a second-class power. The logic of this argument is baffling, since it takes no account of the quality of a nation's manpower, and disregards the fact that many thousands of Indian troops were at that moment fighting with distinction for the Empire. Moreover, it is totally inconsistent with his suggestion of closer Anglo-American association. Grey rarely let logic impede his arguments, however.

From the moment that he had become Governor-General, Grey had been anxious to encourage immigration (of the right sort) to Canada, and suggested privately that the British government should advance money to the Salvation Army to enable them to place the worthy poor and their families in carefully selected areas in the Dominions.(28) He was further inspired when he met Rider Haggard, a British novelist who was compiling a report for the Salvation Army on the state of their emigration schemes in the United States.(29) Grey enthused over these schemes, but the Colonial Office regarded them as failures financially. For the moment, therefore, Grey concentrated more on encouraging land settlement in Rhodesia, and in 1906 urged the British South Africa Company to grant suitable land there to the Salvation Army, together with a loan of £50,000.(30)

With the outbreak of war in 1914, Grey's interest in emigration took on a new urgency. By now he had developed a terrible fear of the civil unrest in Britain in the past few years, including massive and unruly strikes in Wales and Liverpool, and believed that problems would only worsen once the war ended. In December, therefore, he arranged a meeting between the Royal Colonial Institute and the Salvation Army, to discuss how emigration might be a suitable means of alleviating immediate post-war difficulties. He wrote:

It is obvious that at the end of the war we shall have large numbers of ex-soldiers out of employment, and unless provision is made to meet their requirements they may constitute a social and political menace....Here is the opportunity to strengthen the Empire by settling the unoccupied lands of the Empire, particularly Australia.(31)

Grey wrote this to Kerr, probably in the hope of interesting the Round Table in the cause of emigration, but help was not forthcoming. Thereafter he concentrated his efforts on the Royal Colonial Institute, of which he had been President for the past two years. An elderly Australian, Samuel Copley, had in November 1914 offered 100,000 acres of land and £50,000 of working capital for the benefit of ex-servicemen selected by the R.C.I., at a nominal annual rent of £10,000.(32) Grey saw this as just the beginning of great things and, in 1915, established and chaired an 'After the War' Committee (later renamed the Land Settlement Committee) to pursue this cause. Other members included Haggard and Evelyn Wrench.(33)

The Royal Colonial Institute's enthusiasm for emigration was not shared by the government. In June 1915 neither Asquith nor Bonar Law (the latter in his capacity as Colonial Secretary) would see a deputation from the Committee, although after personal pressure from Grey Bonar Law and Selborne (by then the President of the Board of Agriculture) did eventually arrange to see one.(34) In large measure

this antipathy was because the government had far more important things to consider.

During the course of 1915 Grey resigned the chair of the committee on account of his failing health, but supported the proposal of his successor, Lord Sydenham, to send out Haggard to explore the possibilities for land settlement in all the Dominions.(35) The British government declined to approve the idea, aware as it was that some Dominions, and Australia in particular, would be most unhappy. The prospect of Britons of low class and with few practical skills settling on their land and placing an extra burden on their limited resources filled many Australians with a sense of horror, not increased imperial sentiment.(36)

Haggard's trip resulted in an account declaring that various promises had been made by different state governments in Australia.(37) Spurred on by the British South Africa Company's offer of 500,000 acres of land in Rhodesia for post-war settlement, the Committee pursued its objectives with renewed vigour, although by this time Grey's involvement had largely ceased.(38) One year later, in April 1917, the British government at last set up its own Empire Settlement Committee, with Haggard as a member, thus superseding that of the Royal Colonial Institute. Yet it failed to give more than minimal encouragement to aspiring emigrants once the war ended, and declined to take up the various offers of land.(39)

It should be noted that the number of Britons who emigrated to the Empire in 1919 was 115,369, whereas in 1913 the figure had been 285,046.(40) Thus Grey's great hopes were not realised: they provoked enthusiasm from neither the British and Dominion governments, nor the British people as a whole. Nevertheless the project is worth relating because it typified the belief of those like Grey that the concerns of imperial unity and the state of British society were closely

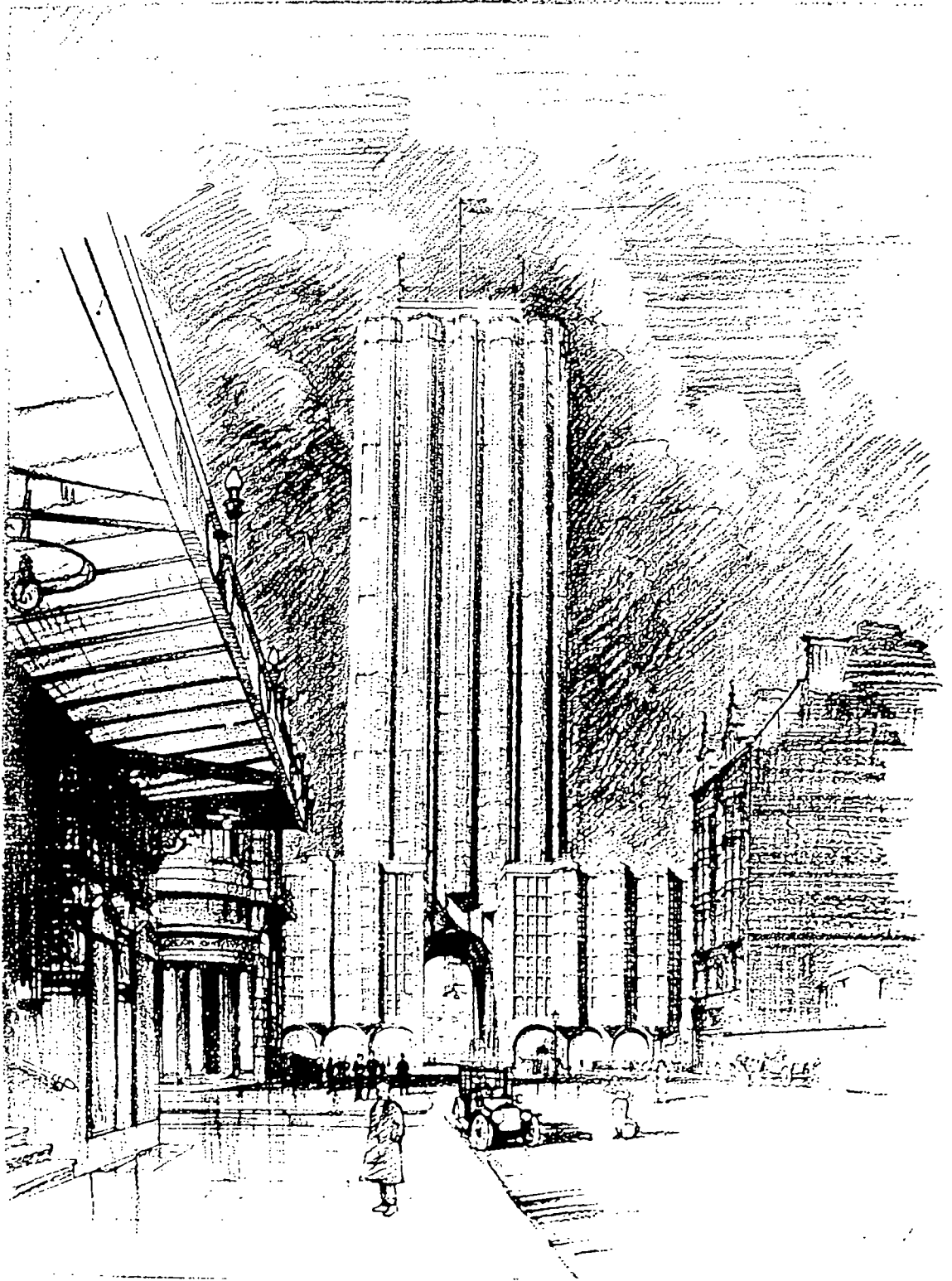
interlinked, and that the Empire could be used as a way of solving Britain's domestic ills.

Grey's 'Magnum Opus': Dominion House

A further and yet more ambitious example of Grey's commitment to the importance of boosting imperial sentiment was his Dominion House project, to which he devoted most of his time after returning home from Canada in 1911. He envisaged one vast building in the centre of London in which the representatives of each of the Dominions might work alongside one another - a great physical symbol of Imperial Federation, matched in splendour and significance only by St. Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster. Grey considered this the most ambitious scheme of his life. 'It is to be my magnum opus', he told one friend.(41)

The idea first occurred to him in 1907, when he suggested to Laurier that if, as they both hoped, a separate Dominions Department in Whitehall were established, 'the pressure for bringing under the same roof all the London offices of the Dominion High Commissioners and Agents General will I hope become irresistible'.(42) In February 1913 this dream was launched when Grey obtained from London County Council an option on a 2.5 acre site at Aldwych in the Strand, and he established a company (Dominion House Limited) to promote the scheme. The site was big enough for not only the London offices of all the Dominions, so enhancing administrative cohesion and unity between them, but also a large exhibition hall where the produce of each Dominion would be displayed, thus boosting inter-imperial commerce. This proposal would constitute a visible link between the centre of the Empire and the Dominions.

In July Grey hosted a luncheon at the Savoy to advertise the scheme, at which all the leading newspaper editors were present. Thereafter he won an enormous amount of favourable coverage in the



EARL GREY'S PROPOSED DOMINION HOUSE
The Physical Symbol of Imperial Federation

British press.(43) He was less successful elsewhere, however. The King declined to patronise the scheme, presumably on the advice of the government - which never offered the slightest hint of support or sympathy for what it considered a costly and impracticable scheme. Likewise, no Dominion government accepted Grey's plea for help. He did persuade numerous Canadian industrialists and politicians to advocate the scheme to Prime Minister Borden (who had succeeded Laurier in September 1911), and wrote numerous personal messages to him reminding him of the benefits of Imperial Federation which would result from a Dominion House - but in vain.

The Dominion governments had no wish to work alongside each other in one building, since they were usually competing fiercely against one another for trading contracts. Moreover, they considered the cost of the scheme - estimated at £3,000,000 - too excessive for them to contribute towards. Neither were other British imperialists particularly interested, and as early as 1912 Rosebery had warned Grey that a building by itself would do nothing to consolidate the Empire.(44) Although he secured the support of Jameson, others like Milner and St.Loe Strachey (editor of The Spectator) preferred a different suggestion for an imperial business and social centre, free from any political overtones.(45)

Despite this lack of support, Grey was anxious that the scheme be kept alive until the time of the next Imperial Conference, when it might be relaunched as an Imperial War Memorial venture.(46) At that conference, however, held in 1917, the scheme was rejected for the foreseeable future. This was indeed a bitter blow to a man by then on his deathbed, who had spent £5,000 of his own money promoting the scheme and devoted most of his failing energies to inspiring in the Dominion governments real enthusiasm for Imperial Federation which transcended mere financial and parochial considerations.(47)

In May 1913 Lewis Harcourt, the only government minister who had expressed any support for the scheme, had written to Grey: 'You always have grandiose ideas and by your enthusiasm very often bring them off'.(48) In this case, however, Grey was swept away by his imagination, and failed to realise that Dominion governments viewed his proposal with nothing less than horror, since it seemed to be advocating centralisation and suppressing the right of independent action which they had long been establishing for themselves. Borden had warned Grey in 1913 that a Dominion House would not meet with the necessary co-operation between the individual provinces of Canada (each separate trading rivals) let alone the separate Dominions.(49)

Harry Brittain, a pioneer of the Imperial Press Conference of 1909, later commented of Grey's Dominion House project: 'It was a grand idea, but was I fear, somewhat before its time; maybe that time will never arrive!'(50) This was an appropriate epitaph for Grey's most ambitious project.

Boosting Imperial Sentiment in practical ways

Even while Grey committed his energies to being Governor-General and then to his Dominion House project, he spared time to promote any venture which caught his imagination, such as the scouting movement, the Imperial Press Conference, and ^{the} Royal Colonial Institute. The scouts were established by Baden Powell in Britain in 1908 - during the era of 'National Efficiency' - as a non-militaristic and non-racial body, illustrative of its founder's belief in the 'need for social and political unity against danger both external and subversive'.(51) It spread to the Dominions in 1910-11, as a way of bringing the youth of the Empire together and encouraging them to think imperially rather than parochially. From the outset Grey expressed his support, and in December 1910 spoke at the Scouts' Ontario Provincial Council:

My interest in the Boy Scouts arises from my love of Canada and my solicitude for her well-being. England has planted the seeds of her great destiny with the Dominion. My doubt is whether the people will be able to reap it. That will depend on the education you give your children. I am not convinced that your schools are turning out boys fitted when they become men to be the reapers of this splendid destiny.(52)

Grey's interest in inter-imperial communications also developed when he was in Canada. He was appalled by the slowness and expense of news transmission between Britain and the Dominions, and by the fact that passenger ships generally headed straight for the United States rather than Canada. In a letter to Harcourt in February 1906 he urged the new Liberal government to subsidise passenger steamers, and thus help to promote the connection between the heart and the periphery of the Empire, as well as to lower inter-imperial postal rates and increase mail service subsidies.(53) He considered it extraordinary that, although Quebec was closer to London than to Vancouver, inter-imperial communications remained so poor. While the union of Germany, Italy and the United States had each benefited so much from improvements in communications, there had been no similar improvements in the Empire.(54) The fact that the Empire was split up by water rather than land was no excuse, he felt, since the new system of telegraph cables had been developed. Indeed, he pressed particularly hard for a special imperial cable network,(55) while at the same time giving much encouragement to the Imperial Press Conference arranged by Britain in 1909, which led to reduced cable charges.(56)

With regard to the Royal Colonial Institute, finally, it was not in Grey's nature, any more than it was his intention, to consider his presidency as merely an honorific position. The Institute became much more active under his guidance, and between 1912 and 1915 doubled its membership to 10,000. In seeking to define its objective, Grey told Asquith that 'it has only one object and that is to bring about

closer cohesion between the component parts of the Empire and the Motherland'.(57) In 1914 Grey hoped to boost the membership considerably in the United States as another way of promoting Anglo-Saxon consolidation; and upon the outbreak of the First World War he even thought it might seek to urge Americans to volunteer for service in the British Army - an idea swiftly scotched by the British Foreign Office.(58)

Grey much enjoyed his work with the Institute, 'the non-political and practical character of whose activities especially appealed to him'.(59) It focused only on the 'white' part of the Empire, moreover, and had long promoted imperial union while not embroiling itself in the debate about what form this might take.(60) In particular, Grey found that it offered him a very useful and prominent platform during the war to promote his various ideas, such as conscription in Britain (which he called for in August 1915), and of course emigration schemes.(61) The Royal Colonial Institute's objectives were, for Grey, the perfect embodiment of what he himself had long advocated: the promotion of imperial sentiment. As he declared in 1915:

It is obvious that the unity and the maintenance of the British Empire depend on the existence in all its parts of a real and living sense of imperial consciousness. The R.C.I. exists to foster and promote this sense of Imperial consciousness and therefore should be supported to the best of his or her ability, by everyone who has the well-being of the British Empire at heart.(62)

Conclusion

No imperialist was more active than Grey in trying to stir up imperial sentiment as a way of making Imperial Federation a more popular and more realisable goal. He refused to accept that the growth of Dominion nationalism made the eventual acceptance of some

sort of political union any more unlikely, and maintained that education was all that was needed to bring the English-speaking peoples of the world together. The failure of his Dominion House project, like the ultimate failure of Imperial Federation itself, was to prove Grey thoroughly mistaken. Despite his undoubted success in boosting imperial sentiment among many Canadians, there remained a fundamental difference between a feeling of stronger sentiment and a positive desire for definite unification of any sort. That Grey refused, or perhaps even failed, to recognise this fact is undeniable, but nevertheless it does not detract totally from the message which he sought to preach.

CHAPTER SIX
EARL GREY AND UNITED KINGDOM FEDERATION

Background

During the years 1886-1914, while debate developed over the future of the Empire and what shape any form of closer imperial union might take, British domestic politics were dominated by the question of Irish Home Rule. From one point of view, Home Rule, if conceded, would be fatal to Imperial Federation, because it was the antithesis of the consolidation which federationists sought to promote. Yet, from another position, it seemed that the problems of both Ireland and the Empire could actually be settled by federation. Indeed, Ireland might be the first step, the ideal opportunity, to advance the imperial cause by a practical demonstration of federalism. The calls for United Kingdom federation must be studied because firstly, as J.E. Kendle suggests, it is not always possible to separate the arguments for closer imperial unity from the proposals for British devolution.(1) Secondly, these proposals help in providing a better understanding of how the word 'federalism' was defined by its advocates, and how well the idea was generally received.

Calls for Irish Home Rule were in vogue primarily in the 1830s, the period 1880-95, and again from 1910 to 1914.(2) At most Home Rule meant establishing an executive in Dublin, responsible for essentially local matters, while the Westminster Parliament continued to dictate trade, defence and foreign policy; at the very least, it meant some degree of local autonomy. The Irish problem persistently recurred in British domestic politics throughout the nineteenth century, and once

Gladstone revealed his conversion to Home Rule in 1885 the issue remained at the forefront of British politics.

In proposing his Home Rule Bill, in April 1886, Gladstone used the example of countries like Hungary to show that 'a vigorous sense of nationality is compatible with the effective organic union tempered by autonomy', and declared that the alternative to Home Rule was social chaos in Ireland and political instability in Britain.(3) Balfour and other Unionists, however, dismissed the very notion that there was any such thing as Irish nationality.

A longstanding opponent of the Bill was Chamberlain. He had been committed since 1879 to some reform of the constitutional arrangements between Britain and Ireland, partly because he had a genuine desire to see the Irish problem resolved, but also because he was convinced that the Westminster Parliament was now so overworked that major reform was necessary. One way to alleviate this problem would be to devolve certain responsibilities to a lower level of government. In May 1885 he had unsuccessfully proposed to the Cabinet a central board in Ireland, which would have certain limited administrative and legislative functions in areas such as education and public works policy.

By December 1885 Chamberlain 'had come grudgingly to the conclusion that the only way of giving "bona fide Home Rule" would be the adoption of the American Constitution'.(4) By this time he meant 'Home Rule All Round' - envisaging the adoption of a federal system of government throughout the British Isles. There would be National Councils in England, Scotland and Wales, and perhaps two in Ireland (including a separate one for Ulster), each still irrevocably bound to the United Kingdom through responsibility to the Westminster Parliament. This was a radical proposal. In truth, it is fair to suggest that his overriding aim was to block Gladstone's scheme, which he believed was fundamentally misconceived in that it would only

encourage Irish moves towards full independence. Chamberlain's interest in federalism was never wholehearted, and subsequently he privately highlighted its impracticability.(5)

Home Rule split the Liberal party, and Chamberlain and Hartington broke away with about forty others, including Selborne and Grey, to form the Liberal Unionists. In contrast, Rosebery remained alongside Gladstone. He believed that Home Rule was regrettable but necessary, as he considered it both inevitable and the only alternative to separation. Moreover, he believed, 'when that is accomplished Imperial Federation will cease to be a dream'.(6) In much the same spirit, he and his fellow Liberal Imperialists - Haldane, Asquith and Edward Grey - voted for Home Rule in 1893, at the time when the Bill was revived. It is interesting that many of those who were on opposing sides in the Liberal party on the Home Rule issue were later to unite in the calls for United Kingdom federation.

Grey's Opposition to Home Rule

Grey's belief in the cultural superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race was a major motivation behind his conviction that Ireland must remain within the Union. He believed that Gaelic people were educationally backward, and that therefore progress of any type in Ireland - whether political, social or economic - was stunted. The view that the Irish were, for whatever reason, unfit to govern themselves was held also by others - including Goldwin Smith.(7) Furthermore, Grey was hostile towards the influence of the Roman Catholic Church which, in Ireland as much as in Canada, he believed advocated ultramontane loyalties, overriding any to the British Empire.(8)

Secondly, Grey considered it quite unacceptable that the United Kingdom should disintegrate while attempts were being made to consolidate the Empire. After all, any form of Irish separation would

show that the British succumbed to intimidation and violence - which would send most unfortunate signals to any in the Empire who aspired to separation, such as various of the French Canadians or the South African Boers. In addition, Grey reasoned that an independent Ireland would constitute a grave strategic weakness for England, lest it failed to rally to England's defence in the event of danger.

This belief in the vital importance of the Union led Grey to oppose Gladstone's Home Rule Bill in 1886, and to stand as a Liberal Unionist candidate at the ensuing election. Thus he broke from many of his fellow Liberals, whom he considered to be pandering to the Irish Nationalist lobby in Parliament. They were, he felt, putting mere party position above what he considered to be the greater need - Imperial Federation.

Throughout the 1890s, while Grey's mind concentrated on British expansion in Southern Africa, he thought little of Ireland. When in Canada, however, he began to appreciate that most Canadians interpreted the Irish problems very differently ^{from?} to him, and instead saw only an oppressed people being ignored by the British Parliament - all in stark contrast to the situation in South Africa and Canada, where the British authorities claimed to attach much importance to racial harmony and the protection of minority interests (except, of course, in respect of franchise rights for the African natives). Grey believed that this Canadian interpretation, whether or not misguided, did nothing to strengthen ties of loyalty within the Empire.

Grey was aware also that to the Canadians it appeared farcical for the Westminster Parliament, guiding the affairs of a great Empire, to be so easily liable to its proceedings being disrupted by just eighty Irish Nationalist M.P.s., and also how much business was devoted solely to Irish affairs. As he wrote in 1910:

A Canadian who realises the important place which the Dominion will occupy some day in the Empire, also realises that the House

of Commons of the United Kingdom is...in the hand of traitors. He asks, why do not your people in England put their house in order?(9)

Ireland had been one of the few points over which Rhodes and Grey disagreed. Rhodes criticised him for his total opposition to the 1886 Home Rule Bill, an occasion when he himself had offered £5,000 secretly to the Liberal Party in approval of the idea. Rhodes's reasoning was that Home Rule in every part of the Empire was a forerunner to 'Imperial Home Rule': if local problems could be solved effectively at local level, the pattern could then be repeated on an imperial scale in an Imperial Parliament. Moreover, Rhodes was convinced by the worthiness of federalism as an appropriate political system for the United Kingdom. Upon Rhodes's death, Grey recollected:

He saw that the federation of Canada had been agreeably arranged...that the time for Australian federation was now at hand; that a peaceful (as he thought) federation of South Africa was inevitable; that with certain modifications in our second chamber, so it might evolve as an imperial senate....(10)

Initially Grey was unconvinced, perhaps because he was more sceptical than Rhodes about the competence of the Irish in managing their own affairs. After all, he had sat in the House of Commons at the time when the Irish M.P.s. had been at their most disruptive. Nevertheless, the seed of Rhodes's enthusiasm had been sown in his mind, and it began to grow once he was posted to Canada in 1904, and could study a federal system at first hand. This, together with the impact of Oliver's Alexander Hamilton, was enough to win over Grey fully to the merits of a federal system of government.

Over the next few years, the possibility of applying federalism to the United Kingdom fermented in Grey's mind. He had become convinced of its merits by 1907, and was one of the earliest of the principal advocates of a federal solution. His basic proposal was for separate provincial legislatures for Ireland, Scotland, Wales,

Northern England and Southern England, overseen by a federal Parliament in London. Each provincial unit would be represented in the overall Parliament in proportion to its size of population, representatives to be chosen by proportional representation. 'When the Irish are thus reduced in the Federal Parliament of the U.K. to their proper proportions, we can begin to talk of Imperial Federation'.(11)

Grey distinguished in his mind between 'national Home Rule', as Gladstone had envisaged for Ireland, and his own call for 'federal Home Rule'. Whereas the former would have given the Irish almost complete independence in domestic matters, not least over customs duties, the latter would relinquish only certain powers, and the central authority - the Federal Parliament - would have plentiful residual powers. He claimed that 'national Home Rule' would have resulted in Ireland being treated as a separate country, when in reality it was ^{an} integral part of the United Kingdom. To illustrate this point, he said, Gladstone had proposed that the relationship between Britain and Ireland should be like that between Canada and Britain. In contrast, under his proposal the relationship would be akin to that between the Canadian provinces and the Canadian federal government in Ottawa. Thus whereas Gladstone's measure promoted separation, Grey's promoted unity.

Federalism is the most modern and the most progressive form of government. It combines the advantages of local autonomy with those of national unity. It provides for self-government in all local matters and for unity in all matters of national concern. It gives liberty to the individual federated states and strength and solidarity to the federation as a whole....Federalism creates liberty and unity combined, while nationalism creates liberty and disunion.(12)

Grey believed in 1886 and 1893 that if Home Rule were enacted, the Irish electorate would undoubtedly support measures by a Dublin

parliament to confiscate the lands of the English or Protestant landlords. He considered this reprehensible, not only because it would jeopardise vital agricultural improvements which had been initiated in some such estates, but also because he feared it might be an unfortunate precedent for radicals and socialists to repeat in England. By 1909, however, his fears had subsided. Now, as a consequence of successive Land Acts, some 300,000 Irish tenants had themselves become landowners, and Grey convinced himself that this fact alone would make the Irish sufficiently responsible to merit their now being given some, though still not total, control over their own domestic affairs.(13)

In addition, the more Grey studied the idea, the more he concluded that federalism would solve British parliamentary problems: the disruptive presence of Irish Nationalist M.P.s. at Westminster; reform of the House of Lords; and an overloaded and overworked House of Commons. On the first point, he considered the eighty-odd Irish Nationalists in Parliament to be the 'greatest danger now threatening the Empire'. Given the relative populations of Ireland and England, Ireland was grossly over-represented in Parliament, a situation he regarded as intolerable since the Irish Nationalist M.P.s. were generally hostile to everything English (including the Empire) and were always on the alert to seize an opportunity of 'stabbing the Empire to the heart'.(14)

Secondly, under Grey's proposals there would be no place for the existing House of Lords in the new Federal Parliament. Although a staunch believer in the hereditary principle, he was shocked by the implications of the parliamentary wrangles over the future of the Upper Chamber. He considered these to be detrimental to Britain at a time when unity was ever more necessary in view of the difficulties facing Britain and its Empire. Under a federal system the House of Lords would be replaced by an elective Senate.(15) Finally, Grey

shared Chamberlain's view that the House of Commons was grossly overworked, and that its membership was too large to allow constructive debate: a Federal Parliament, on the other hand, would deal with far less business and could have a much smaller and hence more intimate membership.

In principle, the idea of a federal system is the reconciliation of central control and local self-government, but an essential feature is that the smaller units should have some control over the government of the central unit. However, in Grey's plan this key feature was missing. What he called federalism, 'Federal Home Rule', or 'Home Rule All Round', was in reality little more than a scheme of devolution, since he always maintained that the Federal parliament should continue to have total power in certain areas - such as defence, foreign policy and imperial policy (although these would ultimately be shared with the Dominion governments once Imperial Federation was established). Using the word 'federalism' in this context was thus a misnomer common amongst all those who came to promote causes similar to Grey's in the period 1909-21, but it was a convenient label which embraced the multiplicity of schemes which were suggested.

Grey's interest in federalism became of practical interest in 1909, the year when the Liberal government's Budget was rejected by the House of Lords. Grey's first convert to federalism was a visitor to Canada in December 1909, Lionel Curtis. It was Grey who also persuaded Curtis, and through him the Round Table, that 'before the road is cleared for the federation of the Empire we have to put the U.K. straight. The time is approaching, if it is not already here, for getting this work done'.(16) The extent of Grey's influence on the Round Table in this respect was profound. Although avowedly an imperialist organisation, it came to devote a considerable amount of time to the Irish issue, and in 1910 produced a 'Green Memorandum' on

imperial affairs which endorsed Grey's point that U.K. federation was a prerequisite for Imperial Federation.(17) In the period up to 1914, the Round Table was to provide key inspiration to the whole federationist movement.

In April 1910, the Liberal government introduced the Parliament Bill, with the aim of reforming the House of Lords. The Round Table now made a concerted effort to win over Balfour. Oliver urged him privately, and in a series of seven letters in The Times, written under the pseudonym 'Pacificus', tried to influence wider Unionist opinion. The Times itself had become enthusiastic about federalism because its proprietor Lord Northcliffe was now a supporter. Grey had first met Northcliffe in 1908, when both had expressed support for an imperial cable service. Thereafter, Grey received favourable coverage in Northcliffe's newspapers, and in September 1910 the Daily Mail proposed that he should be appointed a Knight of the Garter.(18) Grey had predicted that Northcliffe would use 'all his energies in the direction of buttressing up the British Empire',(19) and Northcliffe indeed attributed his own interest in federalism to Grey:

I am sure you have seen that the seed you scattered in London last July has borne fruit. Certainly you crystallised in my mind, whatever that may be worth, the Federal Idea....It is curious that many people who thought you visionary in July, have come round to your point of view in November.(20)

Another recent convert to federalism was Waldorf Astor, the new proprietor of The Observer. Astor convinced his editor, J.L. Garvin, of the merits of a federal solution, and Garvin then joined Oliver's attempt to win over Balfour by writing an article which drew heavily on Grey's ideas. Yet their efforts were in vain.(21) Balfour, in reply, highlighted succinctly several of the difficulties in such a scheme:

Is it not an illusion to suppose (as I gather Albert Grey supposes) that a Federal Constitution in Great Britain would be a

step towards ultimately federalising the Empire? Might it not, from many points of view, increase the difficulties of that task?....Is it not a fact that federalism, as exhibited in the USA, Canada, Australia and the Cape, is a stage in the process from separation towards unification; while federalism in the United Kingdom would be a step from unification towards separation [?](22)

Certainly Balfour's second point seemed unanswerable, and highlighted the irony of advocates such as Grey using the Canadian constitution, especially, as a model for the United Kingdom. Balfour was unimpressed by the vagueness of the talk about federalism, and highlighted the mass of unanswered dilemmas - such as the possibility of a power-clash between an Imperial Parliament and an English Parliament. He knew, too, that most Unionists were totally hostile to federalism, believing it to be merely Home Rule in another guise. In despair Grey wrote that, despite the support of men as influential as Garvin, Northcliffe and Oliver, any real step forward had been thwarted.(23)

Throughout 1910, Grey made personal approaches to various leading figures, including politicians of both parties. He wrote to Lansdowne, Edward Grey, Balfour, and even to the King, urging that the moderates of the two parties should agree to appoint a Royal Commission to consider how best to federalise the United Kingdom.(24) In a subsequent letter to Milner he added his hopes that he would be returning home from Canada, at the end of 1910, to assist in a new federalist party led by Rosebery, Cromer and Milner.(25)

Grey thus endeavoured once more to attract the elusive Rosebery back in to the political fray. This call for a new party should not be taken too seriously. Grey had similar plans in the 1880s, when he dreamed of the Whigs breaking away under Goschen to form a new party of moderation. His proposal now was more a reflection of his contempt for the two existing parties than a serious proposition. It was

always to Rosebery that Grey looked for leadership of any such group, sending him a steady flow of letters exhorting him to join with Edward Grey in taking up the banner of a firmly moderate and imperialist party. Grey seemed to be forgetful of Rosebery's despair of politics by this stage. He also clearly overrated Milner's feelings; in so far as Milner ever supported federalism, it was only because he could see no real alternative except the status quo. He was never an enthusiast, and in November 1910 declared that federalism

clearly affords no jumping-off ground for Imperial Federation....No doubt any change in the constitution of the United Kingdom...must have important consequences for the Empire as a whole. But they will be indirect consequences.(26)

In his letters Grey apologised for endeavouring to intervene in domestic politics while 3,000 miles away, but suggested that distance might enable him to see the situation somewhat more clearly than could many at home. However, the fact that he was trying to involve Rosebery in his plans suggests rather that it was Grey himself who could not see properly. No major Unionist or Liberal Imperialist heeded Grey's lone clarion call from Ottawa. Howick warned that he was causing annoyance by imposing what was felt by some to be a red herring on the scene at a time when the Unionists were trying to concentrate on the crisis facing the House of Lords. But Grey remained unabashed, remarking in reply how awful it would be if it were Asquith instead of Balfour who won electoral acclaim by using federalism to solve the Irish problem. In May 1910 he had sought to anticipate what the popular reaction to Balfour opting for federalism before the next election might be:

Consternation at first and execrations, but out of the storm the voice of reason will make itself [heard]. Slowly and by degrees people will begin to realise that federation of the U.K. is the policy required by the interests of 1. Ireland 2. Gt Britain 3. The Empire.(27)

One source of encouragement for Grey was the Canadian Prime Minister, who, while not a supporter of Imperial Federation, appeared to support his views about Ireland. Laurier wrote: 'A new Parliament has to be evolved, leaving local questions to local legislatures, and above a truly imperial body. What an opening there is at this moment in England, for someone with imagination and courage'.(28) Grey interpreted Laurier's views as reflecting the opinion of all members of the Outer Empire, universally demanding change in Britain.

During the course of 1910 various members of the Round Table had begun to dispute the Grey/Curtis view that United Kingdom federation was a condition precedent to Imperial Federation. Oliver, Brand and Kerr became more cautious, Kerr pointing out that the word 'federalism' was not strictly correct since it was not proposed that there be any restrictions on the authority of the central Federal Parliament.(29) By September 1910 Curtis too was more guarded than before, once he had begun to realise the enormity of the administrative problems that a new system of federalism would create, such as the question of checks and balances and the place of the judiciary. Amery, meanwhile, advocated one local parliament for the United Kingdom as a whole, giving it Dominion status, and subordinate alongside all other Dominions to an overall Imperial Parliament.

Grey too decided to modify his plans, not so much because of the difficulties involved as because they were not attracting any enthusiasm. By October 1910 he had concluded that federal Home Rule was not, in fact, a condition precedent to Imperial Federation, although still very much desirable in itself:

One does not necessarily depend on the other, but one advantage that would result from the agitation for the federation of the United Kingdom would be the stimulus it would give to the idea of Imperial Federation. The agitation for the federation of the United Kingdom would educate people all round the Empire in the virtues of the Federal Principle.(30)

At this time Grey was determined to clear any obstacles to Imperial Federation, which he believed was an imminent possibility. Anxious as he was to see the larger scheme enacted, he did not wish to see it delayed by difficulties about U.K. federation: he therefore found it expedient to argue that the two schemes did not depend on each other. Grey thus shifted his emphasis during the course of 1910, and chose to concentrate on the virtues of federation for solving the Irish problem in itself, rather than on its advantages for the Empire as a whole. While many politicians might be persuaded to favour a federal solution for the United Kingdom in the immediate future, they might be slower to see how it would accord with Imperial Federation. Not everyone saw things quite so clearly as he did, he acknowledged.

As the prospect of a Home Rule Bill grew nearer, once the Parliament Act received royal assent (in August 1911), Grey clearly wished he had not been obliged to stay on an extra year as Governor-General, feeling that his presence in London might yet have done much to persuade his Unionist colleagues to lessen their opposition to Federalism. He was more prepared now, however, to contemplate the Liberals adopting the scheme, and suggested to Harcourt: 'My impression is that there is among the Unionist ranks a sufficient support for that principle to enable your Government to boldly champion it'.(31) He was wrong in fact, because Balfour would not change his mind, but this did not deter him from urging the Unionist leadership not to resist proposals for reform so absolutely that they would lose the support of people such as himself: some change was essential, and the best option was federalism.(32)

The passing of the Parliament Act in August only increased Grey's keenness for his cause, since the reduction of the veto power of the House of Lords to two years now removed any effective obstacle to the passing of a Home Rule Bill by the Liberal government. Describing the newly weakened House of Lords as 'a despicable

Parliamentary Eunuch, a castrated and emasculated Assembly, destined after further degradations and mutilations to be flung in disgust upon the dunghill',(33) he urged a new written constitution for Britain, with an elective Senate and a supreme court, as part of a federal solution for the United Kingdom. 'However much we dislike it', he told Howick, 'we have to recognise that the era of aristocratic government of the Empire is over - and that our duty is to take such steps as will make the new era of the Democratic [Government] of the Empire as safe as possible'.(34) In a letter to the King's secretary, Bigge, he added a blunt and sobering postscript, most uncharacteristically despondent, which is helpful in trying to understand why he was so anxious for a solution to the crisis he believed would result from Home Rule being enacted:

I am so miserable at the prospects of the times, and at the absence of men in the H of C with an adequate appreciation of the dangers in front of us, that for the first time in my life I am inclined to be pessimistic as to the future of my country. I hope this unwonted feeling is only a sign of my growing age, but alas I don't think so.(35)

Grey back in England

Grey returned home from Canada in November 1911, at the same time that he received a note from Rudyard Kipling, declaring: 'I think you have taught the Dominion to find her soul. Now will you please help England to recover hers. She is selling it for 9d. and a Welsh rabbit'(36) - a reference to Lloyd George and the 1911 Budget. Grey decided to involve himself wholeheartedly in the Irish controversy, perhaps aware that he had nothing to lose, since he sympathised with neither political party much, and so had little chance of being offered another major public office. His hopes of succeeding Selborne in South Africa had been dashed in the previous year when Herbert Gladstone was appointed instead.(37)

The Liberal Committee on Ireland presented its report in December to the Cabinet, where a majority decided that there was little support in the party or the country for such a radical reform as 'Home Rule All Round'. Consequently, the Home Rule Bill which was launched in April 1912 was essentially similar to the 1893 proposal. The Bill called for a dual-chamber parliament in Dublin, and the presence of 42 Irish M.P.s. at Westminster - which would continue to have supreme authority in areas such as defence and financial policy. All keen federalists condemned it as a rejection of what they were espousing.

Throughout 1912 and 1913, as the Home Rule Bill passed slowly through Parliament, encountering much opposition from both Irish and British Unionists, federalism remained the subject of intense discussion in both parties. It was essentially this resistance to the Bill which kept federalism alive at this time. Notwithstanding Asquith's lack of interest, Churchill advocated some form of 'Home Rule All Round', having been won over by Curtis. Like many, Churchill was becoming increasingly fearful of the prospect of civil disorder in Ulster, and was prepared to consider anything which might prevent this.

In the House of Lords debate on the Second Reading of the Home Rule Bill in January 1913, Grey was among the most vocal opponents. Ireland, he maintained, had progressed far enough since 1886 to qualify itself for status akin to a Canadian province, but not a Canada. A federal solution would keep Ireland united and would draw it closer to Britain, so strengthening the Empire. He called for Ireland to be divided into two provinces (including one for Ulster), each having considerable control over its own domestic affairs. The Home Rule Bill would, he asserted, never be accepted by Ulster, as it overrode Protestant feeling; he also found the stubborn resistance to change of any kind, as advocated by Lansdowne and Walter Long, equally

unacceptable. For him federalism was the only realistic alternative - and if Canada, Australia and South Africa could each federate successfully, then why not also the United Kingdom? As a way of achieving this, he advocated a conference of both parties, which should seek to create the constitution 'most likely to ensure the permanent well-being of the United Kingdom, of the Empire, and of the whole of the English-speaking people'.(38)

Grey, however, was expressing a minority opinion. Selborne said that he was in favour of Imperial Federation, but not U.K. federation, and sought to draw a distinction between the unitary system in South Africa (where the central government was strong, and only a few powers were expressly devolved) and the federal system in Canada which Grey was proposing, where the smaller units had considerable autonomy. Even among the federalists themselves big differences arose - Grey wanting the entire Home Rule Bill rejected, for example, whereas Dunraven felt it could be satisfactorily amended.(39)

Grey's call for a conference was shared by several others, notably the King and Loreburn (Lord Chancellor), albeit for different purposes. Irish Nationalists and most Unionists feared a trap, and both Asquith and Bonar Law (who had succeeded Balfour in November 1911) were doubtful. Nevertheless, they bowed to royal persuasion and met privately on three occasions in late 1913. Acting upon Grey's advice, Oliver sought to put renewed pressure on the Unionist leadership to be positive about federalism, and the result was a pamphlet called The Alternatives to Civil War. Grey obviously realised that he himself was not best qualified to be the persuader: Oliver had developed his ideas far more thoroughly than had Grey as to what the actual mechanics of a federal system might be, and was not pre-occupied like Grey was with his Dominion House project. Oliver failed to persuade Bonar Law, but did manage to win over Selborne,

Austen Chamberlain and, notably, even Walter Long that federalism was a better proposition than mere stubbornness.

The talks achieved nothing. Even Oliver lost heart, and became convinced that the leaders' attitudes could not be changed. Bonar Law would not abandon Carson, and Asquith would not do anything which might jeopardise his government's Irish Nationalist support. A further attempt at a settlement, at Buckingham Palace in July 1914, also failed. The United Kingdom appeared to be set on course for civil war in Ulster.

As early as 1893 Grey had predicted that Ulster would rebel rather than accept Home Rule, and in 1913 he now repeated this prophecy in a letter to The Times: 'I confess my sympathies are heart and soul with the Ulstermen in their resistance to the Bill, and I will unhesitatingly support them in their endeavour to prevent it from becoming law'.(40) Later he even openly approved of Ulster's right to defend itself by force of arms if necessary.(41) If this were the only way such a revolutionary measure could be resisted, Grey was prepared to sanction armed resistance - a stance openly advocated by Bonar Law during his momentous speech at Blenheim in June 1913 - on the grounds that Asquith's radical government would not heed the warnings of the Opposition. Advocating such a response put Grey firmly alongside the hardline Unionists, although he did not go so far as Milner and Bonar Law in associating with the Ulster Defence League, a body formed in 1908 to sustain opposition to Home Rule by any means.

In August 1914, after the two-year veto of the House of Lords had lapsed, the Home Rule Bill finally reached the statute book. The threat of major disorder in Ireland was averted only by the outbreak of war in Continental Europe, when all parties agreed to the implementation of the new Act being deferred, and attention was switched from domestic issues to the war effort.

In the wake of the Easter Rising in 1916, Grey once again merged Irish with imperial considerations in an effort to offer a practical long-term solution for that troubled land. Because he doubted the ability of any government, whether Liberal, Unionist or Coalition, to solve adequately the Irish problem once the European war ended, he urged that Ireland be governed by emergency police and military regulation until such time as the next Imperial Conference, due to be held in 1917, had

an opportunity of considering what sort of Home Rule will meet in the fullest possible way the legitimate aspirations of the Irish people at the same time that it provides for the full safeguarding of our imperial security, the finding of the Imperial Conference to be binding on the Unionist Party.(42)

Grey no longer trusted British politicians to settle the Irish problem sensibly, and felt that only overseas Dominion leaders could be relied upon to reach a proper solution. He believed that no self-governing Dominion would ever have considered granting to any part of their territories the powers conferred by the Home Rule Act upon the people of Ireland, and that they would bring to the problem a far more rational approach than British politicians alone could offer. Once more he urged that the Unionists should take up federalism, and offered to help as much as his failing health might permit. It might seem inconceivable that any British government would have been prepared to give the Dominions a say in the fate of the United Kingdom, and that Grey was talking nonsense. Yet this idea was also considered seriously by Lloyd George and Selborne in the following year - although it is doubtful that they were contemplating that the government should be bound by a majority decision.(43) Whether the dominions would have wished to become embroiled in the problems of Ireland is another matter.

Before Ireland rose once more to the fore of British politics, Grey had died. The cause for which he had striven lived on, though.

Lloyd George as Prime Minister did re-affirm his interest in federalism, and a government committee on Irish affairs recommended that any Home Rule Bill should be part of a larger measure of federalism. The majority of the Cabinet, however, felt it unreasonable to rush into anything so far-reaching as 'Home Rule All Round' while the war was still raging, and while the whole concept was still remarkably vague. Once the war ended, the government decided that the Irish problem must be solved before United Kingdom federation could even be formally discussed: and by divorcing these two issues, all enthusiasm for devolution faded - reflecting the fact that most of those who supported federalism did so principally with Ireland in mind. Certainly the Government of Ireland Act (1920) and the resultant Irish Free State were not consistent with the federal ideal.

Conclusion

In 1918 some sort of United Kingdom devolution seemed a real possibility: indeed, it never had so much prominence again until the 1970s. At first sight, this appears to be an achievement for the advocates of 'Home Rule All Round', and it may be tempting to suggest that United Kingdom federation would have provided a considerable impetus towards Imperial Federation. In reality, though, interest in federalism centred very largely on its attraction as a solution to the Irish problem. Few wanted far-reaching, systematic reform in the rest of the United Kingdom, and fewer still really understood fully the implications of federalism.

Furthermore, after the extension of the franchise in 1918, and the new emphasis on industrial, labour and economic issues, the government found itself fully pre-occupied. The promises of national reconstruction, and the problems of coping with the aftermath of war, meant that any secondary issues such as constitutional reform were pushed to the wayside.

In the new age of democracy, it seemed appropriate that one should seek to persuade not just the leaders: the led must be persuaded too. Although the pro-federalist reports in the press were considerable, the concept would not gain popularity unless a main political party, or one charismatic politician, adopted it. No such politician did come forward, and those like Lloyd George were aware that - as Chamberlain had discovered - championing a controversial issue, while perhaps winning him a few votes in the Reform Club, would not be likely to prompt a chorus of thanks from a grateful nation. This reality did not accord with Grey's vision.

'Home Rule All Round' demanded the reform of the entire constitutional, administrative and financial structure in Britain, and loyalties focused in a different direction. Despite this, Grey and his fellow enthusiasts failed to make any substantial comment on the enormity of the ramifications of change. The vagueness with which men like Grey spoke of federalism was alarming. Even allowing for the fact that Grey doubtless expected others to offer the substance to the idea, most federationists failed to outline any comprehensive vision of the likely consequences of the introduction of federalism. Perhaps this was because they had little idea themselves. Indeed, perhaps a similar argument could be levelled against that even higher flight of idealism, Imperial Federation.

CONCLUSION

Imperial Federation has been described as 'a compound of idealism and political opportunism, of strategic concern and economic anxiety'.(1) For Earl Grey, idealism was the overriding motive. Everything he believed in seemed to show that Imperial Federation made perfect sense, and he took upon himself the task of promoting it with all his considerable ardour and enthusiasm. Yet he failed, and Imperial Federation came to nothing. This concluding chapter seeks to ascertain the reason for this.

In 1863 Goldwin Smith had dismissed the idea of a 'Greater Britain' as a fantasy, and urged instead an informal association between Britain and its self-governing colonies. Later, in 1905, Richard Jebb expressed the view that federation had been rendered obsolete by the growth of a sense of nationalism in countries such as Australia and Canada.(2) Why should countries which had been establishing for themselves an individual identity over the past fifty years, and been slowly extricating themselves from the grip of formal control by the British government, now voluntarily surrender their autonomy and be submerged in a 'Greater Britain'?

It is contended here that it is not enough to say that Imperial Federation failed just because it lacked popular support in the Dominions. Kandle says that 'no major constitutional changes can be imposed on a reluctant democracy'.(3) But is that not exactly what is happening to Britain in 1991, as it slides inexorably towards a federal Europe, which will entail a considerable erosion of British sovereignty? The electorate were consulted just once on this issue,

in 1975, when they were asked whether they wanted to be in a common economic market, not whether they were prepared to surrender political and legal powers as well. The vast majority of British people have little understanding, and even less enthusiasm, for the prospect, and yet the whole episode is presented to them as if it were inevitable.

The parallels with Imperial Federation are obvious. It can be argued that when public opinion is strongly in favour of something, then politicians will generally concur, but that when public opinion is apathetic, or even slightly negative, politicians may nevertheless choose to disregard it if they feel it expedient to do so. Thus, in the 1990s politicians will lead us towards a federal Europe because they feel Britain's national interest will be best served in that way, notwithstanding public feeling. In 1918 Lloyd George could have introduced U.K. federation if he had wished, because he would probably have had enough support in the House of Commons, and the apathy of the electorate would not have been an immediate obstacle.

Thus Grey was clearly correct in believing that, if he and others could stir up enough enthusiasm for Imperial Federation among the populace in Britain and the Dominions, their cause might yet be won, and politicians would bow to their demands for consolidation of the Empire. So Grey was wise in seeking to promote a feeling of imperial sentiment in every way imaginable. If he won over enough of the led, then their leaders would surely follow.

The problem was that the populace were not interested. Undoubtedly Grey did succeed in making many Canadians more aware of the Empire, and in provoking among those who were already imperialists a greater enthusiasm. Yet, as Hallett suggests, because these people spoke of the Empire in the same glowing terms that Grey himself used, he mistakenly believed that they had the same goals.(4) Like all imperial federationists, he tended to mistake the lip-service paid to his slogans as agreement with his aims.(5) There was a vast

difference between being an imperialist and a federationist, a fact of which Grey usually seemed oblivious.

While a feeling of colonial nationalism could not by itself have prevented Imperial Federation from reaching fruition, it did certainly mean that Grey and his compatriots were unable to use public pressure to win over the politicians. Grey was not wrong in arguing that nationalism and imperialism need not be incompatible; but he extended the idea beyond the bounds of common sense by saying that nationalism could flourish alongside Imperial Federation. What he was envisaging, even if he did not express it in this way, was a 'Greater Britain' - which was itself just an extension of British nationalism. This had little appeal to most Canadians, Australians, or others. Grey seemed genuinely unaware of this dichotomy. He claimed that he could see things like a Canadian, but he was wrong: he saw things as a British imperialist. Imperialism was a peculiarly British phenomenon, emanating from the need to harness the Empire to benefit Britain, as well as to use it so as to promote the Anglo-Saxon notion of civilisation across the world. This had no more appeal to the keenest Canadian imperialists than it did the Afrikaners in the Transvaal, the Roman Catholics in Southern Ireland, or the overwhelming majority of citizens in the United States.

Grey and his colleagues also failed to realise that Imperial Federation aroused little interest at home. The Imperial Federation League received support because it appealed to patriotic feeling more than because it urged political federation. Like Canadians and the citizens of other Dominions, most Britons were perfectly content with the existing imperial relationship and saw no need for any change. Nor did the whole idea of the 'White Empire' ever stir up much emotion, whether among the populace or the leaders of opinion: the vast emptiness of the Australian outback or the Canadian prairies somehow failed to capture the imagination in the same way as the

mystique of India. In this respect, the domestic politicians were much closer to the pulse of popular feeling than Grey ever was. He never had any real conception of public opinion, and too easily mistook the deference of polite audiences or his friends for support. This is, alas, a common fault among idealists. As one commentator has suggested:

Imperial Federation was convincingly denied from at least half a dozen standpoints; yet those who believed in it continued to discuss it as if it required no argument and needed only to be stated to be received with unanimous approval.(6)

Lord Milner differed considerably from Grey in this respect, acknowledging in 1902 that he was 'out of touch with the predominant sentiment of my countrymen, the trend of opinion which ultimately determines policy'.(7) But Milner had long loathed democracy, maintaining that the electorate was too ignorant to know what was best for the Empire or themselves. So Milner's attitude supports the argument advanced here - for he believed that popular feeling should simply be bypassed. That is why he and the Round Table directed their efforts exclusively to winning over the politicians, especially in Britain, on the assumption that if these leaders became sufficiently convinced of the expediency of Imperial Federation, then they would adopt it regardless of public opinion. So Imperial Federation would be successful if the politicians chose to recommend it. Sadly for Milner and Grey, they did not.

As has been shown in chapter four, the Dominions wished to promote the interests of their own burgeoning economies, and it was quite impossible for them in the period after 1900 to abolish tariffs for British imports without losing considerable income. Imperial Free Trade would enable British goods to flood their domestic markets. It did not make sense for any country except Britain, whereas imperial preference, which did make sense for many, could easily be established

informally and without the need for a corresponding political consolidation. Yet a major hurdle to any system of preference was the obsession of the British people with the doctrine of Free Trade, and - as the Unionists discovered in 1906 - no amount of imperialistic drum-beating could alter that. It was to take a world war and an economic slump before that hallowed principle was finally buried, and an imperial preference established in 1932.

Calls for military federation were also doomed. The aspect of defence where co-operation was most widely advocated was naval policy, and yet here again there was considerable difference of opinion. Britain wanted a large number of big ships in one imperial navy, whereas the Dominions each had very different priorities. New Zealand, for example, welcomed the protection afforded by a powerful Royal Navy, and was prepared to pay for the privilege, but Canada - which did not feel attack against it by sea was a likely prospect - had little interest. Moreover, as shown in chapter four, the demand of the British Admiralty that the Dominions each contribute a Dreadnought to the fleet fell on deaf ears, since the various governments believed this would not benefit themselves, and that probably they would not actually see their ship anywhere near their shores.

Economic federation was rejected at the 1902 and 1907 Colonial Conferences, and by the general election result in Britain in 1906, while military federation - and particularly the prospect of a joint naval strategy - was killed off at the Imperial Defence Conference in 1909. Yet at least these were discussed by the politicians. Political federation of the Empire, by comparison, was for most never any more than a fantasy. While the idea of co-operation in strategy might sound a good idea in theory, it would mean nothing in practice unless all the Dominions acted jointly. Yet many felt that the

Dominions already acted closely enough with Britain, consulting Whitehall on issues relating to foreign policy, and similar matters.

Imperial Federation amounted to far more than just co-operation. It would have involved a wholesale sharing of responsibilities as well as powers. Any central body - whether a council or an Imperial Parliament - would inevitably be based in Britain, and would be dominated by British concerns. If representation in any assembly was allocated according to the population of each country, then British delegates would easily outnumber all the others together. Moreover, Canada would no more wish its interests to be discussed and voted upon by the Australians than by the British, and vice versa. It was these practical difficulties, more than popular sensibilities, which rendered political federation impossible.

For Grey and his fellow imperialists, the outbreak of the First World War renewed in them false hopes about what might be achieved by the Dominions being compelled to work so closely together. His kinsman, the Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey, recalled later:

It was the vision of the people of Britain and of the Dominions combined in one high resolve and effort that inspired him and raised his own spirits to a height of enthusiasm and confidence.(8)

At first glance the extent of the co-operation was considerable: more than 2,500,000 colonials fought alongside the British, and Australia and Canada each lost almost 60,000 servicemen in the war. Moreover, leading imperialists obtained positions of power. Curzon joined the government in May 1915, and Milner in December 1916. Astor, Curtis and Kerr served in Lloyd George's personal secretariat, and Amery in the Cabinet equivalent. Largely at Milner's behest, the Dominion Premiers were invited to London in 1917 for an Imperial Conference, and to join the War Cabinet. This was as near to an Imperial Council

as there ever was. Certainly Grey was delighted, and in conversation with Begbie remarked:

We must have, with full local autonomy for all the parts, an Imperial Senate at the heart of the Empire legislating for the welfare of the whole Commonwealth. I cannot understand how men shut their eyes to the wisdom of the idea.(9)

So Grey was continuing to urge that neither conferences nor a council were adequate. Only an Imperial Parliament would suffice in a system of political federation; but he saw the Imperial War Cabinet as a splendid forerunner. However, the 1917 Conference did nothing to stimulate imperial unity, and discussion about the Empire's constitutional relationship was deferred to a post-war conference - which in fact was never summoned.(10) If he had lived beyond 1917, Grey would have been bitterly disappointed.

As was shown in chapter six, once the problem of Ireland was solved, the impetus for United Kingdom federation faded. In much the same way, once the 1914-18 war ended, the need for imperial consolidation did not appear to be so urgent. The calls for military co-operation lapsed, and most countries were pre-occupied with reducing the size of their armies as rapidly as possible. Moreover, inter-imperial trade had grown rapidly of its own accord, without any direct control or the encouragement of tariff reform, and was to continue rising over the next twenty years.

The war also rendered obsolete the prospect of political federation. At a time when Britain and the other victors were pontificating about the right of national self-determination for the new states in Eastern Europe, it seemed farcical that the Dominions should now be expected to submerge their own nascent identities into a 'Greater Britain'. Local nationalist feeling rose up everywhere - in Ireland and India especially, and among the Afrikaners and Canadian French. The failure of Britain to maintain its control of Ireland,

just thirty miles from its coastline, and despite the stationing of 30,000 troops there, underlined Britain's weakening grip on its possessions, and seemed to render futile the calls for closer imperial unity.

The Empire was not represented as a single unit at the Versailles peace talks: instead, there were representatives from both Britain and each of the Dominions - a minor point, but significant. In 1922 Canada and South Africa pointedly refused to support British policy defending the Dardanelles against Turkey, and in 1923 Canada concluded a treaty with the United States without reference to Britain. The Dominions felt that they had 'come of age', and that they no longer needed to seek mother's permission before going out to play.

In Britain itself, even the efforts of two federationist Colonial Secretaries - Milner (1919-21) and later Amery (1924-29) - were fruitless. The endeavours of the doctrinaire Amery to establish imperial preference and to promote imperial consolidation were thwarted by his more cautious Cabinet colleagues, as was his desire to establish a new Dominion in East Africa. Clearly Amery, Milner and their like, although now occupying senior positions in government, were out of touch with how the Empire was developing.

The reality was that, as Goldwin Smith had long maintained, the 'Consolidate or Disintegrate' scenario was wrong. There was a perfectly acceptable middle course - a calm evolution from semi-formal to informal relations between Britain and its Dominions, from associate to partnership status. This new relationship formed the basis of the British Commonwealth, established at the 1926 Imperial Conference, and defined as:

autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the crown, and freely associated as members of the British

Commonwealth of Nations.(11)

This idea of a commonwealth was fundamentally different from what Grey had envisaged. Although he always talked of equal partnership within the 'White Empire', he always saw Britain as the mother and the Dominions as the daughters: he looked forward to the day when the daughters were mature enough to help take decisions and bear many of the burdens of the whole family, but ultimately the agenda would continue to be set by the mother.

In this respect Grey made the fundamental error of assuming that the interests of the Dominions would always be identical with those of Britain. Moreover, Grey can never have seriously contemplated a situation where Britain might find itself outvoted or outmanoeuvred by the Dominions in an Imperial Parliament. The primary purpose of imperial preference was to protect the British economy, and the main role of the Royal Navy was to protect British interests at home and abroad. There was not the slightest chance that Grey or any other federationists seriously imagined Britain's wishes being subordinated to anyone else's.

At this time the 'White Empire' could still be considered as a 'family'. Grey was correct in identifying that it shared a common culture and language, which is more than the European Community can boast. Yet Imperial Federation did not make sense. The daughters, quite understandably, each had different interests and aspirations, and wanted to be allowed to make their own decisions. Grey and the other federationists simply failed to realise this, which was a fundamental error. Politicians, as suggested earlier, are guided primarily by expediency: and the vast majority of them recognised clearly that disintegration was not the only alternative to Imperial Federation.

Grey commented to Begbie in 1917:

Here I lie on my death-bed - looking clear into the Promised Land. I'm not allowed to enter it, but there it is before my eyes. After the War the people of this country will enter it, and those who laughed at me for a dreamer will see that I wasn't so wrong after all. But there's still work to do for those who didn't laugh, hard work, and with much opposition in their way; all the same, it is work right up against the goal. My dreams have come true.(12)

Sadly, Grey's eyes were deceiving him. If his critics were too short-sighted to appreciate Grey's idealistic vision of an Anglo-Saxon federation ensuring world peace and progress throughout the world, towards which Imperial Federation was a vital preliminary step, then it is equally true that Grey suffered from long-sightedness, in being unable to see the sheer impossibility of what he preached. He failed to realise that federation entailed a degree of subordination which none of the Dominions would countenance. Nor did he seem aware of the fact that the existing power-base of British political parties, and of the British government itself, would be radically altered by any such fundamental change as Imperial Federation. It is little wonder that no mainstream politician except Chamberlain ever embraced the idea. The vast majority did not see Imperial Federation as either expedient or sensible, and hence, in the absence of a popular demand for it, the whole idea was a non-starter. As Ronald Hyam says;

The whole dream of an organic imperial integration was unrealistic, misplaced, narrow and out of touch with the intellectual political and economic development of Britain and the Empire.(13)

Earl Grey's passion for Imperial Federation was motivated by the highest, and most noble, idealism. This led him to see beyond the sordid reality of politics to the horizon, to indulge in life not as it was but as it might be. He was probably one of the most highly principled men of his generation, and his whole approach to Imperial

Federation is imbued with a visionary zeal which is both compelling and deserving of study. Ironically, it was because he was so idealistic that he was simply unable to recognise the world as it really was.

In his obituary in The Times in August 1917, this statement was made about Grey's Dominion House project:

It was characteristic of his defects as well as of his strength. It was imaginative and inspiring in its conception, but...its practical usefulness was less conspicuous than its sentimental appeal.(14)

This, surely, is an apt description of Grey's involvement with Imperial Federation, as well as of the idea itself. It is also an appropriate, and by no means dishonourable or unworthy, epitaph of the personality of the 4th Earl Grey, 'Paladin of Empire'.

NOTES

Unless otherwise stated, references to letters, pamphlets or articles relate to items in the 4th Earl Grey Papers in the Special Collections Section of the University of Durham Library. This collection is not fully catalogued at present, so no reference numbers can be given. Correspondence in the 3rd Earl Grey Papers is identified by reference to its authorship and date.

INTRODUCTION

1. In this thesis the phrases 'Dominion' and 'self-governing colony' are used interchangeably, unless otherwise indicated.
2. D. Cannadine, The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy (New Haven, 1990), pp.383, 444.
3. MS. notes for Grey's speech at the inaugural meeting of the Liverpool Branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 July 1885.
4. P.M. Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of Great Powers : Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (London, 1988).
5. P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, 'The Political Economy of Expansion Overseas, 1750-1914'. Economic History Review, 33 (1980), 463-90. L.E. Davis and R.A. Huttenback, Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire (Cambridge, 1986).
6. Grey to King George V, 2 January 1911. This phrase Grey adapted from a similar one used in 1910 by Gerald Graham, Canadian Minister of Railroads.
7. Lord Milner, 1917, quoted in H.G. Begbie, Albert Fourth Earl Grey : A Last Word (London, 1917), p.112.

CHAPTER ONE: IMPERIAL FEDERATION - THE BACKGROUND

1. The concise Oxford Dictionary defines imperialism as: 'rule of an emperor; (Hist.) extension of British Empire where trade required protection given by imperial rule; (Hist.) union of different parts of British Empire for purposes of warlike defence, internal

- commerce etc.; (usu. derog.) (belief in desirability of) acquiring colonies and dependencies, or extending a country's influence through trade, diplomacy, etc.'
2. R. Hyam and G. Martin, Reappraisals in British Imperial History (London, 1975), p.122.
 3. J.E. Tyler, The Struggle for Imperial Unity, 1865-1895 (London, 1938), quoted in Hyam and Martin, Reappraisals, p.128.
 4. B. Porter, The Lion's Share (London, 1982), p.82.
 5. Kennedy, Rise and Fall of Great Powers, pp.²195-6.
 6. Ibid.
 7. Ibid., p.202.
 8. Ibid., p.228.
 9. See below, chapter four.
 10. Kennedy, Rise and Fall of Great Powers, p.154.
 11. A.L. Friedberg, The Weary Titan : Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895-1905 (New Jersey, 1988), p.153, table 4.1.
 12. See below, chapter four.
 13. Porter, Lion's Share, p.118.
 14. J.R. Seeley, The Expansion of England (London, 1902), pp.18-19.
 15. D. Wormell, Sir John Seeley and the Uses of History (Cambridge, 1980), p.155.
 16. A. Lyttelton to Grey, n.d. 1883.
 17. Wormell, Seeley, pp. 1, 55.
 18. Ibid., p.1.
 19. Bodelsen notes that the Imperial Federation movement was already in full swing before 1883, and that the League would probably have been founded soon even if The Expansion of England had not been written. "It seems possible that [Expansion] was carried along by the crest of the wave of imperialism rather than that it created that wave". C.A. Bodelsen, Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism (London, 1960), p.175.
 20. J.P. Labilliere to Grey, 21 June 1884. Labilliere was the secretary of the Imperial Federation League.
 21. Kendle suggests that an imperial conference on defence would probably have been held soon anyway, even without prompting from the League. J.E. Kendle, The Colonial and Imperial Conferences, 1887-1911 (London, 1967), p.8.
 22. Of 83 M.P.s. in the League's Council in 1888, only 6 were Liberals. Wormell, Seeley, p.166.

23. Rosebery's speech at fourth annual meeting of the League, 20 May 1889, quoted in Bodelsen, Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism, p.210.
24. Lord Salisbury, quoted in Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.9.
25. Ibid., p.13.
26. Wormell, Seeley, p.167.
27. See below, chapter four.
28. Goldwin Smith was Professor of Modern History at Oxford, 1858-66. Other critics included J.A. Hobson and the Radical Liberal M.P., Henry Labouchere.
29. Goldwin Smith, 'The Expansion of England'. Contemporary Review, 45 (1884), 524-40, quoted in Wormell, Seeley, p.168.
30. Goldwin Smith, The Empire (1863), p.6, quoted in Wormell, Seeley, p.98.
31. J. Chamberlain, quoted in Hyam and Martin, Reappraisals, p.131.
32. K. Sinclair, Imperial Federation : A Study of New Zealand Policy and Opinion, 1880-1914 (London, 1955), p27. Hyam suggests New Zealand was interested only for selfish reasons anyway, because it was so dependent on the Royal Navy for protection from Asiatic attack: Hyam, Britain's Imperial Century (London, 1968), p.113. See also Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.27.
33. Laurier's views on Imperial Federation are outlined in chapter three.
34. R.R. James, Rosebery (London, 1963), p.156.
35. Rosebery said this to the Leeds Chamber of Commerce in 1888: quoted in R. Faber, The Vision and the Need (London, 1966), p.69.
36. H.C.G. Matthew, The Liberal Imperialists (London, 1973), p.70.
37. Lord Rosebery, 10 March 1902, quoted in Matthew, Liberal Imperialists, p.141.
38. Grey himself advocated all of these causes.
39. G.R. Searle, The Quest for National Efficiency (Oxford, 1971), p.34. The development of the scouting movement, of which Grey was a keen supporter, is discussed in chapter five, below.
40. Matthew, Liberal Imperialists, p.260.
41. Goldwin Smith, cited in Wormell, Seeley, p.168.
42. See below, chapter five.
43. Porter, Lion's Share, pp.18-19.
44. 3rd Earl Grey, Colonial Policy of the Administration of Lord John Russell (London, 1853), vol.2, p.14.

45. Cecil Rhodes, quoted in Porter, Lion's Share, p.134.
46. At the Imperial Institute in 1895 Chamberlain remarked: 'I believe that the British race is the greatest of governing races that the world has ever seen', quoted in Faber, The Vision and the Need, p.122.
47. Wormell, Seeley, p.159.
48. Begbie, Grey, p.174.
49. Joseph Chamberlain, 1887, quoted in Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.20. For Milner's view, see A.M. Gollin, Proconsul in Politics (London, 1964), p.123.
50. Cecil Rhodes, quoted in Faber, The Vision and the Need, p.71.
51. Grey at a university club dinner in Albany, quoted in New York Herald, 20 March 1910 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers). The blatant illogicality of this argument, as well as the opposition it aroused, is considered in chapter five, below.
52. Other original trustees were W.T. Stead, Lewis Michell, Bouchier Hawkesley, and Otto Beit. Subsequent codicils replaced Stead by Milner, and added L.S. Jameson.
53. Grey to Lady Wantage, Easter Tuesday, 1902.
54. A.F.B. Williams, Rhodes (London, 1926), p.286.
55. Speech of Earl Grey given in connection with the Dedication of the Rhodes Memorial, 5 July 1912 (Capetown, 1912).

CHAPTER TWO: INFLUENCES ON EARL GREY

1. A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, 'The Governors-General of Canada'. Journal of Canadian Studies, 12 (1977), 35.
2. Grey was called a 'Paladin of Empire' by H.W. Massingham, editor of The Nation: see Begbie, Grey, p.60.
3. Newcastle Daily Journal, 28 October 1880 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
4. Grey, speech on Imperial Federation, c.1910.
5. The Times, 4 February 1862, quoted in Hyam and Martin, Reappraisals, p.116.
6. 3rd Earl Grey, Colonial Policy of the Administration of Lord John Russell, vol.2, p.305.
7. 3rd Earl Grey, 'How shall we retain the Colonies?' Nineteenth Century, 28 (1879), 305 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
8. Begbie, Grey, p.29.
9. Ibid., p.26.

10. Ibid., p.31.
11. Arnold Toynbee, Lectures on the Industrial Revolution (London, 1884), p.216.
12. C. Harvie, The Light of Liberalism. University Liberals and the Challenge of Democracy (London, 1976), pp.105-6.
13. Life and Writings of Joseph Mazzini, 1867, p.223, quoted in Begbie, Grey, p.47.
14. Begbie, Grey, p.155.
15. I. Silone, Mazzini (London, 1946), p.17.
16. Dictionary of National Biography, 1912-21, p.227.
17. Gladstone to Grey, 12 May 1880.
18. D.W.R. Bahlman, The Diary of Sir Edward Hamilton (Oxford, 1972), p.335 (5 November 1882).
19. 4th Earl to 3rd Earl Grey, 12 May 1881 [3rd Earl Grey Papers].
20. Grey to T.C.Cartwright, 18 October 1885, quoted in T.A. Jenkins, Gladstone, Whiggery and the Liberal Party, 1874-1886 (Oxford, 1988), p.219.
21. P. Fraser, Lord Esher (London, 1973), p.67.
22. Election Address by Grey, 15 March 1880 and n.d (1885).
23. H.C. Deb. (3rd Series), vol.302, cols.142-4, 21 January 1886.
24. V. Halperin, Lord Milner and The Empire (London, 1952), p.94.
25. Jenkins, Gladstone, p.170.
26. Hyam, Britain's Imperial Century, p.94.
27. Lord Crewe, Lord Rosebery (London, 1931), p.279.
28. Grey to Chamberlain, 6 June 1898.
29. The Times , 5 December 1884.
30. Copy extract from Blue Book, Bechuanaland, 1890, C-5918. British South Africa Company, Miscellaneous Papers and Correspondence, 1888-1890, vol.1 [Cawston Papers, Rhodes House, MSS. Afr. s. 73].
31. B.S.A. Company A.G.M., 1899, reported in Truth, 14 March 1901 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
32. Co-operative News, 13 January 1900 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
33. H.L. Deb. (4th Series), vol.129, cols.1141-1153, 12 February 1904.
34. 4th Earl to 3rd Earl Grey, 30 May 1889 [3rd Earl Grey Papers].
35. 4th Earl to 3rd Earl Grey, 5 June 1889 [Ibid.].
36. Lockhart and Woodhouse, Rhodes, pp.164-5.

37. 4th Earl to 3rd Earl Grey, 10 July 1889 [3rd Earl Grey Papers].
38. Williams, Rhodes, p.136.
39. R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians (London, 1961), p.237.
40. Ibid., p.244.
41. Williams, Rhodes, p.222.
42. The Times, 26 January 1898.
43. Earl Grey, 'England and the Transvaal'. North American Review, January 1900, p.24 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
44. Grey to Chamberlain, 10 December 1896.
45. Ibid.
46. Cannadine, Decline and Fall, p.338.
47. W.V. Harcourt to Chamberlain, 17 November 1896, quoted in J.R.M. Butler, The Liberal Party and the Jameson Raid (Oxford, 1968), p.120.
48. Butler, The Liberal Party, p.145.
49. Ibid., p.3.
50. Williams, Rhodes, p.5.
51. Earl Grey, Native Labour in South Africa (Capetown, 1903), p.3.
52. Grey to Rhodes, 8 November 1900 [Rhodes Papers, Rhodes House, MSS. Afr. s. 228, C27].
53. L.H. Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia to 1934. (London, 1965); Cannadine, Decline and Fall, p.436.
54. N. Etherington, 'Theories of Imperialism in Southern Africa Revisited'. African Affairs, 81 (1982), 385-407.
55. Robinson and Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians, p.250; D.K. Fieldhouse, Economics and Empire (New York, 1973); D.C.M. Platt, Finance, Trade and Politics : British Foreign Policy, 1815-1914 (Oxford, 1968); P.J. Cain, 'J.A. Hobson, Finance Capitalism and Imperialism in late Victorian and Edwardian England'. Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 13 (1985), 1.
56. A.G. Hopkins, 'Accounting for the British Empire'. Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 16 (1988), 234-47.
57. L. Davis and R. Huttenback, Mammon, pp.304-9.
58. Cain, 'Hobson, Finance Capitalism and Imperialism', p.18.
59. P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion Overseas; New Imperialism, 1850-1945'. Economic History Review, 40 (1987), 13.

60. J.S. Galbraith, Crown and Charter : The Early Years of the British South Africa Company (Berkeley, 1974), p.x.
61. R.V. Turrell, 'Rhodes, De Beers and Monopoly'. Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 10 (1982), 311-43.
62. Galbraith, Crown and Charter, p.125.
63. Grey to Lady Wantage, 10 December 1906.
64. Davis and Huttenback, Mammon, p.208. There was much investment in equities overseas from 1880 onwards, notes Cannadine, as this avoided income tax or death duties. Before 1914 considerable investment in Canada was made by the Dukes of Westminster, Sutherland and Fife, for example; Cannadine, Decline and Fall, p.134.
65. Grey to Lady Wantage, 28 March 1916: see also Cannadine, Decline and Fall, p.411.
66. Grey to Arthur Beit, 19 September 1896.
67. Grey to Lady Wantage, 21 June 1904.
68. Cannadine, Decline and Fall, p.598.
69. Grey to Lady Wantage, 1 July 1915.
70. Galbraith, Crown and Charter, p.37; Grey to Lady Wantage, 28 March 1916; Grey to Sir Horace Plunkett, 3 November 1914.
71. Porter, Lion's Share, p.168.
72. Grey to Lady Wantage, 8 March 1916.

CHAPTER THREE: POLITICAL FEDERATION

1. MS. notes for Grey's speech at the inaugural meeting of the Liverpool branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 July 1885.
2. The Times, 1 May 1902.
3. Grey to Howick, 10 May 1910.
4. Ibid.
5. Grey to Crewe, 10 March 1910. Lord Crewe was Colonial Secretary from 1908 to 1910.
6. Grey to Edward Grey, 14 October 1910; Grey to F.S. Oliver, 3 November 1910.
7. Grey to R.L. Borden, 30 April 1913. Address by Grey at the annual meeting of the Victoria League, quoted in The Times, 7 May 1913. Borden was Canadian Prime Minister, 1911-20.
8. W. Nimocks, Milner's Young Men: the "Kindergarten" in Edwardian Imperial Affairs (Durham N.C., 1968), p.134. Those who met at the first meeting of the Round Table were: Milner, Anglesey, Lovat,

Curtis, Oliver, Kerr, Brand, Marais, Holland, Steel-Maitland, Craik, Wolmer and Howick. Subsequent associates included Amery, Astor and Selborne.

9. The Times, 5 June 1934. F.S. Oliver, Alexander Hamilton : An Essay on American Political Union (London, 1906).
10. J. Morris, Farewell the Trumpets (London, 1978), p.115.
11. Nimocks, Milner's Young Men, p.154. Grey was delighted by their visit. Of Kerr he wrote subsequently: 'He impresses me as perhaps the most intelligent and the most attractive of the young men who have visited me at Government House'. Grey to Laurier, 3 November 1909.
12. Richard Jebb was author of Studies in Colonial Nationalism (London, 1907).
13. In 1910 Howick devoted his energies to being elected as Unionist M.P. for Bradford. Although he was unsuccessful, his marriage in 1906 to the only daughter of Lord Selborne had already brought him into contact with many of the leading political families.
14. Kendle, 'The Round Table Movement and Home Rule All Round'. Historical Journal, 11 (1968), 332-53.
15. Grey to Howick, 4 January 1909
16. D. Judd and P. Slinn, The Evolution of the British Commonwealth (London, 1982), p.17.
17. Wilfrid Laurier, 1900, quoted in C.C. Eldridge, Victorian Imperialism (London, 1978), p.232.
18. W.D. McIntyre, Colonies into Commonwealth (London, 1966), p.120.
19. D.C. Creighton, Dominion of the North : A History of Canada (Toronto, 1968), p.398.
20. Grey to Lyttelton, 25 October 1905; Lyttelton to Grey, 23 October 1905.
21. Sinclair, Imperial Federation, p.59.
22. Grey to Lyttelton, 8 May 1905.
23. Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.80.
24. Hallett, Grey as Governor-General, p.67.
25. Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.71.
26. Ibid., p.108.
27. Hopwood to Elgin, 23 May 1907; quoted in R.Hyam, Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office, (London, 1976) p.345 (note 4).
28. Laurier to Grey, 26 June 1907.
29. Grey to Dudley, 22 November 1908.
30. Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.127.

31. Crewe to Grey, 25 March 1909.
32. Grey to Crewe, 8 April 1909.
33. Grey to Laurier, 28 April 1910.
34. Kendle, Colonial and Imperial Conferences, p.131.
35. Sinclair, Imperial Federation, pp.41-43.
36. L. Curtis, The Problem of the Commonwealth (London, 1916).
37. Grey to Laurier, 29 July 1911.
38. Cannadine, Decline and Fall, pp.588, 600.
39. A. Hasluck (ed.), Aubrey Tennyson's Viceregal Days (Canberra, 1978) p.249; quoted in Cannadine, Decline and Fall, p.602.
40. Creighton, Dominion of the North, p.399.
41. P. Neary, 'Grey, Bryce, and the Settlement of Canadian-American Differences, 1905-11'. Canadian Historical Review, 49 (1968), 358. Fuller comment on Grey's intervention in Canadian affairs is given in chapters four and five, below.
42. Wilfrid Laurier, quoted in Creighton, Dominion of the North, pp.424-5.
43. Creighton, *Ibid.*, p.383.

CHAPTER FOUR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY FEDERATION

1. Imports rose from an annual average of £360,000,000, 1870-79, to £393,600,000, while exports rose from £218,100,000 to £230,300,000. B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics (Cambridge, 1962), pp.282-84.
2. J.A. Froude, 1888, quoted in B.H. Brown, The Tariff Reform Movement in Britain, 1881-1895 (New York, 1943), p.103.
3. Matthew, Liberal Imperialists, p.165. Certainly Hobson claimed that political federation was for Chamberlain the overriding objective, and tariff reform only secondary.
4. Porter, Lion's Share, p.80.
5. Grey to Chamberlain, 12 October 1903 ; quoted in J. Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain (London, 1969), vol.6, p.484.
6. Grey to Moreton Frewen, 21 October 1903.
7. Grey to Matthew Ridley, 27 October 1903.
8. The Times, 16 July 1885.
9. Grey to P.L. Gell, 28 November 1905. Gell was a director of the British South Africa Company, 1899-1926.

10. Grey to Lyttelton, 16 January 1906.
11. Grey to W.S. Churchill, 29 October 1906.
12. Grey to Fabian Ware, 28 October 1907. Ware was editor of the Morning Post, 1905-11. See also Creighton, Dominion of the North, p.384.
13. Grey to Crawshay Williams, 9 November 1908.
14. Ibid.
15. Grey to Crewe, 8 December 1908.
16. Grey to Milner, 1 March 1910.
17. Grey to G.W. Prothero, 12 October 1910. Prothero was editor of the Quarterly Review, 1899-1922.
18. Grey to C. Phillips-Wolley, 5 June 1911. Phillips-Wolley was a Canadian author and imperialist.
19. Grey to Andrew Carnegie, 4 December 1908.
20. Davis and Huttenback, Mammon, p.150.
21. Ibid., p.304.
22. Ibid., p.158.
23. Gordon, Dominion Partnership, p.166.
24. Creighton, Dominion of the North, p.399.
25. Admiral Fisher to A.J. Balfour, 19 October 1903, quoted in Judd and Slinn, The Evolution of the Modern Commonwealth, p.11.
26. M.E. Howard, The Continental Commitment (London, 1989), p.16.
27. MS. notes for Grey's speech at the inaugural meeting of the Liverpool branch of the Imperial Federation League, 15 July 1885.
28. 4th Earl to 3rd Earl Grey, 14 February 1892 [3rd Earl Grey Papers].
29. The Times, 1 May 1902.
30. Grey to Crewe, 8 December 1908.
31. Grey to Jameson, 5 March 1907.
32. Grey to Amery, 17 April 1909. Amery was later Colonial Secretary, 1924-29.
33. D.C. Creighton, Dominion of the North, p.42.
34. Gordon, Dominion Partnership, p.252.
35. Grey to Laurier, 17 October 1909.
36. The Times, 6 October 1909

37. Canadian Annual Review, 1910, p.181, quoted in Hallett, 'Grey as Governor-General'. p.289.
38. Howick to Lord Crewe, 31 May 1910 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
39. The Times, 29 September 1911.
40. Ibid., 12 October 1910.
41. A.J.P. Taylor, Beaverbrook (London, 1972), p.56.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMPERIAL SENTIMENT

1. Begbie, Grey, p.126.
2. Hallett, 'Grey as Governor-General', p.37.
3. In 1986 there were about 25,300,000 residents in Canada, according to the census.
4. C.J.H. Hayes, A Generation of Nationalism, 1941, cited in Eldridge, Victorian Imperialism, p.136.
5. C.A. Bodelsen, Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism, p.168.
6. Inaugural address by Grey to the Women's Club of Montreal, 12 December 1907.
7. Grey to Laurier, 17 October 1909.
8. Ibid.
9. Grey to Bryce, 25 October 1909.
10. Grey to Selborne, 19 March 1908.
11. R.M. Dawson, William Lyon MacKenzie King (London, 1958), pp.167-8. It is worth noting that Creighton, in Dominion of the North, does not make any mention of the 1908 Celebrations.
12. Oliver, Alexander Hamilton, p.459.
13. Grey to Rhodes, 4 August 1897.
14. Grey to Maxse, 13 October 1907. Maxse was editor of the National Review, 1893-1932.
15. Grey to Howick, 3 April 1911
16. Grey to Lady Wantage, 16 November 1906.
17. J. Eayrs, The Art of the Possible, 1961, quoted in Hallett, 'Grey as Governor-General', p.215.
18. P. Neary, 'Grey, Bryce, and the Settlement of Canadian-American Differences, 1905-11', 357-80.
19. H.A.L. Fisher, James Bryce (London, 1927), vol. 2, p.10.

20. Roosevelt to Grey, 6 July 1905.
21. Speech at the Pilgrims Dinner, 31 March 1906, quoted in Review of Reviews, 1 September 1906 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
22. The Times, 30 August 1917, 2 April 1906.
23. The Gaelic American, 7 April 1906 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
24. Goldwin Smith, The Schism in the Anglo-Saxon Race (New York, 1887), p.6.
25. Grey to Bryce, 19 April 1917 [Bodleian Library, MS. Bryce 73. fols.152-154]. Joseph Choate had been U.S. Ambassador to Britain from 1899 to 1905, and Walter Page held the same position from 1913 to 1918.
26. Grey to Ware, 28 October 1907.
27. Address by Grey at a meeting of the Empire Parliamentary Association, 31 July 1916.
28. Grey to Raleigh Grey, 27 August 1904.
29. Grey to Lyttelton, 1 May 1905.
30. Grey to Gell, 3 May 1905.
31. Grey to Kerr, 16 December 1914 [Bodleian Library, Round Table Papers, MSS. Eng. hist. c.813, fol. 210].
32. Grey to Colonel Lambe, 7 November 1914.
33. "After the War" Empire Settlement and Rural Employment Committee Minute book, 28 April 1915 [Royal Commonwealth Society Archives].
34. Grey to Asquith, 25 June 1915.
35. Lord Sydenham had been Governor of Victoria, 1901-3.
36. R.C. Munro-Ferguson to Grey, 6 April 1915. Munro-Ferguson was Governor-General of Australia, 1914-20.
37. 'The After the War Settlement and Employment of Ex-Servicemen in the Overseas Dominions', 1916; in J.M. Fewster, 'Documentary Sources concerning Australia in Durham University'. Durham University Journal, 81 (1988), 59-69.
38. "After the War" Committee Minute Book, 8 March 1916.
39. T.R. Reese, The History of the Royal Commonwealth Society, 1868-1968 (London, 1968), p.118.
40. "After the War" Committee Minute Book, May 1920.
41. Grey to Lady Wantage, 16 February 1913.
42. Grey to Lord Dudley, 22 November 1908.
43. Luncheon list, Savoy Hotel, 21 July 1913. Guests included Northcliffe, H. Lawson, J.A. Spender, J.L. Garvin, G. Robinson. C.P. Scott, Lionel Curtis and St. Loe Strachey.

44. Rosebery to Grey, 10 April 1912.
45. The Standard, 18 September 1913 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
46. Grey to Borden, 7 July 1915.
47. Hallett, 'Grey as Governor-General', p.353.
48. Harcourt to Grey, 23 May 1913 [Bodleian Library, MSS. Harcourt dep.446, fol.254]. Lewis Harcourt was Colonial Secretary from 1910 to 1915.
49. Borden to Grey, 2 October 1913.
50. H. Brittain, Pilgrims and Pioneers (London, 1946), p.222.
51. Allen Warren, 'Citizens of the Empire: Baden-Powell, Scouts and Guides, and an Imperial Ideal', in J.M. Mackenzie (ed.), Imperialism and Popular Culture (Manchester, 1986), p.238.
52. The Times, 22 December 1912.
53. Grey to Harcourt, 11 February 1906 [MSS. Harcourt, dep.439, fols.11-22].
54. Grey to Rosebery, 15 February 1907.
55. Grey to Howick, 2 January 1907.
56. Brittain, Pilgrims and Pioneers, p.197; R. Pound and G. Harmsworth Northcliffe (London, 1959), p.369.
57. Grey to Asquith, 25 June 1915.
58. Grey to Sir Edward Grey, 17 March 1915.
59. Dictionary of National Biography (1912-21), p.228.
60. T.R. Reese, Royal Commonwealth Society, p.78.
61. Ibid., p.120. Conscription was introduced in 1916.
62. Speech by Grey to the Royal Colonial Institute, n.d. 1915, p.4.

CHAPTER SIX: UNITED KINGDOM FEDERATION

1. J.E. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution : The Debate over the United Kingdom Constitution, 1870-1921 (Montreal, 1989), p.vii.
2. Kendle, 'The Round Table and Home Rule All Round', p.334.
3. W.E. Gladstone, Contemporary Review, 53 (1888), quoted in D.G. Boyce, The Irish Question and British Politics, 1868-1986 (London, 1988), p.31.
4. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.30.

5. Kendle, Ibid., pp.24-31. P. Jalland, 'United Kingdom Devolution, 1910-14'. English Historical Review 94 (1979), 758; Mansergh, The Irish Question, p.164.
6. Rosebery to Esher, 23 December 1885, quoted in Crewe, Lord Rosebery, p.279.
7. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.23.
8. Grey to Rosebery, 14 March 1910. Later examples of this attitude, as far as Grey was concerned, were the Catholic Church's lack of co-operation in respect of his Quebec Celebrations, as well as the way it attacked Laurier's naval policy as militaristic in 1910. He would doubtless also have resented its fierce opposition to conscription in Ireland in 1918.
9. Grey to Prothero, 12 October 1910.
10. Philadelphia Bulletin, 26 March 1902 (copy in 4th Earl Grey Papers).
11. Grey to Curtis, 14 December 1909.
12. The Times, 11 October 1913.
13. Grey to Howick, 15 December 1909.
14. Grey to Milner, 1 March 1910.
15. Suggestions for reform of the House of Lords were frequent between 1900 and 1911, even Lansdowne and Rosebery each making proposals. So Grey was not unusual in advocating reform.
16. Grey to Curtis, 14 February 1909.
17. Kendle, 'The Round Table and Home Rule All Round', 332-53.
18. Daily Mail; cited in Ottawa Free Press, 6 September 1910.
19. Grey to Cecil Ashley, 26 October 1908.
20. Northcliffe to Grey, 4 November 1910. In that year Northcliffe was proprietor of The Observer, The Times and the Daily Mail.
21. Gollin, The Observer and J.L. Garvin, pp.171-3. In 1908 Grey had described Garvin (editor of The Observer from 1908 to 1942) as 'far and away the most brilliant living journalist in England': Grey to Sir Alexander Hamilton, 20 January 1908.
22. Balfour to Garvin, 22 October 1910, quoted in Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.121.
23. Grey to Howick, 23 November 1910.
24. Grey to Lansdowne, 2 February 1910.
25. Grey to Milner, 1 March 1910. Grey sent a copy of this letter to Howick, in which he added: 'You will laugh at this trio ! but I know no reason why all three should not join a federalist party'. According to Kendle, Lord Dunraven, another keen federalist, suggested that Grey himself might lead such a party. No response

from Grey is recorded, unfortunately: Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.108.

26. Grey to Rosebery, 23 March 1907 and 14 March 1910. Milner to Balfour, 5 November 1910, quoted in Kendle, 'The Round Table Movement and Home Rule All Round', p.344.
27. Grey to Howick, 10 May 1910.
28. Laurier to Grey, 27 February 1910.
29. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.107. Kendle, 'The Round Table Movement and Home Rule All Round', p.338.
30. Grey to Prothero, 12 October 1910.
31. Grey to Harcourt, 15 April 1911.
32. Grey to Earl of Balcarres (Unionist Chief Whip in the House of Lords), 12 December 1911.
33. Grey to Sir Arthur Bigge, 14 September 1911.
34. Grey to Howick, 14 September 1911.
35. Grey to Bigge, 14 September 1911.
36. Kipling to Grey, 28 October 1911. Upon Grey's death in 1917, Kipling succeeded him as a Rhodes trustee.
37. Grey to Benson, 10 June 1911.
38. H.L. Deb. (5th Series), vol.13, cols.497-508, 27 January 1913.
39. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.158.
40. The Times, 9 June 1913.
41. Ibid., 11 October 1913.
42. Grey to Earl Peel, 17 July 1916.
43. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.176 and p.183.

CONCLUSION

1. McIntyre, Colonies into Commonwealth, p.120.
2. Goldwin Smith, The Empire, p.6, cited in Wormell, Seeley, p.98; Richard Jebb, 1905, cited in Hyam, Britain's Imperial Century, p.110.
3. Kendle, Ireland and the Federal Solution, p.238.
4. Hallett, 'Grey as Governor-General', p.356.
5. Sinclair, Imperial Federation, p.24.

6. J.D.B. Miller, 'The Utopia of Imperial Federation'. Political Studies, 4 (1956), 195.
7. Lord Milner, quoted in Porter, Lion's Share, p.194.
8. Edward Grey, Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916 (London, 1925), pp.81-82.
9. Begbie, Grey, p.137.
10. Reese, History of the Royal Commonwealth Society, p.120.
11. Porter, Lion's Share, p.268.
12. Begbie, Grey, p.53.
13. Hyam, Britain's Imperial Century, p.118.
14. The Times, 30 August 1917.

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