

establish some acceptable plan of federation. Nothing, however, was effected, except that education on the issue was being widely diffused.

In Feb. 1890, Sir Henry Parkes brought about a federation conference, attended by delegates from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania and Fiji. An address to the crown was adopted, in which it was declared that the best interests of the colonies as well as of the Imperial government would be conserved by a union under the crown. There was also adopted a recommendation for a national Australasian convention empowered to report an adequate scheme for a federal constitution.

During the early part of April the authorized convention met at Sydney, New South Wales, completed its work and adjourned on the 9th of said month. The constitution adopted denominates the colonies, states and the new federation "The Commonwealth of Australia." The legislature is to consist of a Senate and House of Representatives. Each state legislature will send to the Senate, eight members for six year terms, but four must retire every three years. Members of the House are limited to three year terms. Each State is entitled to four members, but the principle of representation according to 30,000 of population is that on which the House membership is based. The congress of Australia will have more imperial power than that of the United States. It will control the postal and telegraphic service, and it will enact all laws governing marriage and divorce.

The Chief Executive will be officially known as Governor-General. He will be appointed by the Crown, and will be assisted by a council of seven ministers, selected from members of either House. He will be invested with the "vetos" power. He will be commander-in-chief of the army and navy. Provision is made for a Supreme Court similar to that of the United States, but in some cases an appeal from it to the Crown can be made. Inter-State free trade will go into effect at once, but existing tariffs with foreign countries must remain as at present until Congress decrees otherwise. Surplus revenue must be distributed among the States. Constitutional amendments are to be made by a majority vote of Congress.

A convention elected by popular vote will next be held in each State, and a draft of the constitution adopted by the Sydney convention submitted. Should three States adopt and ratify this constitution, the Imperial government will then be petitioned to establish the Australasian commonwealth.

It is safe to conclude that the five States of Australia proper will approve the scheme, that is New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and West Australia. New Zealand and Tasmania can also become members of the Union if they so desire. It is also safe to conclude that England will ratify the new commonwealth. Coercion is no longer part of her policy in governing colonies. Should an extra-official person be appointed to the governorship, trouble may result, and absolute independence follow. It only

requires a slight constitutional amendment to throw off the governorship altogether. The instrument is drawn with a view to such a contingency. So that the governor-general had better be as chary of exercising his veto power as is the queen.

There is one feature of the constitution of the commonwealth of Australia that is especially significant to students of United States history and politics. That is the tendency to federalism rather than to States' rights. The Australian parliament or congress reserves to itself the right to control immigration, naturalization, qualifications for citizenship, suffrage, marriage, divorce and the chartering and regulation of corporations. It can even enact laws applicable to single states. Laws relating to the levying of taxation must originate in the Lower House, but the Senate may accept or reject them, it cannot amend them. The bill must go back to the House and be there amended, but nothing in the way of what we call a "rider" will be tolerated.

The Supreme Court will consist of a Chief Justice and four Associate Justices. This will be the final court of appeal, except in cases where public interests touching the empire are concerned. In this respect Australia will differ somewhat from Canada and other British provinces, where appeal is always in order.

The Constitution is universally admitted to be an able document. It is the work of Sir Henry Parkes. He has studied the question thoroughly. He mastered the shortcomings of other governments, and outlined his federation scheme on the broadest philosophic basis consistent with the safety of the empire, and with the good government of his commonwealth.

JUNUS.

APRIL 30, 1891.

EUROPEAN MOVEMENTS.

THE proposition of Germany to isolate France, by forming a commercial union with other leading powers, is progressing toward consummation. A leading purpose on the part of Germany is to conciliate Russia. We stated on Monday that the latter would not accept of the bait tendered without the imposition of a condition which would in some way relate to the advance of the Czar upon Constantinople.

It appears that this view is correct, later dispatches asserting that Russia will have nothing to do with the commercial scheme unless the power of the Turkish Porte over the Dardanelles shall cease. In other words, the Czar asks that the portion of the treaty of 1841—confirmed in London in 1871, and again at Berlin in 1878—which forbids the passage of foreign ships of war through the Dardanelles without the consent of the Sultan, shall be abrogated. This means that Russia demands a southern seaboard for naval purposes, and ultimately that the Turks shall be driven out of eastern Europe and the Muscovites occupy

Constantinople, one of the strongest strategic points in the world.

It is stated that Italy, Switzerland and Belgium are invited to become associated with the proposed international commercial union, the ostensible purpose of which is to operate to the disadvantage of heavily protected countries. Surprise is expressed that such a plea should be advanced as a reason for the formation of such an organization, seeing that some of the nations invited to participate are more strongly protected than any others. Of course it is not the real reason, the genuine object being purely political, rather than financial. Germany wishes to break up combinations that threaten her peace, not to say her existence.

The British government must be watching the present movements upon the European international chessboard with special interest and perhaps some degree of anxiety. The condition imposed by the Czar as the basis upon which he will consent to become a party in the proposed commercial union is treading on the tail of the British lion. Should the powers who were parties to the treaty of 1841—or a majority of them—consent to the free passage of Russian warships through the Dardanelles, independent of the Turkish Porte, how could England help herself? Unless the latter should yield she would probably have to fight, as Russia seems bent on gaining the point made in connection with her entrance, or otherwise, into the commercial union. The sending of the two ships of the Russian volunteer navy to the Dardanelles were merely feelers put out to ascertain the situation and prospect.

Should England conclude, under certain conditions, not to resist the attainment of the object of the Czar in relation to the Dardanelles, and consequently regarding Constantinople, which commands that narrow neck of water, what would Britain require as an offset? It appears as if it would necessarily be the full occupation by her of Egypt, through which runs the Suez canal, connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, this being the short route to India.

It seems as if Lord Beaconsfield must have foreseen such a contingency as the one now probable when his government purchased the Island of Cyprus, the most available point for a naval station contiguous to the Mediterranean entrance to the Suez canal. With this strategic advantage Great Britain might hold out a long time against Russian encroachments, one of the ultimate objects of