

IMPERIAL GEOLOGICAL UNION.

No one interested in Geological Science could fail to be impressed with the evidence afforded by the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, in its display of natural products, in the conferences connected with it and in the number of scientific men collected from all parts of the Empire, of the amount of Geological work represented by Great Britain and its dependencies, and the commanding position of the Empire with reference to the Geology of the world. The same fact was apparent in the importance attached to Colonial and Indian Geology and Geography at the meeting of the British Association at Birmingham. Influenced by these facts, I was induced to speak somewhat strongly in the address which I had the honour of delivering at Birmingham, on the position of Britain and its colonies and the English speaking world in general with reference to scientific progress.

On my return to Canada, and more particularly after the (temporary, as I hope) failure of the project to hold a meeting of the British Association next year in Australia, it seemed desirable to give the matter some definite form; and after correspondence and consultation with friends, I was induced to address a letter on the subject to Prof. Stokes, the President of the Royal Society.

The reasons for this course were that both Prof. Huxley and his successor in the Presidential chair of the Royal

Society

Society had suggested an Imperial Scientific Union, and the subject was understood to be under the consideration of the Council of the Society which from its central and commanding position has a right to the initiative in any movement of this nature. In this letter Geological Science is alone directly referred to, as being that with which the writer is more immediately connected and that which in some respects has already the best organization; but without excluding other departments of Science. Special reference is also made to Canada, as affording an apt illustration of the extent and value of the Geological domain of the Empire. I need scarcely add that the present year, distinguished as it is by many movements in the direction of Imperial Union, in connection with its being the fiftieth year of the reign of Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, seems especially auspicious for such a project. The following are extracts from the letter referred to.

Copies of the above letter were sent to representative men in every part of the Empire, and a large number of replies have been received, expressing an interest in the proposal and readiness to aid in carrying it out. In so far as Canada is concerned, Lord Lorne, the founder of the Royal Society of Canada, and his successor as Patron of that Society, Lord Lansdowne, have signified their hearty concurrence, and the Council of the Society appointed a committee on the subject, consisting of Dr. Selwyn, F.R.S., Rev. Prof. Laflamme and the writer, whose report was adopted at the recent meeting of the Society in Ottawa. ^{are the conclusions and recommendations} The following ~~is a portion~~ of this report:-

It will be seen that we hope the initiative will be taken by the Royal Society ^{of London,} and the present communication is intended to aid in securing that general co-operation throughout the Empire which is essential to success. With the same object I have asked the council of the British Association to throw its influence on the side of Union; and propose in resigning the office with which the Association had honoured me to make it a personal request that this great Society, which by its meeting in Canada and its proposed meeting in Australia, has assumed an Imperial character, will take a leading part in the promotion of Imperial Union both in reference to Geology and to other sciences.

I need scarcely add that the project is not intended to interfere with the operations of the International Congress of Geologists, which is to meet in London in 1888; but it would appear eminently desirable that the contemplated Imperial Geological Union should be organized before that meeting, so as to enable British Geology to present a united front, and to assume the importance to which it is entitled.