

constitute an obstacle to New Zealand's joining the Commonwealth. Such an argument might have had some force a hundred years ago, but is puerile in an age when science is daily annihilating space, and bringing the colonies closer to one another. The Federal Bill provides that the Capital is to be not less than 100 miles from Sydney; thus New Zealand representatives could reach the seat of government in about four days. Tasmanians are not so much better off, since the journey from Tasmania to Sydney occupies about two and a-half days, while, under the most favourable circumstances, the Westralian members could not accomplish their journey in less than six days. The New Zealand members would be no more removed from the control and criticism of their constituents than members from North Queensland and other remote parts of the continent; while the diffusion of news by cable, reports of debates and the publication of Hansard, would give the people as much information about their doings as similar reports of the proceedings of Parliament in the individual colonies.

It has also been asserted that New Zealand should beware of becoming a member of the Commonwealth because complications are sure to rise with coloured population, by whose labours alone the tropical parts of Australia can be developed. The antipathy shown to coloured labour in New South Wales and the southern colonies of Australia, the overwhelming majority in favour of Federation in North Queensland, the resolutions recently passed by a public meeting in Brisbane for a "white Queensland," and the assertion of Sir John Forrest that the Commonwealth can more effectively exclude undesirable aliens than Westralia or any individual State, are all indications of the unanimity with which United Australia will prevent the possibility of a coloured difficulty similar to that which perplexes the United States.

Many who look upon Imperial Federation as a "consummation devoutly to be wished," reject with derisive scorn the mere sug-

gestion of Australia coming into fiscal conflict with the Mother Country. The remark has been made by someone that England lost her colonies in the past because she insisted upon taxing them; she might lose others in the future because *they insist upon taxing her*. The growth of industries in Australia similar to those England, and the onward-flowing tide of State Socialism, which has for its avowed object the maintenance of a higher standard of comfort among the workers than obtains in the Old Country, will be unsurmountable barriers to such a union.

Freetrade with England, which Imperial Federation implies, would mean the degradation of Australian artizans to the level of the English white slaves, and would be resisted by the industrial masses of Australasia, even at the point of the sword. Australia will be, in the future, one of a number of English-speaking States bound to England by a permanent alliance, but otherwise perfectly independent rather than a unit in that world-wide composite State which Imperial Federation pre-supposes; and, in such a case, Australia would be New Zealand's natural ally, both from a commercial and a defensive point of view.

The advantages that New Zealand is likely to gain by joining the Federation considerably outweigh the few disadvantages she may suffer. She will gain in national life, in commercial importance, in immunity from foreign aggression, while her superior climate and resources are sufficient guarantees that she will be able to compete successfully with Australia in the sphere of manufacturers. New Zealanders have their destiny in their own hands; they will have to decide shortly whether they are to remain isolated and alone, or to seek their natural ally, and dissipate the few remaining clouds that obscure the dawn of that auspicious day when "Australia girt by her oceans, with Tasmania and New Zealand for associates, will form a natural federation apart, a federation quite capable of living for itself, and of having, in the future, a distinct nationality, and perhaps a great history."