

### 3. THE ROUND TABLE "MOVEMENT"

The Round Table was founded, as Curtis emphasised in 1913, "with a view to action".<sup>1</sup> The strategy adopted in 1909-10 envisaged the creation of a "'cloque', or clique, or group, or whatever we may call it in each Dominion to shout 'harrooh' in a spontaneous manner when the egg is hatched", leading to an Empire-wide movement for imperial federation.<sup>2</sup> John Kendle has rightly concluded that this strategy betrayed a somewhat naïve assessment of opinion in the Dominions. Nevertheless, there were other points where this strategy was clearly optimistic, and where the plans of 1909-10 stood in danger of becoming unravelled. In particular, Curtis's assumption that the Moot itself could agree on a new "Selborne Memorandum" had yet to be proved. Moreover, as Curtis himself realised, much of the rationale behind the Round Table movement hinged on the existence of an unstable and menacing international situation. It was therefore possible that "tremendous and swiftly moving events" might "rush upon us like a thief in the night and precipitate a crisis which public opinion has not yet been prepared to face".<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 Curtis, *The Round Table Movement: its Past and its Future* (privately printed, London, 1913), p 9.
- 2 Kerr to Curtis, 31 Aug 1910, Lothian Papers 2, fols 92-95.
- 3 Curtis, *The Round Table Movement . . .* (London, 1913), pp 30-31.

### Finance

Lord Lovat was later to recall that the Plas Newydd meeting was primarily concerned with fund-raising.<sup>1</sup> In this, he was perhaps correct. Lord Anglesey was persuaded to part with £1000 pa for three years. The shrewder Lovat arranged that the Round Table's London office perform all the work of his Mushroom Valley Company (a South African land settlement scheme) in return for £200 and another £200 in 1912. Oliver gave £105, Milner £100, and all the others present £25 each.<sup>2</sup>

Milner spent the following months pressing other wealthy friends to make donations. He succeeded in extracting £2000 from Lady Wantage, £500 each from Lord Elphinstone and Gerard Craig-Sellar, £300 from Lord Leconfield, and £100 each from Jameson and the Duke of Sutherland.<sup>3</sup> Fund-raising continued apace throughout the Round Table's early years, netting one-off payments of £1000 from the Duke of Westminster and "E.C.G.", and regular payments of £300 pa from Lord Cowdray, £250 pa each from the Marquess of Salisbury, Earl Grey, J F Mason MP and Sir S Scott, £200 pa from Hugh Morrison, and £100 pa each from Viscount Iveagh, Lord Leven and Melville, Ernest Debenham, W S Burns, F C Tiarks, G Ridpath and R M Kindersley. Milner, Oliver, Brand and Hichens - the wealthier members

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1 Sir Francis Lindley, *Lord Lovat: A Biography* (London, nd), p 14.

2 [List of subscribers,] RT Papers c 782, fols 8-9.

3 *Ibid*; "Subscriptions promised", RT Papers c 778, fol 134.

of the Moot - also continued to support the Round Table on a regular basis.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to these sources, the Round Table received £1400 residue from "Lord Selborne's fund", and £4300 promised by Sir Abe Bailey for *The State*, but not needed at the time.<sup>2</sup> Once some unspecified "ruffled feelings" were soothed, Bailey gave a further £2000 for Round Table publications and £1500 for the general account.<sup>3</sup> He was thereafter the most generous individual supporter of the Round Table, and of other projects associated with the group.

By far the most lucrative source of funds for the Round Table in its early years was the Rhodes Trust, which Milner persuaded to match private donations on a "£ for £" basis until the end of 1915, when the combination of war, falling de Beers values, and a series of unwise investments forced the Trustees to cut back on their discretionary expenditure. Under the "£ for £" arrangement, the Round Table received £18,993 of Rhodes Trust money by the end of the First World War.<sup>4</sup>

Without the receipt of such funds from individual supporters and the Rhodes Trust, it is unlikely that the Round Table would ever have been able to get off the ground, as the table on the following page shows.

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- 1 [Lists of subscribers,] RT Papers, c 782, fols 19, 37, 46, 63 and 208.
  - 2 Milner to Kerr, 16 Sept 1909, Lothian Papers 11, fol 33.
  - 3 Ibid; "Funds available as at 22 May 1913", RT Papers c 778, fol 153; Minutes of RT meeting, 12 Feb 1914, c 782, fol 139.
  - 4 "Current State of Income", 9 Jan 1915, RT Papers c 783 fol 14; "Income and Expenditure, 1913-19", 25 March 1920, c 783, fol 109. The Round Table in fact received "£ for £" donations for the years 1909-14 and 1916 (having received larger amounts of private donations in the latter year than in 1915).

Income and Expenditure, 1910-19<sup>1</sup>

	Donations	Rhodes Trust	Other income	Expenditure
1909-10	5210	4255	159	4439
1911	225	2000	1416	4283
1912	3715	2000	1731	6322
1913	4580	1206	2415	7018
1914	2501	4580	2279	7508
1915	2183	2190	3676	7243
1916	2762		4360	7849
1917	2138		4475	7992
1918	713	2762	4532	8269
1919	426		4447	8129

(Other income = magazine, pamphlet and book sales, interest on investments

Expenditure = magazine and other printing, organiser's and editors' salaries and expenses, London and Ledbury office expenses)

The Round Table's expenditure was always greater than its income from sources other than donations. Such was the initial scale of these donations that the group managed to avoid financial difficulties, although during the First World War it was forced to eat into the capital reserves accumulated in the previous few years. Thereafter, financial constraints became an important factor in determining the group's strategy.

1 "Finance", 3 Dec 1911, RT Papers, c 782, fols 3-6; "The Round Table (Magazine accounts)", c 782, fol 24; (1912 accounts,) c 778 fols 106-11; "Current State of Income", 9 Jan 1915, c 783 fol 14; "Income and Expenditure, 1913-19", 25 March 1920, c 783, fol 109.

The Round Table provided a livelihood for Curtis, except for a brief period when he was employed by the Colonial Office, until 1931, when he came into a substantial inheritance.<sup>1</sup> The Round Table also paid what at the time was a considerable salary of £1000 pa (rising to £1500 pa after the war) to Kerr and his successors as editor of the *Round Table*. Further sums had to be found for the Round Table offices. A suite of seven rooms at 175 Piccadilly was rented from early 1910, and by 1913 six employees worked there for salaries ranging from £500 pa (for the senior secretary Mr Handcock) to £71.10.0 pa (for the office hand Mr Preece). In addition, Curtis had his own office and secretary (from 1916 Pat Scott, whom he married in 1920) at his home in Ledbury, Herefordshire.<sup>2</sup> Despite a relatively high subscription rate (10s pa until 1920, £1 pa until 1948) the *Round Table* magazine only briefly broke even, in the late 1920s and again during the Second World War. Curtis's various studies were also continually in the red, and therefore subsidised.<sup>3</sup> None of the funds generated by Milner and his colleagues in London found their way to the Dominion groups, which were expected to be entirely self-financing.

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1 Curtis to Hichens et al, 6 Aug 1930, Lothian Papers 252, fol 32; the Round Table continued to pay Curtis's office expenses after 1931.

2 [Office expenses,] RT Papers c 782.

3 Curtis's *Round Table Studies* were paid for by Dominion groups at cost price. Even so, a loss of £1658 was made between 1910 and 1914 (RT Papers c 782, fol 141), and a further loss of £699 in 1915 and 1916 (RT Papers, c 783, fol 103).

The Round Table in the Dominions

It was crucial to Curtis's plan that the demand for federation should be launched from the Dominions; otherwise "such a movement would almost inevitably be interpreted as . . . an attempt to interfere with colonial autonomy".<sup>1</sup> He and his colleagues therefore went to great lengths to portray the Round Table as a real "co-operative" enterprise.<sup>2</sup> The South African origins of the movement were emphasised, and Curtis himself was encouraged to assume "the guise of a colonialised Britisher".<sup>3</sup>

Curtis's first port of call in 1910-11 was South Africa itself, where he set to work on his argument for imperial federation. The latter he finished by the end of May, and sent back to England to have printed under the title *Memoranda on Canada and the British Commonwealth* (referred to as the "Green Memorandum" or the "original egg").<sup>4</sup>

In South Africa, Round Table affairs were left in the hands of the remaining "Kindergarten" members Wyndham, Duncan and Feetham. These three enlisted the help of J Tyndall, a Johannesburg lawyer and associate of Feetham, to handle subscriptions, and at some later stage Howard Pim, Percy Horsfall and Professors F Clarke and E A Walker joined them in a "mootlet" to arrange *Round Table* articles. There was never any attempt to organise

- 1 Curtis to Kerr, 21 July 1910, Lothian Papers 1, fol 60.
- 2 RT, Nov 1910, frontispiece, and all subsequent issues to 1937.
- 3 Kerr to Curtis, 22 Dec 1910, Lothian Papers 12, fols 162-9.
- 4 Copies in Curtis Papers 156, items 4 and 6.

regular "study-groups". This was more than just the result of Curtis's missed opportunity: as the editor of the *Round Table* wrote in 1917, "it would make it difficult for our people in South Africa" - all of whom were politically ambitious - "if they were known out there to be the regular 'Round Table' contributors".<sup>1</sup>

In New Zealand, by contrast, Curtis set about forming Round Table "study-groups" with vigour and determination. He took great care not to offend Dominion sensibilities by appearing as the emissary of a London-based propagandist organisation.

"I come here as a man identified with South Africa, I tell them how the South African group grew up in the last ten years . . . . I go on to . . . suggest . . . that they should form little groups of students, similar to our South African group, and that we should pursue these studies together, with a view to the development of a policy of mutual relations which would fit the circumstances of all. I represent the establishment of a similar group in England, rather as the outcome of suggestion from South Africa, subsequently endorsed by the approval of friends we have made in Canada."<sup>2</sup>

Curtis's version of the Round Table's origins was undoubtedly helpful to him in his task of recruiting Dominion contacts, who in turn lent credibility to the Round Table's projected image; but it also left him and his colleagues open to the charge of insincerity, and presaged difficulties should their views not meet with full agreement.

Curtis spent three months in New Zealand, forming groups in Wellington, Christchurch, Auckland, Wanganui and Dunedin, as well as a

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1 Coupland to Oliver, 8 Sept 1917, Oliver Papers 90, fol 92.

2 Curtis to Kerr, 21 July 1910, Lothian Papers 1, fols 59-83.

network of *Round Table* agents. Altogether some 44 individuals were involved, including 11 academics, one MP and roughly equal proportions of lawyers, businessmen and landowners.<sup>1</sup> Curtis's principal contact was S Arnold Atkinson. His brother, A R Atkinson, was New Zealand correspondent of the *Morning Post* until 1911 and of *The Times* thereafter. Curtis was extremely pleased with his work, writing to Oliver that the Wellington group had had to be restrained in their enthusiasm for publishing his "original egg".<sup>2</sup>

Curtis next sailed for Australia, where - with the help of John Dove, sent to speed up Curtis's work - groups were established at Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. The composition of these groups again reflected Curtis's concern to capture the "leading men" of the Dominion. Of some 63 individuals initially enlisted, 20 were or went on to become academics; 9 were public servants; 5 were churchmen, including an archbishop and two bishops; and the remainder were in almost equal measure lawyers, businessmen and landowners.<sup>3</sup> A Round Table office was set up at Sydney, but Curtis's principal contacts were in Melbourne, where F W Eggleston and Professor W Harrison Moore were among the founder members of the longest-surviving Round Table branch.

- 1 Lists of New Zealand RT group members. RT Papers c 844, fols 2-6, 14-18 and 23-24; cf J Kendle, "The Round Table Movement: Lionel Curtis and the Formation of the New Zealand Groups in 1910", *NZ J of History*, vol 1, no 1 (April 1967), pp 33-50.
- 2 Curtis to Oliver, 15/16 Aug 1910, Lothian Papers 2, fols 135-51.
- 3 Lists of Australian Group Members, RT Papers, c 844, fols 2-6, 14-18 and 19-20; cf L Foster, *High Hopes* (Melbourne, 1986).

Canada, the oldest and most populous of the Dominions, was the crux of Curtis's scheme: as he emphasised to the Wellington group,

"the one country which it is important to influence was [sic] Canada, and . . . our main objective should be to get a lot of men like themselves in Canada to adopt a statement of this kind in some shape or form and to issue it to Canadians on their own responsibility".

However, Curtis recognised that Canada was "the one Dominion to which I cannot show the Egg in its present form". He therefore requested the Moot to allow him to return home "until I have got a doctrine I can preach".<sup>1</sup> He felt that his task was made all the more difficult by the Moot's decision to authorise the journalist (Sir) John Willison and the financiers Sir Edmund Walker, A J Glazebrook and (Sir) Edward Peacock to control the Canadian end of the *Round Table* magazine. By so doing the Moot was

"now putting the formation of the group into the hands of men who are, I admit, second to none that we met in Canada. The difficulty is that they differ with us on the point which . . . we came to the conclusion was fundamental . . . . Now if we succeed in getting this organisation to agree to the main features of our policy, well and good; but if not, we shall be put in the position of a definite rupture with some of our best friends, and we shall then have to set to work to create a separate organization".<sup>2</sup>

The Moot was unsympathetic to Curtis's reasoning, and ordered him to return via Canada, as planned.<sup>3</sup> Curtis spent only two months in Canada, and set up only two Round Table groups, at Toronto and Montreal. Some 37 individuals were initially enlisted, including 12 academics and 2 churchmen. Financiers (6) were more prominent than in Australasia,

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1 Curtis to Oliver, 15/16 Aug 1910, Lothian Papers, 2, fols 135-51.

2 [Curtis,] "Memorandum", 18 May 1910, RT Papers c 776, fols 64-72.

3 Kerr to Curtis, 14 Oct 1910, Lothian Papers 2, fols 127-34.

lawyers (3) less. Businessmen constituted the bulk of the remainder.<sup>1</sup> A J Glazebrook and E J Kylie were made convenor and secretary of the Toronto group, which paid for an office. After Curtis's departure the Canadian groups expanded rapidly. By 1912 there were 102 members of the Toronto group, and there were new groups in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg and Halifax. A separate Newfoundland group was set up in 1912, with (Sir) Brian Dunfield as secretary.<sup>2</sup>

Curtis later claimed that the Round Table groups comprised a representative cross-section of opinion in the Dominions, including "men . . . found among the ranks of socialism, radicalism and labour".<sup>3</sup> This was undoubtedly misleading. Of 37 original Canadian Round Tablers, only 2 were Francophones (Talbot Papineau and Senator R Dandurand), and 3 others were regarded as liberals (Vincent Massey, W H Blake and J S Willison). The 63 original Australian Round Tablers did include the Labour elder statesman J C Watson and a Trade Union official, William Somerville, as well as a few others sympathetic to Labour, but they were clearly in a small minority. In New Zealand, only one of the 44 original Round Tablers, Edward Tregear, had strong Labour connections. One reason why the Round Table failed to attract a more representative membership may be inferred from a later episode involving a Labourite in New Zealand: his attendance at a Round

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- 1 Lists of Canadian RT Group Members, RT Papers c 844, fols 2-6 and 14-18.
  - 2 List of Toronto members, 31 Oct 1912, (Kylie file, ), RT (O) Papers. Similar lists for other Canadian groups appear not to have survived. For Newfoundland, see Dunfield, "Notes on the RT Group", 16 Dec 1921, (Newfoundland file, ) RT (O) Papers.
  - 3 Curtis, *The Round Table Movement* (1913), p 23.

Table meeting caused a flurry of excitement, and a general agreement that it "would have done [him] . . . a lot of good".<sup>1</sup>

As Leonie Foster has demonstrated in the case of Australia, the Round Table groups comprised a very unrepresentative section of Dominion populations. They were, as they were intended to be, composed of members of the social, cultural and political élites of the new nations.<sup>2</sup> Many Dominion Round Tablers - such as (Sir) Robert Garran, (Sir) John Latham and F W Eggleston in Australia, or Vincent Massey and Loring Christie in Canada - went on to play important rôles in policy-making in their own countries. At the time of the Versailles conference, Curtis remarked on the number of Round Tablers included in Dominion delegations. This was, he thought, "simply due to the fact that for ten years . . . the group system had given the R.T. men a special training".<sup>3</sup> Whether or not this was so, it is clear that the Round Table was able to attract individuals of a very high calibre in each of the Dominions.

The question which naturally arises is, what attracted such men to the Round Table? Some - such as H F von Haast in New Zealand, or Harrison Moore in Australia - appear to have joined out of old-fashioned imperial loyalism. Nevertheless, such individuals were surprisingly rare. Most appear to have joined because they saw in the Imperial connection the means to pursue their own agenda of national interests and nation-building. In Kerr's view, there was no contradiction in the Round Table consisting of

1 H F van Haast to Grigg, 10 May 1920, Lothian Papers, 17, fol 1.

2 Foster, *High Hopes* (Melbourne, 1986), chapters 2 - 4.

3 Curtis to A J Glazebrook, 2 Sept 1921, RT Papers c 796, fols 134-40.

"good nationalist Englishmen, good nationalist Canadians, good nationalist Australians, etc".<sup>1</sup>

Both nationalists and imperialists agreed that there was an "Imperial problem". They agreed that some new system of Anglo-Dominion relations would have to be found if the Dominions were to become truly "self-governing". They agreed, also, that conservatism, inertia and ignorance of foreign affairs constituted the main obstacles to change. Eggleston complained that the average Australian's attitude towards defence and foreign policy was at best "somewhat like the man who will sign cheques for his wife's charities, but does not want to be worried by details of the cases".<sup>2</sup> The Round Table was a useful means of educating opinion in the Dominions. But it was clearly more. Very few Dominion Round Tablers thought that it was possible - let alone desirable - for their countries to survive as independent nations.<sup>3</sup> The question, therefore, was how to make British policy more responsive to the needs of the Dominions. And here the interests of Dominion nationalism and of imperial unionism converged. As Kerr emphasised, it was necessary for the Dominions to "barrack loudly" if they were ever "to have a say".<sup>4</sup>

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1 Kerr to V Massey, 4 Jan 1917, RT Papers c 822, fols 28-9.

2 Eggleston to Grigg, nd [1913], RT Papers c 798, fols 155-59.

3 E J Kylie, "Liberalism and Empire" [1910], (Kylie file,) RT (O) Papers; cf *Round Table Studies, [First Series, Vol 1, 1911]* pp 638-86.

4 Kerr to W H Kelly, 28 Nov 1911, RT Papers c 797, fols 27-30.

The Round Table Magazine

Curtis's original plan had envisaged a network of journals in each of the self-governing Dominions, edited locally, but also carrying a certain amount of common material fed by an editorial clearing-house in London. It is not clear whether Curtis intended these journals to be circulated at all beyond the membership of local Round Table groups.

This plan was substantially modified by the meetings of 1909-10. It was agreed that there should be only one journal, edited in London, "to which all [Round Table] workers and all important statesmen in the Dominions could be induced to subscribe".<sup>1</sup> In Curtis's absence, he and the Moot continued to work "in diametrically opposite directions".<sup>2</sup> The Moot agreed to start producing *The Round Table* even before Curtis had finished forming Dominion groups. Printed pamphlets and flysheets advertising the magazine made no mention of the Round Table groups. Moreover, these promised a regular, comprehensive, well-balanced survey of Imperial affairs: in other words, not a forum for discussion, but a medium of information and enlightenment.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the London group still saw the *Round Table* magazine as "an offshoot of the movement".<sup>4</sup> Kerr identified three main purposes for the new journal, all of them connected to the eventual goal of the Round Table movement:

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- 1 Minutes of RT meeting, Ledbury, 15-18 Jan 1910, Lothian Papers 11, fols 7-11.
  - 2 Curtis to Kerr, 21 July 1910, Lothian Papers 1, fols 59-83.
  - 3 "The Round Table" [1910], RT Papers, c 844, fols 159-65; cf "The Round Table" [1910], *ibid*, fols 25-6.
  - 4 "Round Table Statement", 1913, RT Papers, c 778, fol 199.

- a) it would serve as a "link between the students of the Imperial problem within each group",
- b) it would "help to recruit believers in Imperial Union who are not known to the members of the groups", and
- c) it would correct "false impressions and misunderstandings", and disseminate "those facts, figures and ideas, which must become the commonplaces of public opinion, before it is ready to receive the true gospel".<sup>1</sup>

The first issue of *The Round Table* contained a number of references to the inadequacy of the existing constitutional machinery of the Empire. Subsequent issues carried articles on such topics as the confederacy of Delos and the union of England with Scotland, which would have made little sense except in the context of arguments about the respective merits of co-operation and federation.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the Moot agreed "that until the 'egg' is published the *Round Table* should not come out flat-footed in favour of a scheme of organic union of the Empire".<sup>3</sup> Oliver's call for "a more definite and propagandist" and "positive line upon the need of Imperial Union" was decisively rejected.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Kerr, "Memorandum" (Nov/Dec 1910), Lothian Papers 11, fols 46-58.

2 [Kerr,] "Introductory", *RT*, Nov 1910, pp 3-4; [Perry,] "An Early Maritime Confederacy", *RT*, March 1912, pp 312-17; [W P Johnston,] "The Union of England and Scotland", *RT*, March 1913, pp 277-302.

3 Minutes of RT meeting, 21 Nov 1912, RT Papers, c 777, fols 168-9.

4 Oliver, "Minute", [June 1913,] RT Papers, c 778, fol 50; Minutes of RT meeting, 26 June 1913, RT (O) Papers.

Initially the Moot's attitude can be explained in terms of the "study-group" strategy. While it was believed that the *Round Table's* "influence mainly depends upon its leading articles being written from one point of view, i.e. in knowledge of and sympathy with the doctrines of the 'egg'"<sup>2</sup>, it was also believed that the call for Union would have to be carefully orchestrated. Increasingly, however, the Moot's attitude reflected conflicts over the timing, form and even need of Union, which Curtis's attempts to produce a new "Selborne Memorandum" brought out. As a result, the Moot came to appreciate the magazine as a distinct and separate mouthpiece, through which to influence opinion on a wide range of issues, sometimes unconnected to federation.

The Moot's collective responsibility for what was published in the *Round Table* was an important element in maintaining the consistency of the magazine. Ideally, "the line to be taken in the policy articles is thrashed out very earnestly, [and] the article is then drafted by the writer selected, circulated and thrashed out again".<sup>3</sup> As Amery later emphasised, the process "still left play for a good deal of individual outlook on the part of the various authors".<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, "the views

- 1 Oliver, "Minute", [June 1913,] RT Papers, c 778, fol 50; Minutes of RT meeting, 26 June 1913, RT (O) Papers.
- 2 [Kerr,] "Editorial Arrangements", [Jan 1912,] RT Papers, c 781, fols 162-3.
- 3 Curtis to Sir Arthur Salter, 17 Apr 1930, Lothian Papers 251, fols 596-99.
- 4 Amery to J Conway, 21 Feb 1952, (ed ctee file,) RT (O) Papers.

expressed" were generally "taken as being those of a body of men with a certain reputation".<sup>1</sup>

The anonymity of *Round Table* articles reflected the fact that they expressed the collective viewpoint of the Moot. It was also useful in concealing the extent to which *Round Table* articles (which, according to the printed circulars, would always be written by "qualified persons"<sup>2</sup>) were the work of a relatively small number of individuals.

Members of the London Moot wrote approximately two thirds of all identifiable "policy" articles in the years 1910-18.<sup>3</sup> Kerr, editor from 1910 to 1916, and Coupland, his successor from 1917 to 1919, were particularly prolific, as were Oliver, Brand, Craik and Grigg (who acted as caretakers of the magazine during Kerr's illness). Hichens, Malcolm and Zimmern also contributed a number of articles. Dawson appears to have contributed only on British politics between 1920 and 1922. Curtis wrote a number of articles after 1918, but none before. Coupland thought that Curtis would only produce "some particular thesis of his own" which would by no means be "practical politics".<sup>4</sup>

Others who contributed "policy" articles in the early years included the "Kindergarten" associates Duncan, Feetham, Perry, Marris and Meston. Roughly one-fifth of early "policy" articles were by members of the

- 1 Dove to Brand, 23 June 1933, Lothian Papers 276, fols 608-11.
- 2 "The Round Table", (1910,) RT Papers, c 844, fols 25-26.
- 3 See Appendix D, "Round Table Articles, by Author".
- 4 Coupland to Kerr, 17 Jan 1919, Lothian Papers 17, fol 480.

Dominion groups (including the "Kindergarten" members in South Africa). In some cases they were disavowed by the Moot.

An early circular for the *Round Table* stated that it was "not a commercial undertaking", but that "there is no reason why the journal should not be read by every man . . . who is seriously concerned with Imperial affairs".<sup>1</sup> By contemporary standards the circulation of the magazine was quite respectable.<sup>2</sup> A print-run of 3500 for the first issue gradually increased to 6500 by June 1914; 13,000 of the "Special War Issue" were printed in September. The print-run then settled down to around 10,000 for the remainder of the decade.<sup>3</sup> Most sales were through bookshops. The number of regular subscribers reached a plateau of just over 3,000 at the end of 1912. Relative to population, subscribers were more numerous in the Dominions (particularly New Zealand) than in the UK: at the end of 1914, for example, there were 935 subscribers in the UK, 614 in Canada, 360 in Australia, 227 in South Africa and 799 in New Zealand.<sup>4</sup>

- 1 [Untitled, printed circular for distribution in Canada, 1911,] RT Papers, c 844, fols 29-33.
- 2 The weeklies *New Age*, *New Statesman* and *Nation* had circulations of about 3,000. Even the most successful weekly, *The Spectator*, had a circulation of only 22,000 in 1903, falling to 13,500 in 1922: K Robbins, *Politicians, Diplomacy and War in Modern British History* (London, 1994), ch 9. Circulation figures for the major quarterlies are likely to be similar or even smaller.
- 3 "*The Round Table*", 10 May 1920, Brand Papers, Box 41; cf papers on the magazine's finance, RT Papers, c 782-3 and c 844-6.
- 4 [Subscription lists,] RT Papers, c 844, fols 210 ff and c 846, fols 228 ff; "Round Table Number 16", 27 Oct 1914, RT Papers, c 782, fol 202.

To make sure that the magazine reached its intended audience, the Koot sent out large numbers of each issue free: 668 in September 1912, and 1,222 by September 1914.<sup>1</sup> In Britain the recipients included Buckingham Palace, leading politicians, all national newspapers and high-class reviews, the leading provincial papers, shipping lines, hotels and London clubs.<sup>2</sup> Free and cost-price copies were also distributed through the WEA and the Overseas Club (whose secretary wanted "every member . . . to become imbued with the Round Table doctrines"<sup>3</sup>). Journalists were considered particularly important targets. As Curtis stated, "the *Round Table* is not intended so much for the average reader, as for those who write for the average reader".<sup>4</sup> In order to make the journalists' job easier, a subcommittee was established to write a précis of each issue, which was then sent to all leading British and Dominion newspapers.<sup>5</sup>

For the first few years of its existence, the *Round Table* was unique. Other quarterlies, such as the *Westminster*, *Edinburgh* and *National Reviews*, the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *Blackwoods*, published occasional articles on Empire relations and foreign policy. The Royal Colonial Institute's *Proceedings* provided a wealth of information and analysis. Finally, *The Times* published occasional supplements on individual parts of the Empire as

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- 1 "The Round Table" (1912), RT Papers, c 844, fol 131; "Round Table Number 16", 27 Oct 1914, c 782, fol 202.
  - 2 [Free lists, 1910-14,] RT Papers, c 844-5; [UK lists,] c 845, fols 55-74; [Dominion lists, March 1912,] c 844, fols 123 ff.
  - 3 Evelyn Wrench to Kerr, 11 Dec 1914, RT Papers, c 845, fol 9.
  - 4 Curtis, *Dyarchy* (London, 1920), p 74.
  - 5 Minutes of RT meeting, 9 May 1912, RT Papers, c 777, fols 12-15.

well as news items from local correspondents. None of these, however, attempted to do what the *Round Table* set out to do, which was to provide a regular, comprehensive and consistent survey of the Imperial position, to balance information with argument, and to pursue an agenda of considerable controversiality with subtlety and discrimination.

#### The "Green Memorandum"

The *Round Table* magazine was an increasingly important focus of Round Table activities, both in London and in the Dominions. Nevertheless, the real purpose of the organisation was to campaign for "closer union" of the Empire. Central to the strategy adopted in 1909-10 was the preparation of a convincing case for federation. Indeed, the whole of Curtis's plans hinged on his ability to produce a document acceptable both to the Moot and to the Round Tablers in the Dominions.

The "Green Memorandum" was Curtis's first attempt at producing such a document. Although his later writings differed in both form and substance, many of the themes which he developed remained central to his critique.

Curtis prefaced his essay with an analysis of international relations reiterating the imperialist belief that nations necessarily engaged in a world-struggle for survival and predominance. Citing Captain Mahan, he argued that Britain's naval hegemony was a necessary condition for the evolution of Canada and even of the United States. He mocked Canadians' assumption that they were already self-governing: lacking control of defence and foreign policy, Canada could not claim to have "its own hand on its own rudder." British institutions, meanwhile, were "breaking down

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1 [Curtis,] *Memoranda on Canada and the British Commonwealth* (privately printed, Letchworth, 1910), p 74.

beneath the strain", resulting in the congestion of parliament, the retardation of social reform, even the physical and mental deterioration of the British race.<sup>1</sup>

If present relations were inadequate, so too would be any form of mere co-operation, which would leave unresolved the central issue of accountability: the Admiralty, War and Foreign Offices could not operate if responsible to "five or six" different governments. Moreover, co-operation would actually be dangerous, as it would "encourage the delusion that we are equipped with the strength which can only be derived from unity itself".<sup>2</sup>

Thus Curtis came to his "Alternative", the "organic union" of Britain and the Dominions. This, he admitted, was supported by "so few [Canadians] that they scarcely count".<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, in the long term, union was the only alternative to dissolution. Curtis envisaged a peripatetic Government on parliamentary lines, with a lower house elected in proportion to population, and an upper house consisting of an equal number of members from each represented part. It would control defence, foreign policy and the dependencies, but not tariffs; it would derive its revenue in the first instance from the existing national governments.<sup>4</sup>

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1 *Ibid.*, pp 85-98. Curtis devoted many pages to the question of degeneration, quoting C F G Masterman's *The Heart of the Empire* extensively. Like Winston Churchill, he supported the segregation of the "feeble-minded".

2 *Ibid.*, p 127; cf pp 70-84.

3 *Ibid.*, p 58.

4 *Ibid.*, pp 99-128.

Curtis's "Green Memorandum", together with his addenda *The Australian People* and *New Zealand Notes*, were initially circulated to some 120 group members and other friends in Britain and the Dominions.<sup>1</sup> Their comments, written on the blank pages interleaved for the purpose, were returned to Curtis and issued as *Round Table Studies, First Series* in 1911 and 1914. These volumes did not identify by name the authors of remarks included, for the ostensible reason that "each student should feel the utmost freedom in expressing his views".<sup>2</sup> Curtis was in possession of a list identifying the authors (a fact concealed from the Dominion groups<sup>3</sup>), but no extant copy can now be found.

Many individuals doubted that Britain's burden would be any less if there were no Dominions to protect. Others suggested that as Britain derived greater benefit from overseas trade she should continue to bear a greater share of naval expenditure.<sup>4</sup> Most thought Curtis's picture of the weary Titan exaggerated. Degeneration was "stuff and nonsense", according to one critic.<sup>5</sup>

A number of commentators thought that the main obstacle to federation would come from Britain itself. One suggested that a long period of education was needed in order to "teach the English voters that they must

1 Small "study groups" (mainly consisting of university teachers and students) were subsequently set up at Oxford, Cambridge, Reading, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

2 Curtis, *Dyarchy* (London, 1920), p 43.

3 Curtis to Hichens, Nov 1911, RT Papers, c 844, fols 77-84.

4 *Round Table Studies, [First Series, vol I, 1911,]* pp 33 (contribution 41) and 35 (contributions 43 and 63); pp 261 (contribution 4) and 263 (contribution 42).

5 *Ibid*, p 223 (contribution 55).

regard themselves as 'partners in the Empire'. Another doubted whether "the 'Mother of Parliaments' [would] consent to play second fiddle".<sup>1</sup> The Glasgow group feared that, if Curtis's scheme were implemented, "the whole character of the British constitution would be upset".<sup>2</sup>

Curtis's hostility to "co-operation" was not shared by all his "students": many thought it a necessary stage of Imperial relations which would grow (rather than collapse) into Union.<sup>3</sup> Similar views were put forward more forcefully in private correspondence. Eggleston thought that unity might be "dis-served by Imperial Federation" if it were implemented too hastily. "It is clear to my mind that [unity] . . . will only be achieved in the last resort by some form of organic union"; nevertheless, federation should be seen as "the final step", not "a first step".<sup>4</sup>

As for Curtis's "Alternative", numerous contributors foresaw difficulties over the rôle of local defence forces, powers of taxation and (especially) control of the dependencies. Others argued that "organic union" would not be complete without control of tariffs and migration.<sup>5</sup>

1 *Ibid.*, pp 245 (contribution 32) and 606 (contribution 1).

2 *Round Table Studies, First Series, Vol II* (1914), p 498.

3 *Round Table Studies, [First Series, vol I,] p 179* (contribution 61); pp 405-06 (contributions 80 and 81).

4 Eggleston to Grigg, 16 July and 14 October 1913, RT Papers c 798, fols 102-04 and 125-32.

5 *Round Table Studies, [First Series, vol I,] pp 250-351*. For the dependencies, see below, pp 88-89. For tariffs, see pp 127-31.

Curtis himself reckoned that he could identify 35 supporters of his scheme and 9 opponents from the Dominions other than South Africa, including 13 supporters as against 6 opponents in Canada.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, even those who supported Curtis's argument emphasised that they felt out of line with general opinion. As one otherwise enthusiastic student put it,

"I . . . do not wish it to be understood that I think that a scheme which is theoretically just and promises to be effective can at present be carried out in politics. Personally I think it most unlikely that Canada, for example, would agree to come under the control of a Federal Government . . . . In my judgment nothing but the pressure of grave and imminent danger from war would induce the Canadians even to consider such a proposal".<sup>2</sup>

The London group itself was far from ready to endorse Curtis's memorandum. Many members thought Curtis over-enthusiastic in his denunciation of co-operation, but, paradoxically, also contended that any scheme of federation would have to be more wide-ranging. Kerr believed that "many concessions [that] have been made to Dominion prejudices" might have to be abandoned.<sup>3</sup>

While Curtis was still touring the Empire, the Moot concentrated on the passages in which he alluded to imperial federation as a panacea for Britain's domestic problems. The majority soon decided that "it is inadvisable to base an argument for Imperial Union on a detailed examination of the domestic evils caused in the United Kingdom" by the existing constitutional practices.<sup>23</sup>

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1 Ibid, pp 794-5.

2 Ibid, p 778 (contribution 100).

3 [Kerr,] "Memorandum", [Nov 1910], RT Papers, c 776, fols 124-36.

Rather more significant were disagreements over the form the proposed Imperial Government should take, its constitution, functions and powers. A subcommittee was set up in November 1910 consisting of Kerr, Brand and Cecil, to thrash out with Curtis an acceptable *Form of an Organic Union of the Empire*. In the course of discussions lasting four months, Curtis's original scheme was considerably modified. The proposal of a peripatetic assembly was dropped. The necessity of a right of direct taxation was insisted upon. Whatever its powers in peacetime, the Imperial Government "ought to have power to do anything" in time of war. Finally, rather than a two-tiered Parliament which gave the Dominions a safeguard against British preponderance, Curtis was made to accept a single assembly in which the majority of seats would represent the British Isles.<sup>2</sup> Even this outline did not satisfy all the members of the Moot: Amery and Selborne had both submitted memoranda calling for a unitary constitution, which would enable the Imperial Government to control tariffs.<sup>3</sup>

Curtis was thus caught between the Dominion groups, which were reluctant to accept the whole of his proposals, and the Moot, which thought them not far-reaching enough, and had now saddled him with a scheme for

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- 1 Kerr to Curtis, 30 Sept 1910, Lothian Papers 2, fols 96-123; Minutes of RT meeting, Blackmoor, 12-13 Nov 1910, RT Papers, c 776, fols 79-81.
  - 2 [Curtis,] *The Form of an Organic Union of the Empire* (privately printed, revised 23 March 1911), copy in Curtis Papers 157, item 11.
  - 3 Amery, "Memorandum", [Jan 1911], RT Papers c 776, fols 113-23; Selborne, "Memorandum", 26 Jan 1911, c 776, fols 89-91.

which, as he admitted, "public opinion today is nowhere ripe".<sup>1</sup> Clearly a more persuasive argument would have to be found.

Curtis therefore embarked on a new three-part study of the problem. Historical analysis would reveal the necessity of the British Empire; analysis of contemporary conditions would illustrate the need for a decisive step to prevent its dissolution; finally, the irreducible components of such a step would be elaborated.

#### "The Principle of the Commonwealth"

The position of India and Britain's other dependencies under imperial union was a question which the Imperial Federation League had been unable to resolve.<sup>2</sup> Initially, the Round Table ignored this problem, assuming that the Dominions would be keen to share in the government of these vast territories. Curtis even proposed to let them do so before Union (by transferring the West Indies to Canadian administration, Fiji to Australian, and so on).<sup>3</sup>

In his "Green Memorandum" Curtis made several references to Britain's rôle as a "constable" in the dependencies, which, foreshadowing Lugard, he described as "her duty to them and her duty to the world at large". He emphasised the dependencies' "incapacity" to secure "civilised rule" for

1 [Curtis,] *The Form of an Organic Union*, p 7.

2 See S R Mehrotra, "Imperial Federation and India, 1868-1917", *JCPS*, Vol I, no 1 (Nov 1961), pp 29-40.

3 Minutes of RT meetings, Plas Newydd, 4-6 Sept 1909, Lothian Papers, 11, fols 1-6. Jebb also thought that control of the dependencies might supply an "organic link" between Britain and the self-governing colonies: *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* (London, 1905), p 278.

themselves, but warned that their increasing hostility to "alien rule" meant that they were likely to be an increasing burden. It was therefore essential that they should come under the control of a government able to command the resources of the whole Empire. This, Curtis now admitted, ran directly counter to the view prevalent in Canada, "that these Possessions are held merely for honour and glory and profit . . . or that they might be given self-government and placed on a colonial footing".<sup>1</sup>

Curtis's argument failed to convince many of his Dominion "students". Indeed, as Kylie had predicted, reluctance to share in the control of India and the dependencies was the "real crux" of Dominion opposition to Curtis's scheme.<sup>2</sup> "How far is it a rather Pecksniffian trusteeship and how far the desire to have a regular stable government as a necessity for English merchants?", asked one student. If Britain wanted to continue ruling the dependencies, that was up to her, contended another; "it does not appear that this is a matter which should be included . . . [in an] arrangement for the preservation of the Empire".<sup>3</sup>

Curtis realised that the divergence of views could not simply be ignored. "We must face the question as to who is to be responsible for the great Dependencies."<sup>4</sup> Curtis's case was reinforced by Marris, who argued forcibly that, while the "egg" might be "solid" on the Dominions, it was weak, and potentially fatally so, on the dependencies. There would

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1 [Curtis,] *Memoranda on Canada and the British Commonwealth* (1910), pp 26, 56 and *passim*.

2 Kylie to Kerr, 16 Oct [1910], (Kylie file,) RT (O) Papers.

3 *Round Table Studies, [First Series, vol I, 1911]*, pp 13 (contribution 3) and 13-15 (contribution 27).

4 Curtis to Oliver, 15 Aug 1910, Lothian Papers, 2, fols 135-51.

inevitably be opposition from India to any changes which would put her under the control of a body representing the Dominions, especially if such changes failed to take into account Indian aspirations to self-government.'

Kerr visited India in 1912. There, under Marris's influence, he composed "a proposal for altering the fundamental propositions of the 'Egg' so far as they relate to India".<sup>2</sup> Kerr adduced three reasons for proposing a limited Indian representation in an Imperial Parliament: previous British promises to associate Indians with the government controlling India, the need for informed discussion of Indian affairs, and the expediency of satisfying "the entirely proper aspirations and self-respect of the native Indians". Kerr suggested the inclusion of non-voting nominees of the Government of India, to provide "expert" knowledge, and two voting representatives of the Indian Legislative Council. He stopped short of suggesting any significant Indian representation: "they could not be given such representation . . . as would enable them, like the Irish today, in combination with large minorities, to turn out of office the Cabinet which ultimately controls Indian affairs".<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 Marris to P (Kerr), 10 July 1911, Brand Papers, box 2.
  - 2 Kerr to Paterson, 18 April 1912, RT Papers, c 826, fol 2. For Marris's influence, see Marris to Curtis, 18 April 1912 (copy), Lothian Papers, 462, fol 15: "the main proposal is what I suggested to him in the beginning".
  - 3 Kerr, "Memorandum on the Representation of India", [April 1912,] RT Papers c 826, fols 4-14.

Kerr's argument was supported by memoranda from four British officials working in India, W H Buchan, H T Cullis, E D Maclagan and E Molony.<sup>1</sup> All stressed the importance of making some concession to Indian opinion: as Cullis put it, "India is not governed by an autocratic bureaucracy, which can do as it likes, but by a very limited bureaucracy, very sensitive and very deferential to public opinion".<sup>2</sup> Further memoranda from Marris and Neston also supported Kerr's proposal. Both argued that Indian representation was, in Neston's words, necessary as a declaration of faith that "self-government" was "one of the ideals at which our rule in India is to aim".<sup>3</sup>

This proposal horrified a number of members of the Moot. Craik asserted that Indian self-government "is in the far distant future and may never arrive". Moreover, "I have at least an open mind as to whether when that day comes it would not be better for the Empire to get rid of India".<sup>4</sup> Malcolm deplored any attempt to transcend the racial barrier on which

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- 1 W H Buchan, "Memorandum on the Representation of India", 11 June 1912, RT Papers, c 826, fols 45-56; H T Cullis, "Notes on the Indian Memorandum", fols 75-8, and "General Note on the Indian Memorandum" (sent 12 June 1912), fols 79-85; E J Maclagan, "Note on the Memorandum", 2 July 1912, fols 208-10; E Molony, "Memorandum on India", 3 June 1912, fols 143-58.
  - 2 Cullis, "General Note", fol 79. Cullis, Maclagan and Molony argued for a larger measure of representation than that advocated by Kerr; Buchan was more cautious.
  - 3 Neston, "Memorandum on India and the Empire", Dec 1912, RT Papers, c 826, fols 86-104 (quotation from fol 87); Marris, "Memorandum on India and the Empire", Dec 1912, fols 160-66. Both argued for at least three voting representatives.
  - 4 Craik, "Note on the Principle of Indian Representation", 16 July 1912, RT Papers c 826, fols 223-7.

Empire rested: "Are we prepared to contemplate the ethnological collection into which our Imperial Parliament will develop?"<sup>1</sup>

Curtis also opposed the Marris/Kerr proposal: "until we are really prepared to accord the Dependencies governing power we are only laying up . . . a store of misunderstandings by pretending to do so". Nevertheless, he was struck by the suggestion that "self-government" should be the declared aim of British rule, although it was one whose realisation would come "long after ["the present generation"] have been in their graves". The adoption of this aim would re-emphasise the moral basis of British rule, and avoid the necessity of enunciating a separate ideal of citizenship for whites and non-whites. Therefore,

"the conception that Indians should be regarded as fellow citizens of one super-commonwealth with ourselves, and that to prepare them first for the control of their own sub-commonwealth and finally for an equal share in the control of the super-commonwealth should be our guiding principle".<sup>2</sup>

"Commonwealth" soon became the central concept in Curtis's propaganda for imperial union. Although his "Commonwealth" principle was in many ways "simply the old Liberal doctrine of the Victorian era",<sup>3</sup> it also reflected a thoroughgoing, illiberal authoritarianism.

"What is a State and in what respect does it differ from any other combination of individuals? Are we right in thinking that it is an organisation which claims to exercise an unlimited authority over its

1 Malcolm, "Memorandum", nd [1912], RT Papers c 826, fols 167-72.

2 [Curtis,] "Note on Philip Kerr's Indian Memorandum", [1912,] RT Papers c 826, fols 233-40.

3 Zimmern to J A Hobson, 13 Sept 1916, RT Papers c 817, fol 139.

members? . . . . Conversely is not a citizen a person whose legal obligation to obey the formally declared will of the state is unlimited?"<sup>1</sup>

In Curtis's view, the state rested on a "bond" which was "in the nature of dedication . . . at root not contractual, but sacramental"; it demanded from individuals "a sense of devotion" and of "sacrifice". What distinguished a "commonwealth" from other forms of government was that citizens were "dedicated" to each other, and not to some ruler claiming divine sanction. Citizens of a "commonwealth" owed unlimited obedience to the "general will" as expressed in law: but, as not all citizens were "responsible", not all could join in the making of law. "Commonwealth" was therefore not the same as "self-government", although it implied a tendency towards it. A "commonwealth" was constantly engaged in the process of widening its basis of active participation, but not in such a way as to endanger the stability of the state itself.<sup>2</sup>

Once again Curtis failed to convince his colleagues, who reacted to his new line in Imperial propaganda with consternation. It was decidedly "philosophical" and for that reason alone "poison to the Anglo-Saxon mind".<sup>3</sup> Craik complained that he could not understand Curtis's drift, and doubted if others would.<sup>4</sup> A second objection was that Curtis's thesis was

1 [Curtis,] "Memorandum" [nd: 1912], Brand Papers, box 2.

2 [Curtis,] *Round Table Studies, Second Series, Part A*, [1912,] "Introduction"; reprinted in *The Project of a Commonwealth, Part One* (1915) and published in *The Commonwealth of Nations, Part One* (London, 1916). Cf *The Problem of the Commonwealth* (London, 1916), ch 19; "A Criterion of Values in International Affairs" in Kerr and Curtis, *The Prevention of War* (New Haven, 1923); *Civitas Dei, Volume One* (London, 1934).

3 Brand to Kerr, 23 July 1912, Brand Papers, box 182.

4 Craik, "Note on the Principle of Indian Representation", 16 July 1912, RT Papers c 826, fols 223-7.

patently untrue: as Brand confessed, "I cannot get clear in my head that . . . history can properly be moulded into its form".<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, Curtis's colleagues argued that Curtis's implicit assumption that other races were "unfit" for responsibility was, in the long term, unsustainable. Like Craik and Malcolm, Brand was

". . . apprehensive of the logical application of these sweeping principles . . . . I never intend that the black man, however civilised, and however numerous, shall govern the Empire on an equality with the white . . . . I am not sure that all this is consonant with mutual citizenship in a Commonwealth. Why should a minority of the citizens decide that a majority is not fit for the full status of citizenship? We all of us agree that it is our duty to train the dependencies up to self-government and not treat their inhabitants as chattels. But cannot this be said without recourse to the theory of the Commonwealth?"<sup>2</sup>

Finally, Curtis's new line of argument was rejected as simply irrelevant to the problems which the Round Table existed to solve. As Craik argued, the Round Table's object was

"to make [the British Empire] still more powerful. This was to be done by calling upon the Dominions . . . to take a share in Imperial power . . . . A world-wide federation may be all very well - or it may not. At any rate it is not what we are proposing".<sup>3</sup>

Milner was apparently more sympathetic to Curtis, but by no means wholeheartedly so. "Why do you accuse me of being 'dedicated' to a 'commonwealth'?" he demanded of Oliver in 1914. "I am an out and out

- 1 Brand, "Memorandum on the First Part of the 'Round Table Report'", Dec 1912, RT Papers c 777, fols 154-66.
- 2 *Ibid*; cf Malcolm, "Memorandum", nd [1912], RT Papers c 826, fols 167-72.
- 3 Craik, "Note on the Principle of Indian Representation", 16 July 1912, RT Papers c 826, fols 223-7.

imperialist and a great admirer of our friend L.C. But it is his work I admire not his philosophy. And I hate all kinds of flapdoodle more than words can say."<sup>1</sup>

"The Problem of the Commonwealth"

As Brand defined it, the object of Curtis's "Round Table Studies" was to provide answers to three separate questions:

- "1. Why the Empire cannot go on as it is ....
2. What changes are required for the Empire to be preserved? ....
3. Is the Empire worth preserving?"<sup>2</sup>

Curtis's attempts to answer these questions in a way acceptable to both the London and the Dominion groups had so far met with little success.

Clearly, federation was more attractive in the abstract than as a specific and detailed proposal.

The Dominion groups contained many individuals who agreed with Curtis in theory. A few, in the words of the New Zealand secretary, "will follow till all's blue". But the majority was convinced that a long period of "education" was needed before conditions were ripe for a federalist movement.<sup>3</sup> The situation elsewhere was similar. In Australia the feeling was rife "that federation can only come as a means of reconciliation of divergent tendencies consciously felt and felt to be dangerous", which was not the case yet.<sup>4</sup> In Canada, the Round Table groups were coming under fire as a "Tory plot", ruling out any possibility of concerted action for

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1 Milner to Oliver, 22 June 1914, Oliver Papers 86, fols 40-1.

2 Brand, "Memorandum", 25 May 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 85-89.

3 S A Atkinson to Curtis, 10 May 1912, RT Papers c 777, fols 67-69; cf Atkinson to Curtis, 17 Jan 1913, RT Papers c 778, fols 66-67.

4 F W Eggleston [to Curtis], 3 March 1913 (extracts), RT Papers c 778, fols 91-92.

some time.<sup>1</sup>

Curtis's response was now to urge caution and a protracted period of "study" before pressing on with the original plan.<sup>2</sup> However, some of the London group were anxious to enforce haste, an anxiety which was increased by the group's unplanned entry into the arena of controversy as the butt of attacks by Richard Jebb.

Jebb had originally been counted as a potential supporter of the Round Table project. His comments on the "original egg" were included in the first "annotated" volume.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, his espousal of co-operation and Tariff Reform led to an increasing opposition between his views and those of the Round Table. Under pressure from Curtis, Jebb excised an attack on the group from his *Imperial Conference* of 1911,<sup>4</sup> but by 1912-13 he was seriously concerned "that Imperial Federation is in the air". The result was a series of letters to colonial statesmen, and in May 1913 *The Britannic Question*, which contained a lengthy attack on the Round Table as "the intellectual guide of regenerate Conservatism".<sup>5</sup>

Curtis was pressed "to speed up", and was sent to Canada again to

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- 1 E J Kylie to Curtis, 10 Feb 1913, RT Papers c 778, fols 62-3; cf Perry to Brand, 22 Feb 1913, RT Papers c 778, fols 38-42.
  - 2 Curtis, "Memorandum", 25 Feb 1913, RT papers c 778, fols 60-61.
  - 3 Jebb's comments were given the number 118; see his copy of *Round Table Studies* in the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London.
  - 4 Jebb to Curtis, 4 May 1911, Jebb Papers; cf Curtis to Feetham, 27 April 1911, Curtis Papers 2, fols 68-71 ("he has given away the whole show").
  - 5 Jebb to Curtis, 15 April 1913, Jebb Papers; Jebb, *The Britannic Question* (London, 1913), p 77. Jebb and Fabian Ware also produced a short-lived magazine, *The Britannic Review*, to counter the Round Table's "centralist" arguments.

attempt to secure agreement to the fundamental propositions of the "egg".<sup>1</sup> This he was unable to do. After discussion with the leading Toronto Round Tablers, Curtis agreed that he would have to publish on his own responsibility, leaving the "study-groups" uncommitted to his proposals. Any propagandist movement in favour of federation would have to be created afresh, albeit largely centred on former Round Table members.<sup>2</sup>

However, any notion Curtis might have entertained that his new-found independence extended also to his relations with the London group was soon scotched by a letter from Brand.<sup>3</sup> Curtis was therefore urged to prepare a summary of Part III before writing the full version. This he did, but his draft<sup>4</sup> once more failed to win the group's agreement. Craik, Brand and Malcolm again submitted memoranda savaging Curtis's "principle of the Commonwealth" as obscure, inconsistent, dangerous and irrelevant.<sup>5</sup>

The outbreak of war naturally brought into question the need for Curtis to continue working on his *Round Table Studies*. However, Curtis argued strongly that some alteration of the constitutional relations of the Empire was now inevitable. It was therefore the Round Table's duty to be ready with an argument and scheme for the kind of rearrangement which it

1 Minutes of RT meetings, 17 July 1913 and 25 Sept 1913, RT (O) Papers.

2 No contemporary record of these meetings can be found, but their outcome was summarised in Curtis to V Massey, 28 March 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 57-74.

3 Brand to Curtis, 12 Jan 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 1-3.

4 [Curtis,] *A Practical Enquiry into the Nature of Citizenship in the British Empire* . . . (1914), Curtis Papers 157, item 6.

5 Craik, "Memorandum", 22 May 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 90-101; Brand, "Memorandum", 25 May 1914, *ibid*, fols 85-9; Malcolm, "Notes on the Printed Draft of Report Part III", 27 May 1914, *ibid*, fols 19-22.

had been founded to promote.<sup>1</sup> Others in the Moot agreed. Brand, for instance, thought that "if those who recognise that the present organisation of the Empire is only temporary do not take every advantage possible of the present favourable crisis, matters may be far more difficult 10 years' hence".<sup>2</sup>

Curtis's plan was still for a three-part study of the Empire. In addition, the Moot had decided there was a need for a shorter volume, designed for popular consumption.<sup>3</sup> By the outbreak of war, only four of five instalments of Volume I were ready. Curtis now hurried off the final instalment of this volume, which was printed as a whole and without alteration as *The Project of a Commonwealth, Part I* in 1915, and published as *The Commonwealth of Nations, Part I* in early 1916.<sup>4</sup>

Curtis's task of finding a formula acceptable to the Moot was made all the more difficult by the circumstances of the war. The massive injection of manpower and resources by the Dominions clearly discredited any belief that "co-operation" was an ineffectual means of uniting the Empire. Brand now wanted this reflected in Curtis's work, arguing that "half a loaf is better than no bread".<sup>5</sup> Curtis, on the other hand, saw in

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1 Curtis, "Memorandum on the Conduct of RT Work during the War", 19 Oct 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 102-113.

2 Brand to Sir R Borden, 8 Jan 1916, Brand Papers, box 182.

3 Minutes of RT meeting, 30 May to 2 June 1914, RT (O) Papers.

4 5,037 copies of the two editions were printed, of which 666 were sent out free, and only about 1800 sold by January 1917 (RT Papers c 783, fol 103). According to G L Beer, the book's lack of success was "mainly due to its length. It is neither history for the trained scholar, nor is it adapted to the needs of the busy layman" (Beer to Brand, 8 Oct 1917, RT Papers c 846, fols 134-35).

5 Brand to Sir Edmund Walker, 22 Feb 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 32-3.

the very fact of war evidence that "co-operation" had failed: had the Empire been united, the German alliance would have shied from resorting to force.<sup>1</sup>

To make matters worse, Brand and others took a stronger line on imperial taxation than Curtis wished, arguing that the power of direct taxation was an essential attribute of government.

"To pretend . . . that something that is not Organic Union is really Organic Union is in my opinion perfectly disastrous. It will raise all the hostility that Organic Union would raise and in addition can be absolutely riddled by anyone who cares to do so."<sup>2</sup>

Brand's line was supported by a majority of the Moot, who agreed a formula by which the Dominions would determine the distribution of taxation, while its collection would be left to the Imperial Government.<sup>3</sup>

The possible representation of India still divided the Moot. Another "Indian Moot" was set up in the autumn of 1915, and agreed that some declaration of British policy was a necessity. One of its members, Sir William Duke, again urged the Round Table to convince Indians: "India's part in the coming contention [over federation] must be very subordinate, but when forces may be rather nicely balanced it would be a pity if her contributions were limited to wails of protest".<sup>4</sup> Curtis himself was now

1 Curtis to Kerr, 4 Sept 1915, RT Papers c 809, fols 78-81.

2 Brand to Kerr, 23 Feb 1916, Brand Papers, box 182.

3 Minutes of RT meeting, 2 March 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 52-3. Amery wrote up the Moot's proposals as Chapter 18 of the first (unpublished, but privately circulated) version of *The Problem of the Commonwealth*.

4 Duke to Curtis, 8 Feb 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 34-35.

coming round to the view that India should be given representation in the proposed Parliament, but many of his colleagues remained unconvinced. "We are divided among ourselves by the cleavage of opinion which divides the world," Curtis eventually declared.<sup>1</sup>

A further rift opened up on the form of the proposed imperial constitution. As the war progressed, Milner, Oliver, Amery and Grigg appear to have become increasingly cynical towards the parliamentary system on which Curtis sought to model his federation. As early as December 1914 Oliver declared that "if we win [the war] it will be because the spirit of the small remnant who hate and despise democracy . . . will save the country".<sup>2</sup> Milner claimed not to share Oliver's "aversion for democracy".

"I myself am perfectly indifferent. I regard it, like any other form of Government, as a necessary evil. . . . But I shy at the idea that you have only to reproduce in the sphere of Imperial politics the same system, which has begun to work so badly in domestic politics, in order to find a panacea for all existing ills."

Milner urged Curtis to "give men of independence and character a chance" by "producing something more like a Council of Statesmen".<sup>3</sup>

Curtis's draft of the shorter volume did include some concessions to his critics. His verbiage on the "commonwealth" was relatively restrained, the proposal of Indian representation was omitted, and the necessity of direct imperial taxation was asserted.<sup>4</sup> However, Curtis still failed to

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1 Curtis to Milner, 24 Feb 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 38-41.

2 Oliver [to Brand?], 26 Dec 1914, Brand Papers, box 2B; Oliver to Brand, 16 Feb 1916. Brand Papers, box 3. Cf Grigg (from the Western front) to Kerr, 23 Dec 1915, Brand Papers, box 3.

3 Milner to Curtis, 27 Nov 1915, Curtis Papers 2, fols 188-98.

4 Curtis, *The Problem of the Commonwealth* (unpublished version, 1915).

win the endorsement of his colleagues.' It was therefore agreed that Curtis should issue the work with a preface dissociating the Moot, as well as the other Round Table groups, from his conclusions. It was also agreed that Curtis was free not "to defer to other people's judgement" on matters where he was not convinced. Curtis did in fact modify the passages on Imperial taxation and on India to reflect more faithfully his own points of view.<sup>2</sup>

Curtis's problems were not yet over, inasmuch as the Canadian Round Tablers now launched vehement protests against the publication of his volume.<sup>3</sup> The proposals for Imperial taxation and control of the dependencies were particularly galling. Although they "must some day be faced by us all . . . if pressed now [they] will doubtless imperil the whole matter".<sup>4</sup> At most, the Canadians were prepared to support the publication of the first part of Curtis's work, in which it was argued that there was a problem to be solved. No solution should yet be offered.<sup>5</sup>

The Canadian view received support from some members of the Moot. Kerr questioned "whether it is sound strategy to begin your campaign by propounding the solutions in detail ahead".<sup>6</sup> Oliver, likewise, argued that Curtis's specific proposals could be published later "in response to a

- 1 Oliver's diary, 2 March 1916, Oliver Papers 216.
- 2 Curtis to Milner, 24 Feb 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 38-41, reporting the agreement reached between himself and Hichens, the latter acting on behalf of the Moot.
- 3 Glazebrook to Curtis, 29 Jan 1916, *ibid.*, fols 16-17
- 4 Walker to Brand, 1 Feb 1916, *ibid.*, fols 31-32.
- 5 V Massey to Curtis, 2 March 1916, *ibid.*, fols 54-56.
- 6 [Kerr] to Oliver, 24 March 1916, Oliver Papers 90, fol 68.

widespread demand".<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, when the issue was thrashed out at a meeting early in April 1916, Curtis was able to command a majority of the London group. Curtis himself was despatched on a further tour "to explain the circumstances . . . and arrange for publication" in the several Dominions.<sup>2</sup>

In May 1916, therefore, more than six years after the inception of the Round Table project, Curtis's argument for imperial federation was finally published, in the form of *The Problem of the Commonwealth*.

Although Curtis's thesis was considerably more refined than that of his original "Green Memorandum", fundamentally it remained the same. The great question, as he put it, was "whether the Dominions are to become independent republics, or whether this world-wide Commonwealth is destined to stand more closely united as the noblest of all political achievements".<sup>3</sup> The Dominions, heirs to Britain's long tradition of progressive self-government, were not self-governing in the one area which really mattered. Distinct nations, each with its own "national consciousness", they could yet preserve and extend their own identities by agreeing to create a new Imperial Parliament. A price would have to be paid, especially by Canadians. After making allowances for "taxable capacity" (highest in Britain, lowest in South Africa), Curtis suggested the following distribution of the defence burden:

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- 1 Oliver to Curtis, 3 April 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 86-88.
  - 2 Minutes of RT meeting, 6 April 1916, RT Papers c 780, fol 90.
  - 3 Curtis, *The Problem of the Commonwealth* (London, 1916), Preface.

	<u>Actual expenditure, 1913-14</u>		<u>Suggested distribution<sup>1</sup></u>	
	£m	per cap	£m	per cap
Canada	2.704	0- 7-4.9	9.348	1-5-7.3
Australia	4.082	0-18-1.7	5.553	1-4-8
New Zealand	0.765	0-13-10.8	1.383	1-5-1.7
South Africa	1.345	0- 4-5.6	1.397	0-4-7.9
UK	72.346	1-11-9.6	63.561	1-7-11.2
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	81.242	1- 5-2.7	81.242	1-5-2.7
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In return for such an increase in expenditure the Dominions would be assured of a supreme authority responsive to their needs, and an Empire which no other Power would dare to challenge.

#### Demise or Hiatus?

The outbreak of war was a disaster for the movement. On the one hand, it exacerbated the divisions which Curtis's "Studies" had already brought out; on the other, it ruled out the kind of long-term strategy which most believed to be necessary. As G L Beer emphasised in 1914, peace was bound to lead to an enormous "centrifugal tendency".<sup>2</sup>

Throughout 1915 Curtis urged his colleagues "to begin giving practical people the impression that the movement is leaving its academic stage".<sup>3</sup> He even proposed a new United Kingdom organisation, to press the Dominions "to realise and assume their responsibilities".<sup>4</sup> His suggestion was turned down, however, on the grounds that such an organisation would

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1 Ibid, pp 167-85.

2 G L Beer to Curtis, nd [late 1914], RT Papers c 779, fols 82-83.

3 Curtis to Grigg, 24 April 1915, RT Papers c 809, fols 25-26.

4 Curtis to Kerr, 4 Sept 1915, RT Papers c 809, fols 78-81.

smack of the worst kind of centralism.'

Curtis encountered similar difficulties when he urged the Moot to use the magazine to support federation. He had always "understood that when the Egg was published the 'Round Table' magazine was to become definitely propagandist".<sup>2</sup> However, both Kerr and Oliver now argued against such a course. Nor did Oliver like Curtis's other suggestions, that the *Round Table* should give way to a new magazine (which would give the impression that the Round Table had "broken up in disorder"), or that the magazine should continue as a "bear-pit of controversy". The majority of the Moot agreed with him.<sup>3</sup> As a result, the *Round Table's* send-off for Curtis's book was limited to a brief mention of it as one which "every responsible citizen ought to read".<sup>4</sup>

The reception accorded Curtis's *Problem* in the British press was also far from encouraging. Of the London papers, only Dawson's *Times* was fulsome in its praise: the anonymous reviewer spoke of "the fundamental truth of these principles" and "the contagion of this faith".<sup>5</sup> The general Tory attitude was that Westminster would not reduce itself to a mere "provincial Assembly", and that the British constitution should continue to change by custom and not fiat.<sup>6</sup> The Liberal papers, on the

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- 1 Kerr to Curtis, 25 Nov 1915, RT Papers c 809, fols 92-94.
  - 2 Curtis, "Memorandum on the Conduct of RT work during the War", 19 Oct 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 102-13.
  - 3 Oliver to Kerr, 29 May 1916, Brand Papers, box 3: cf Kerr, "The Round Table", 1 June 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 124-25; Minutes of RT meeting, 8 June 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 127-28.
  - 4 [Kerr,] "The Principle of Peace", *RT*, June 1916, p 427.
  - 5 *The Times Literary Supplement*, 25 May 1916.
  - 6 Eg *The Athenaeum*, 16 July 1916.

other hand, derided Curtis's philosophy as that of an expansionist, Prussianist "Kultur".<sup>1</sup>

It was not in Britain, however, but in the Dominions that Curtis sought the constituency through which to force Union on the Empire. Although the idea of using the Round Table groups as the media of a propagandist campaign had been abandoned, they could still serve a purpose in providing platforms for the discussion of Curtis's book, and forcing a recognition of the fundamental "problem".<sup>2</sup>

Arriving in Canada at the end of April 1916, Curtis reconciled the Canadian groups to the fait accompli of publication of his book, and secured the issue of a Canadian edition.<sup>3</sup> He also persuaded the groups to issue a "manifesto" which stated that Canada, while determined to remain within the British "Commonwealth", was keen to assume responsibility for defence and foreign affairs, and called on Canadian leaders to meet and discuss the question.<sup>4</sup> Again at Curtis's instigation, G A Warburton was hired to resuscitate the Western groups (now in disarray). Warburton proved quite successful, although he found that "it was . . . a very decided advantage to be able to state that the publication of this volume by Mr Curtis had been opposed by the leaders of the Round Table in

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1 Eg J A Hobson, writing in *The Manchester Guardian*, 11 Sept 1916. Hobson's review sparked off a heated correspondence with Zimmern (RT Papers c 817, fols 139-60), with Hobson accusing Curtis of an "impudent piece of mental jugglery", and Zimmern accusing Hobson of being "remote from facts".

2 Curtis, "Memorandum on the Conduct of RT work during the War", 19 Oct 1914, RT Papers c 779, fol 105.

3 Curtis to Milner, 2 May 1916, RT Papers, c 780, fols 106-12.

4 "Memorandum" [printed, Toronto, 1916,] RT Papers, c 802, fol 276.

Canada".<sup>1</sup> Curtis was successful in breathing new life into the Canadian organisation, but a Canadian movement for imperial federation was clearly still a long way off. Curtis himself left the Canadians "a bit critical . . . and disposed to think that he made a good many faux pas".<sup>2</sup>

In New Zealand and Australia, Curtis found a more encouraging response to his *Problem*, and an Australasian edition was swiftly produced.<sup>3</sup> Curtis found himself "talking to the converted" in New Zealand, and the Round Table groups readily agreed to extend their operations, forming new study-circles and special women's groups and agreeing to issue a "manifesto" on the same lines as the Canadian groups. Curtis made numerous speeches, which were fully and sympathetically reported in the press.<sup>4</sup> In Australia Curtis found the "disintegrationists" more numerous, a fact which he put down to Australia's large Irish population.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the Round Table groups were "in general agreement with the statement of the case contained in 'The Problem'", and "desirous of assisting in every way possible".<sup>6</sup>

From Australia, Curtis sailed to India, with the intention of forming new Round Table groups from amongst the British people stationed there. A

1 G A Warburton and W F Bowles, "Report Upon Their Visit to the West . . ." [April 1917], RT Papers c 846, fols 231-46.

2 Wrong to Kerr, 20 July 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 139-41.

3 Curtis, *Notes on the Progress of the Movement in Australia* (Bombay, 1916, "for private circulation".)

4 Curtis to the Moot [Aug 1916], RT Papers c 780, fols 158-68.

5 Curtis to Milner, 16 Oct 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 189-95.

6 C H Wickens to Curtis, 20 April 1916 (Australia file,) RT (O) Papers.

ban on ICS employees taking part soon scotched his plans. Nevertheless, Curtis ended up staying for 18 months, unable to resist the temptation of becoming embroiled in Indian politics.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Moot was unwilling to endorse Curtis's *Problem*, most members still supported the idea of federation, and many felt the need for some forward move while conditions were still favourable. In Curtis's absence, the Moot therefore laid plans for a new network of "Commonwealth Societies", with a definite commitment to the creation of an Imperial Parliament. Curtis's *Problem* would not have to be accepted in its entirety, "partly because it went into too great detail, and partly because there is a good deal of disagreement about some of its propositions even among those who accept its main conclusions". In particular, there would be no commitment against "intermediate" steps.<sup>2</sup> Draft "proposals of agreement" were drawn up, listing the powers envisaged for an eventual Imperial government: defence, foreign relations, the dependencies, taxation "from specific sources only", citizenship (but not residence and migration), and a veto on Dominion legislation.<sup>3</sup>

Curtis's reaction was, somewhat surprisingly, to protest at the drawing up of "articles of faith".<sup>4</sup> Perhaps because of his protests, nothing more was done. The employment of various members of the Moot in

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1 For Curtis's activities in India, see below, pp 192-97.

2 [Coupland?] to Glazebrook, 22 Nov 1916, RT Papers c 802, fols 264-72; cf Kerr, "Memorandum", 1 Dec 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 178-81.

3 Kerr, "Rough Draft Proposals of Agreement", 29 Dec 1916, RT Papers c 780, fols 105-08.

4 Curtis to Coupland, 15 March 1917, RT Papers c 810, fols 12-16.

Lloyd George's new administration also limited its capacity to reconstruct the Round Table organisation. Moreover, the decision to summon an Imperial Conference in 1917 - long called for by the *Round Table*' - inevitably preoccupied the movement.

The actual course of the summer's Imperial gatherings provided the Round Tablers with cause both for optimism and for dismay. On the one hand, the innovation of an Imperial War "Cabinet" appeared to be a big step towards the kind of constitutional reconstruction which the Round Table existed to promote. Moreover, Resolution IX of the Conference agreed the need for a convention to consider Imperial relations after the war. On the other hand, Borden and Smuts both ruled out "the federal solution". Smuts, at a Parliamentary banquet in his honour, claimed that the Dominions' war effort showed that the work of "union" was "very largely . . . already done". Harcourt wrote to him with the gleeful verdict that "tonight was the funeral of the Round Table".<sup>2</sup>

At a Round Table dinner for Smuts on 4 May, Milner welcomed what he saw as a step towards simplifying British foreign policy, ensuring its continuity, and diminishing its control by the parties at Westminster. Kerr and Brand went further, endorsing the principle of "consultation", and adding only that the new "Imperial Cabinet" should be accompanied by an

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1 See, eg, [Grigg,] "The Dominions and the Settlement: a Plea for a Conference", *RT*, March 1915, pp 325-44.

2 V K Hancock, *Smuts, Vol I, The Sanguine Years* (Cambridge, 1962), pp 429-32. Wyndham and Duncan "thought that [Smuts] went as far as he possibly could in advocating some form of imperial reconstruction": Wyndham to Coupland, 8 July 1917 (SA file,) *RT* (O) Papers.

"Imperial Conference" representative of all parties in the various national legislatures. They were subsequently criticised for neglecting "the full Round Table point of view", but asserted

"that full federation was at the present moment impracticable and that they, personally, were highly satisfied that such a step forward as that suggested could be taken at all".

For Kerr, the co-operation scheme provided "the nucleus both of a future Imperial executive and of a future Imperial Parliament", which was "better than a shadowy scheme of federation for which opinion was not yet ripe".<sup>1</sup>

Brand now wanted the group to recognise "the necessity for an intermediate stage of co-operation", while reiterating "our main principle of Organic Union for the ultimate future".<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Malcolm insisted that "co-operation in this or any other form will fail".<sup>3</sup> This was an argument which the London group was unable easily to resolve, although its members shared a "general belief that there is no immediate prospect of organic union".<sup>4</sup>

Uncertainty over the effects of the Conference resolutions and a perceived need "of defining more clearly the nature and purpose of the Round Table movement" combined to recommend to the Moot a convention of Round Table groups. The proposal was made in a letter to group secretaries

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of discussion, 4 May 1917, Lothian Papers 474, fols 4-8; cf Kerr to Curtis, 24 April 1917, Lothian Papers 33, fols 12-14.

<sup>2</sup> Brand, "Memorandum", 7 May 1917, Brand Papers, box 41.

<sup>3</sup> Malcolm, "Addendum to Mr Brand's Memorandum", 25 May 1917, Brand Papers, box 41.

<sup>4</sup> Coupland to Curtis, 22 May 1917, RT Papers c 810, fols 66-68.

in October 1917.<sup>1</sup> Until such a convention could be held, there could be no "enlargement in the scope of the Round Table propaganda".<sup>2</sup>

The proposal of a convention served only to delay the taking of decisions. The Australian and New Zealand groups set about organising preliminary national conventions, but these did not meet until the summer of 1919. When the Canadian reply eventually arrived, in February 1919, it was that individuals might attend in a personal capacity, but that there was no possibility of producing anything like a Canadian mandate. The Canadian Round Tablers were "in favour of the continuance of the Round Table groups but . . . shaky in regard to a specific doctrine".<sup>3</sup>

If the Round Table movement "failed", it was thus partly for want of trying: the organisation never became propagandist, in the sense Curtis had originally envisaged. Dominion hesitation was obviously an important factor, but so too were the divisions within the Moot, and the rapidly changing situation created by the war. The 1917 Conference threw the movement into disarray: if federation could be achieved gradually, there was no place for Curtis's "pistol policy". Finally, the end of the war brought a multitude of new problems, as well as removing the most pressing reason for federation. Some new and longer-term strategy had clearly to be devised, even if the ultimate aims of the movement still held good.

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1 Coupland to RT Group Secretaries, 18 Oct 1917, RT Papers c 802, fols 111-12; cf Coupland to Curtis, 9 July 1917, RT Papers c 810, fols 109-10.

2 Coupland to B Dunfield, 17 June 1918, RT Papers c 802, fols 119-22.

3 Glazebrook to Coupland, 13 Feb 1919, RT Papers c 802, fols 179-81.

#### 4. PROBLEMS OF EMPIRE AND FOREIGN POLICY, 1910-14

The primary focus of Round Table activities in 1910-14 was preparation for an eventual federationist movement. The existence of this overriding aim tended to determine *Round Table* coverage of practical issues, as a matter of tactics as well as of ideology.

It later became a maxim of the group that "our first duty is not to consider what interests people, but rather to interest their minds in what really concerns them".<sup>1</sup> In the period 1910-14, the Moot's appraisal of such issues centred very largely on Anglo-Dominion political relations, and to a lesser extent matters relating to foreign policy. India received less coverage than any of the Dominions. There was one article on Egypt, but none directly on any of the other dependencies.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Round Table and Prewar Politics

The Round Table was unusual amongst contemporary pressure groups in having substantial financial resources at its command; a respected magazine as its mouthpiece; and a network of associated Dominion groups which might act not only as the means of influencing policy in the Dominions, but also as proof of the Round Table's claim to speak for the whole Empire.

Potentially, therefore, the Moot was well placed to exercise a unique and considerable influence on policy and policymakers.

Nevertheless, the very nature of the Round Table enterprise, the aim of imperial federation and the strategy adopted for achieving it, severely circumscribed both the London group's desire and its ability to act on the

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis to Hichens et al, 6 Aug 1930, Lothian Papers 252, fols 627-32; cf Curtis, *Letters to the People of India* (London, 1918), p xii.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix C, "Round Table Coverage, by Subject".

level of day-to-day, "practical" politics. Imperial federation was clearly a long-term goal. Even its most enthusiastic supporters admitted that an extended process of "education" would be necessary before it could realistically be sought. By 1913 Curtis was convinced that a "revolution in thought" was needed, of the same magnitude as that which followed Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.<sup>1</sup> The bulk of the Round Table's efforts was, necessarily, concentrated on the level of "public opinion", not of existing party politics. Indeed, party politics and politicians could themselves be seen as both cause and consequence of the defects of the existing system, and, as Curtis pointed out, "nobody likes to vote away his own importance".<sup>2</sup>

The Round Table strategy was built around the notion of "co-operative study". Consequently there was some nervousness about publicising the activities of the central Moot, and a need not to alienate Dominion Round Tablers. The London group could ill afford to be tarred with the brush of partisanship. The Dominion groups had the additional task of avoiding the appearance of being directed from London. It was agreed early on that

"in cases . . . when questions of importance to the whole Empire come up for discussion in the United Kingdom or any of the dominions, the communication of facts or suggestions to people in other parts of the Empire should be effected by correspondence between individuals and not through the medium of the Dominion Offices of the review".<sup>3</sup>

Most correspondence between London and Dominion Round Tablers, even about the review, was between individuals and not between groups. Nevertheless,

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- 1 Curtis, "Memorandum", 25 Feb 1913, RT Papers c 778, fols 60-61.
  - 2 Minutes of RT meeting, Plas Newydd, 4-6 Sept 1909, Lothian Papers 11, fol 5.
  - 3 [Kerr,] "Private Memorandum", [1910,] RT Papers c 776, fols 73-75.

this decision reflected deep ambivalences within the Round Table organisation, between study and propaganda, individual and collective action, autonomy and centralism, which were never satisfactorily resolved.

Further constraints on the Round Table's activities as a pressure group were placed by the limited extent of the Moot's leverage within British politics. Richard Jebb claimed in 1913 that,

"welcome to Conservatives as a splendid champion of Authority, and to Liberal partisans as an imperialist ally against Tariff Reform, the Round Table brilliantly achieves that inter-party equilibrium which is a stronger position for getting things done than independence of political parties".<sup>1</sup>

Jebb was right in identifying the aim of Round Table strategy, but he was undoubtedly wrong in attributing such a large measure of success to the group. Aristocratic, Oxford, Cecilian and Milnerite connections gave the younger Round Tablers privileged access to a number of key figures in both leading parties, such as Sir John Simon, Winston Churchill, Austen Chamberlain and Sir Edward Carson. Nevertheless, access by no means guarantees influence, and here the Moot was handicapped both by its lack of an organised political following, and by its close attachment to Lord Milner. The latter was something of a political troublemaker, loathed by Liberals, unwelcome to the Unionist leadership, influential mainly on the imperialist wing of the Tariff Reform movement. The younger Round Tablers alienated even that, presently powerless, constituency.<sup>2</sup> The London Moot in fact occupied an extremely marginal position in British politics, from

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Jebb, *The Britannic Question* (London, 1913), p 78.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp 127-31.

which it could hope to exercise influence only in situations where its aims were consonant with those of more powerful interests and personalities; or where there was a policy vacuum needing to be filled, and no other groups or individuals willing to fill it.

Finally, the Moot's ability to act as a pressure group was constrained, to a surprising extent, by its inability to reach agreement within itself. Despite the relative homogeneity of the group, there existed differences of view and emphasis, both on the question of closer union itself and on the numerous questions thrown up by day-to-day politics, which only became clear once those questions began to be tackled.

It is extremely difficult to evaluate the Round Table's influence on the level of "public opinion". Curtis certainly thought that the group was acting successfully, claiming in October 1914 that he could see a "change . . . in the attitude of public men and of the press in the last four years" which "has been largely due to the steady leavening effect of the Round Table".<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, when it came to the more easily quantifiable level of influence on "men and measures", it is clear that the Round Table was altogether less successful. Only rarely did the London group attempt to exert pressure, and when it did so, the constraints on its action became all too apparent.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis, "Memorandum on the Conduct of RT Work during the War", 19 Oct 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 102-13.

Federation versus Co-operation

Two intersecting pressures conspired to create the "Imperial problem". The first was the intensification of Great Power rivalry which forced all nation-states and Empires to seek a more effective mobilisation and management of their resources. The second was "colonial nationalism".

The Round Tablers were convinced that the Empire could not survive in an increasingly hostile world by relying on the resources of Great Britain alone. Britain's defence expenditure was already the highest in the world: £67.8 million in 1910, compared to Russia's £62.8 million, Germany's £61.4 million and France's £52.4 million.<sup>1</sup> In per capita terms, Britain's defence burden was, relatively, higher still. The Dominions, by contrast, lagged far behind, as the following figures (published in the first issue of the *Round Table*) illustrated:

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Per capita defence expenditure, 1908-09<sup>2</sup>

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United Kingdom	1 - 6 - 3
Canada	0 - 3 - 2%
Australia	0 - 4 - 10%
New Zealand	0 - 5 - 0%
South Africa	0 - 6 - 8

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The present-day demography of the former Dominions suggests that the addition of their resources to those of Britain would, ultimately, have made little difference to the Empire's ability to maintain itself as a

<sup>1</sup> J J Eddy and D M Schreuder (eds), *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism*, (London and Sydney, 1988), p 36.

<sup>2</sup> [Kerr,] "Anglo-German Rivalry", *RT*, Nov 1910, pp 32-33. The figure for South Africa related to white population only (as in subsequent years).

"world-state". Nevertheless, it is important to remember the prevailing assumptions of the period.

There was, at the time, little recognition of ecological restraints on population growth, and great faith in deforestation, irrigation and agricultural innovation. Dominion politicians were themselves great "boosters": indeed, their rôle in organising loans and capital projects made them professionally so. Laurier famously spoke of the new century "belonging to Canada". A compatriot, writing in the *Round Table*, agreed "that the Twentieth Century is hers by right".<sup>1</sup> The notion of vast "empty spaces" was hard to shake off. Dove, writing in 1921, reckoned that Canada and Australia between them possessed the resources for a population of 200 million.<sup>2</sup> If Dominion resources could be mobilised to the same extent as Great Britain's, then the future of the Empire would, at the very least, look more secure.

By 1909-10 the Dominions already controlled their local defence forces, and had won the right (despite initial obstruction by the Admiralty) to construct their own navies; they were beginning to develop treaty-making powers (as between Canada and the United States, and between South Africa and Portugal); and, unchecked by the Empire's residual authority, they were passing domestic legislation (notably on "Asiatic" immigration) which was bound to affect their relations with foreign states. As Kerr commented in 1911, defence and foreign policy "have already ceased to be" the "sole and exclusive concern of the United Kingdom".

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<sup>1</sup> [W L Grant,] "Canada and Anglo-American Relations", *RT*, Dec 1913, p 108. J V Dafoe believed that Britain would be dwarfed by Western Canada alone within 20 years: Kerr, *Notes from Tour of Canada, 1909*, Lothian Papers 5, fol 35.

<sup>2</sup> [Dove,] "The Migration of the Races", *RT*, March 1921, p 270.

Nevertheless, it was "impossible for the Dominions to set up independent foreign policies and independent defensive systems . . . without destroying the Empire".<sup>1</sup>

The "Imperial problem" was, therefore, one of finding some means whereby Dominion resources could be mobilised in support of the Empire, yet Dominion aspirations to self-government and to control the disposal of their resources could be accommodated. Curtis, of course, believed that he already had the solution.

An alternative did exist, and was to cause considerable problems for the Round Table project. Indeed, the Round Table's inability to develop an agreed strategy for dealing with it must be considered one of the main reasons for the group's "failure". The essence of this view was co-operation between sovereign nations still owing allegiance to a single Crown.

"The existing governments, whether in London, Ottawa, Wellington, Melbourne or Pretoria, were all to stand on an equal footing, side by side, severally administering and controlling the external, as well as the internal, affairs of their respective countries, but maintaining the unity of the Empire by co-operation and also by loyalty rendered to one crown and one flag."

Curtis characterised this as the "Canadian view". It "failed to help" the Round Table, except in proving that the "Imperial problem . . . had not been thought out."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Kerr,] "The New Problem of Imperial Defence", *RT*, May 1911, pp 231 and 252.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis, *The Round Table Movement* . . . (privately printed, 1913), pp 7-8.

Curtis's hostility to co-operation was frequently reiterated, although rarely with the clarity and persuasiveness which the significance of the matter demanded. He claimed that no form of co-operation had ever been devised which was both effective and lasting. "Alliances can be made and unmade": that was the lesson of history, from the Confederacy of Delos to the recent experience of the Inter Colonial Council in southern Africa.

In Curtis's view, co-operation was fraught with constitutional difficulties. The principle of responsibility would be severely impaired, with members of the decision-making body or "executive" responsible to half a dozen legislatures, mostly weeks away. The "executive" could hardly refrain from taking important decisions until all the legislatures had been consulted. The legislatures could only exercise their responsibility after decisions had been made, by removing their executives and repudiating their decisions. Decisions of the "executive" could therefore be reversed, i.e. they were not decisions but merely provisional agreements.

If co-operation implied a liberum veto, the whole of Imperial policy would be at the mercy of each and every small Dominion; if it implied majority voting, both the constitutional difficulties and the danger of political discord would be greatly increased. Britain would have to reserve the right of unilateral action, and therefore would have to continue bearing the whole cost of Imperial responsibilities. The Dominions would therefore see no reason to increase their commitments. Nevertheless, they would continue to be implicated in Britain's actions. "The relationship of dependency remains unaltered, however studiously it may be veiled under courtesies and forms."

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<sup>1</sup> See especially [Curtis,] *Round Table Studies* [First Series, Vol 1, 1911], Introduction, pp ix - xiii (quotation from p xiii).

Others in the Moot were less convinced, and certainly less dogmatic on this point. None doubted that co-operation would eventually prove inadequate. Nevertheless, Curtis's forcing of the Dominions' dilemma was thought, in the short term, to be a gamble: after all, it was not inconceivable that Canada and South Africa would prefer independence to federation.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, co-operation had its positive aspects: it would serve the process of education, and it would at least make a start on the problem of inducing the Dominions to share Britain's Imperial commitments. Finally, it was not clear that the breakdown of co-operation would be either immediate or dramatic. Kerr believed "that the existing arrangements - anomalous as they are - can be made to work for some time to come, provided the governments concerned mean to make them work".<sup>2</sup>

The Round Table's unresolved disagreements over co-operation provided an undercurrent of irresolution whenever the group attempted to confront the practical and immediate issues of Anglo-Dominion relations. That the Round Table should confront those issues was not doubted. As Dawson wrote in 1909, "Some of us have to talk or write about these things in public ~~now~~" and it was obviously desirable "to help to keep them on lines which fit in with . . . our general scheme".<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the pages of the *Round Table* itself had to be filled and, as Curtis observed, the purposes of the Review as agreed by the Moot included "from the outset . . . the propagation of views".<sup>4</sup>

The early meetings of the Round Table were able to do no more than

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<sup>1</sup> [Kerr,] "The Question of Policy" [1910], Lothian Papers 14, fol 286.

<sup>2</sup> [Kerr,] "Memorandum", nd [1911], (Kerr etc file,) RT (O) Papers.

<sup>3</sup> G G R[obinson] to Curtis, 26 July [1909], Lothian Papers 11, fols 27-29

<sup>4</sup> [Curtis,] "Memorandum", 18 May 1910, RT Papers c 776, fols 64-72.

float a few ideas on the "subsidiary" subject of Imperial co-operation. The approach of the 1911 Conference provided the Round Table with the opportunity of producing more substantial and considered proposals.<sup>1</sup> A sub-committee was convened over the summer of 1910, and memoranda were produced by Kerr, Amery and Malcolm. These were forwarded to Curtis in New Zealand, who also wrote his own memorandum at the request of the Governor, Lord Islington. Amery wrote a further memorandum at the end of the year, which (after amendment by Kerr and Milner) was submitted to a dozen leading British Cabinet politicians.<sup>2</sup>

There was a substantial measure of agreement between the Round Tablers' various memoranda. All suggested that the separation of the Dominions department from the rest of the Colonial Office (agreed by the 1907 Conference) should be completed; that each Dominion should have its own Ministry of Imperial Affairs, in regular communication with London; that the Conference should be presided over by the Prime Minister and not the Colonial Secretary; and that it should be provided with a confidential resumé of foreign, defence, Indian and Colonial policy by the appropriate British ministers. The latter point was also argued, forcefully, by Kerr in the *Round Table*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See John Kendle: "The Round Table Movement, New Zealand, and the Imperial Conference of 1911", *JCPS*, Vol III (1965), pp 104-17, and *The Colonial and Imperial Conferences, 1887-1911* (London, 1967), chapters 7 and 9. The following interpretation differs in emphasising the extent of divergence between members of the Moot, and also of Curtis's responsibility for the subsequent débâcle.

<sup>2</sup> Kerr to G Craig-Sellar, July 1910, RT Papers c 776, fols 22-24; [Copy of Curtis's memorandum,] Lothian Papers 13, fols 181-217; [Kerr,] "The Imperial Conference", RT Papers c 776, fols 137-44; Amery, "Memorandum" (circulated version), (Amery file,) RT (O) Papers.

<sup>3</sup> [Kerr,] "The New Problem of Imperial Defence", *RT*, May 1911, pp 231-62. Selborne raised the matter of the PM presiding: *Hansard (Lords)*, 5th series, Vol VII (5 April 1911), cols 1047-49.

In addition a number of proposals were put forward, especially by Amery and Curtis, which were not supported by the others. Amery was particularly keen to widen the Conference by including parliamentary delegates, and to press for the establishment of an Imperial secretariat. Curtis, on the other hand, was more interested in improving communications by enhancing the rôle of Dominion High Commissioners in London. He also proposed raising a £100 million loan to pay for new shipbuilding, its burden to be distributed between the governments of Britain and the Dominions according to population.

Amery aimed to build an effective machinery for co-operative decision-making, which in time would grow, almost imperceptibly, into an "imperial union", with powers over tariffs and other matters as well as defence. In the short term, he was little worried by confusion between advisory and executive functions. Kerr described Amery's position as reflecting "transparent" political ends and suggested instead

"that . . . our aim should be not to build up the Imperial Conference as an organ of government, but a) to alter its constitution so as to increase its value as a means of educating the Governments and peoples of the Dominions . . . and b) to put it as often as possible to the test . . . so as to reveal the defective working of the co-operative system".<sup>1</sup>

Curtis went further than Kerr. In his view, Imperial Conferences were mere "humbug". The important thing was to bring home to the Dominions "the real issues". Himself "soaked in colonial conditions", he was convinced that union would only come about as a result of a deliberate step. If his proposals exacerbated the Dominions' tendency to see themselves as separate

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<sup>1</sup> [Kerr,] "The Imperial Conference", loc cit. Cf Kerr to Amery, 16 Dec 1910, (Amery file,) RT (O) Papers.

nations, all well and good: he was himself "not afraid of that tendency and in this point I am a disciple of Jebb's".<sup>1</sup>

At a dinner for subscribers after the Conference, Milner claimed that the Round Tablers "had altered the whole course" of Imperial relations by their lobbying for the Dominion premiers to be initiated into the arcana imperii.<sup>2</sup> In other respects, however, the Moot's early hopes of "stage managing the Conference"<sup>3</sup> were severely disappointed.

The débâcle of Sir Joseph Ward's confused and misjudged advocacy of an "Imperial Council" is well known, as is the ostensible cause - his reading of Curtis's "Green Memorandum", a copy of which found its way into Ward's hands accidentally, as Curtis later emphasised.<sup>4</sup> It appears, however, that Curtis's responsibility for the episode was larger than he liked to admit. His "Islington memorandum", without elaborating any precise scheme of federation, pointed firmly in that direction. Its relatively brief treatment of substantive proposals was prefaced by a long section explaining that co-operation was historically and logically doomed, and that New Zealand's greatest contribution would be to put "the two alternatives of increasing separation or closer union".<sup>5</sup>

While in New Zealand Curtis clearly hoped that Ward would engage the "real issues": he even envisaged the Conference as the ideal opportunity to launch "a new sort of Selborne memorandum", with Ward giving it "a good

1 Curtis to Kerr, 10 Sept 1910, Lothian Papers 12, fols 99-108.

2 Curtis to Lady Anne Kerr, 20 Jan 1912, Lothian Papers 462, fol 2.

3 Kerr to Curtis, 29 July 1910, Lothian Papers 11, fols 87-98.

4 Curtis to Feetham, 27 April 1911, Curtis Papers 2, fols 68-71.

5 [Copy of Curtis's memorandum,] Lothian Papers 13, fols 181-217.

send off".<sup>1</sup> The Moot was more cautious, thinking Ward "a lightweight" and his only likely supporter, Fisher, "a freak - a Labour P.M."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, in his *Round Table* article preceding the Conference, Kerr urged the assembled premiers to face "the problem of the future relations" between Britain and the Dominions.<sup>3</sup> It was the manner in which the premiers did so, rather than the fact that they did, that constituted such a setback.

After the Conference, some members of the Moot were reluctant to engage in any private lobbying before Curtis completed his *Round Table Studies* and the Moot agreed on a precise set of objectives. When, in 1912, Steel-Maitland invited the Round Table to submit suggestions for him to pass on to Bonar Law, Brand immediately called on the Moot to reject Steel-Maitland's proposal. After some reflection, Oliver joined him, arguing that "the Moot has not yet arrived at that degree of certainty with regard to central principles as to justify it in tendering advice to practical politicians on current affairs".<sup>4</sup> On only one issue does the Moot appear

1 Kerr to Curtis, 14 Oct 1910, Lothian Papers 12, fols 153-56, quoting a previous letter from Curtis.

2 Kerr to Curtis, 31 Aug 1910, Lothian Papers 2, fols 92-95.

3 [Kerr,] "The New Problem of Imperial Defence", *RT*, May 1911, p 260.

4 Steel-Maitland's suggestion reported in Minutes of RT Meeting, 9 May 1912, RT Papers c 777, fols 12-15; Brand's opposition the subject of Curtis to Brand, 9 June [1912], Brand Papers, box 2; Oliver's remarks in "Memorandum of Objections . . ." with Oliver to Paterson, 21 June 1912, RT Papers c 777, fols 92-95.

to have attempted to influence the political debate before 1914 - the question of local navies versus contributions.

The Defence Conference of 1909 had endorsed the principle of local navies. At first, the Moot also accepted the principle as, in a phrase coined by Milner, "creating fresh centres of strength" for the Empire.<sup>1</sup> An early memorandum by Kerr argued that

"no Dominion Parliament will ever vote any substantial sum to be handed over to be spent by a foreign [sic] department of state. Contribution is simply a method of salving the conscience, and calming the fears of the electorate, at a minimum cost to themselves".<sup>2</sup>

Neither South Africa nor New Zealand subsequently embarked upon an autonomous naval programme, but Australia did so with enthusiasm, and Canada, under Laurier, promised to do the same. It was Laurier's defeat in 1911, by an unholy alliance between Borden and Bourassa, both pledged to repeal his Navy Act, which again raised the whole question.

The Moot had felt increasingly uneasy with the implications of the local navy scheme, especially since the Australian and Canadian legislation left the question of wartime control (implicit in the 1909 agreement) unresolved.<sup>3</sup> In August 1911, the *Round Table* quoted Selborne that "the sea is all one, and the British Navy therefore must be all one".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Milner, *Speeches Delivered in Canada during the Autumn of 1908* (Toronto, 1909), p 32.

<sup>2</sup> Kerr, "Naval Defence and the Dominions", 9 Dec 1911, Brand Papers, box 2; cf [Kerr,] "The Defence Conference", [1909,] Lothian Papers 12, fols 174-80.

<sup>3</sup> [Kerr,] "The New Problem of Imperial Defence", *RT*, May 1911, pp 249 ff.

<sup>4</sup> [Craik,] "Colonial Neutrality", *RT*, Aug 1911, p 435.

Laurier's defeat was welcomed by the Moot, whose members now saw an opportunity to link naval contributions to representation in the Committee of Imperial Defence. Canadian Round Tablers were sent a detailed plan of action with which to "take the lead in saving the Empire".<sup>1</sup> A small committee (Wrong, Kylie, Glazebrook, Willison and Walker) dutifully drew up a memorandum linking the issues of contribution and representation, and Wrong despatched a letter to Borden urging an "impressive" programme, claiming all-party support.<sup>2</sup> The London section of a special article of September 1912 maintained the impetus, welcoming Borden's declared intention of introducing a new Navy Bill as opening "a new era in the Empire's history".<sup>3</sup> A further article in March 1913 asserted that "unity of control is all-important".<sup>4</sup> W H Kelly, one of the Australian Round Table's most prominent sympathisers, was instructed by Kerr to "keep your eye on Borden". Nevertheless, any hopes that Australia might abandon her own policy were misplaced: as Jose, *The Times'* correspondent in Australia, pointed out, Australians "do think it unwise to dig up seedlings every week to see how they are rooting".<sup>5</sup>

Despite concerted activity, the Round Table's attempts to influence the Canadian naval debate came to nothing. Borden's Bill was rejected by

1 Curtis to G M Wrong, 12 April 1912, RT Papers c 777, fols 22-26.

2 "Memorandum", [May 1912,] RT Papers c 777, fol 34; Wrong to Borden, 8 July 1912, *ibid*, fols 124-25.

3 [Grigg, Perry and Stevenson,] "Canada and the Navy", RT, Sept 1912 (pp 627-56), p 637.

4 "Policy and Sea Power", RT, March 1913 (pp 197-231), p 231.

5 Kerr to W H Kelly, 28 Nov 1911, RT Papers c 797, fols 27-30; Extracts from a Letter from A W Jose, 16 Oct 1912, *ibid*, fols 48-51.

the Senate, and no further attempts to secure a Canadian naval contribution were made. Kylie blamed Canadians' "ignorance of foreign affairs", but also emphasised the "New World's" fear of being caught up in the struggles of the Old. His own disappointment was plain: there had been too much "flinging facts at a great conception . . . . Local self-government is an excellent thing, but if carried so far as to destroy larger units of society it may prove a misfortune".<sup>1</sup>

By the outbreak of the First World War, the advocates of imperial unity cannot be said to have achieved any practical success. Imperial federation was as far from realisation in 1914 as in 1910. Little had been done to improve the machinery for consultation, either. The disparity in defence expenditure between Britain and the Dominions remained striking, as Curtis's figures showed:

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Per capita defence expenditure, 1913 - 14<sup>2</sup>

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United Kingdom	1 - 11 - 9.6
Canada	0 - 7 - 4.9
Australia	0 - 18 - 1.7
New Zealand	0 - 13 - 10.8
South Africa	0 - 4 - 5.6

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Nevertheless, as the figures also showed, all the Dominions except South Africa had vastly increased their defence expenditure in the five years since 1908-09. In Australia's case, the increase was three-fold; or, from

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<sup>1</sup> [Kylie,] "The New World and the Old: A Canadian View", *RT*, Sept 1913, pp 637-47.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis, *The Problem of the Commonwealth* (London, 1916), p 167.

less than a fifth to more than half of Britain's per capita expenditure. Australia was, of course, the only Dominion with its own navy. It might reasonably have been asked, therefore, whether insistence on the centralisation of defence contributions was not, in the short term at least, counter-productive.

### Tariff Reform

Joe Chamberlain's Tariff Reform campaign originated as an attempt "to cement the union of states beyond the seas . . . to consolidate the British race".<sup>1</sup> Many of the key figures in the early Round Table were also keen Tariff Reformers. Milner instituted a preference for British goods in South Africa. On his return, he declared himself a Tariff Reformer "of a somewhat pronounced type"<sup>2</sup>, and set about supporting Chamberlain's campaign with gusto. Amery was keener still, denouncing free trade as "the negation of the whole meaning and essence of human society, the denial of law and morality".<sup>3</sup> Others who supported Tariff Reform included Selborne, Oliver, Dawson and Grigg.

The majority of the Moot (and especially of the "Kindergarten") was less convinced. There were a number of reasons for this. First, it was by no means clear that the Dominions (especially Dominion manufacturers) really wanted a closed Imperial system. Malcolm's experience in Canada convinced him that "with the exception of a few journalists who have

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1 C V Boyd, *Mr Chamberlain's Speeches, Vol 2* (London, 1914), p 143.

2 Milner, *Imperial Unity: Two Speeches* (London, 1907), p 19.

3 Amery, *The Fundamental Fallacies of Free Trade* (London, 1906), p 5.

affinities with the Unionist press at home nobody in Canada cares a damn whether Tariff Reform is brought about or not".<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, something that was clear was that a majority in Britain itself was opposed to Tariff Reform. The Liberals, after all, had won the 1905 election largely through opposition to "food taxes". At a more sophisticated level it was recognised that Britain's interests as a manufacturer, trader and banker could not be sufficiently catered for by the Empire alone.<sup>2</sup> Tariff Reform was clearly not a vote-winner. Cecil (himself an unrepentant free trader) believed that the Unionists' commitment to Tariff Reform "will permanently keep them out of power".<sup>3</sup>

The British context also provided a third reason for Round Table non-commitment. Tariff Reform had clearly become a party issue; whereas the Round Table hoped that federalism would secure the support of all parties, and therefore agreed, early on, the need to avoid charges of partisanship. Amery later recalled that this was the main reason why the Round Tablers failed to support Tariff Reform: they "devoted themselves largely to converting Liberal opinion, believing that they had the Conservatives already behind them".<sup>4</sup>

Finally, many of the younger Round Tablers thought that the Unionist proposals went much further than Dominion policies, by calling for tariffs

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm to C Onslow, 22 Jan 1910, Onslow Papers (Guildford), Private Papers C 173/25/49. I am indebted to Chris Collins of Nuffield College for this reference.

<sup>2</sup> Alan Sykes, *Tariff Reform in British Politics, 1903-13* (Oxford, 1979); cf "The Unionists and the Food Taxes", *RT*, March 1913, pp 232-76.

<sup>3</sup> Cecil to Kerr, 3 Oct 1911, (Cecil file,) RT (O) Papers.

<sup>4</sup> Amery to J Conway, 21 Feb 1952, (ed ctee file,) RT (O) Papers.

for the benefit of the Dominions rather than of the UK itself. In Kerr's view, such calls for sacrifice were profoundly dangerous. Instead, he suggested that British tariffs should be framed according to British needs, and that only then should preferences be given, leading to customs agreements "frankly based on the self interest of each part".<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Brand argued that tariffs and preferences were an essential component of national social structures, and would therefore, even under a federal system, be a matter for conference rather than centralised decision-making.<sup>2</sup> Sir Keith Hancock described "tariff personality" as an essential ingredient in Dominion development.<sup>3</sup> This fact was brought home by the Dominion contributions to Curtis's *Round Table Studies*.<sup>4</sup> "Is it heretical to say that defence is at bottom the only reason for the union of the Empire?", Brand asked, rhetorically, in rejecting the Tariff Reformers' arguments.<sup>5</sup>

While the Round Tablers fought shy of including tariffs in their scheme for Imperial union, there were some signs of an attempt to mediate between the two extremes of absolute free trade and complete Imperial autarky. Thus Curtis, who was most emphatic on the need to leave the

1 Kerr, "British Politics and the Empire", [1911,] (Kerr etc file,) RT (O) Papers.

2 Brand to Kerr, 4 Jan 1913, Brand Papers, box 182.

3 W K Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, vol 2, part 1* (London, 1942), p 85.

4 See, eg, [Wellington group,] "Notes on the Question of Finance", 25 May 1911, pp 11-14 of [Round Table] *Group Notes, No 2* (1911).

5 Brand, "Memorandum", [1911,] RT Papers c 776, fols 107-12.

Dominions fiscal autonomy, was also reported to be "very anxious to find, if it be possible, an alternative policy of Preference, which does not involve the food tax".<sup>1</sup> Even Cecil admitted the case for retaliatory duties; and he was also prepared to support a measure of Imperial preference, if food taxes could be avoided.<sup>2</sup> However, nothing concrete appears to have been suggested.

Amery, in particular, tried hard to convince his colleagues that their proposed Imperial Parliament should have powers to introduce a Zollverein<sup>3</sup>; nevertheless, the majority realised that his ideas were as out of touch with Dominion opinion as the Manchester School he so fervently attacked. The Round Table's stance also brought criticism from a number of other keen Tariff Reformers. Austen Chamberlain in 1913 begged the Round Table "not to 'crab' any movement which led in the direction of Imperial Union".<sup>4</sup> The same year, Jebb's *Britannic Question* explicitly pitted his own vision of an Empire based on economic integration against the Round Tablers' political movement.

In an interesting variation on the theme of the Round Table's "failure", John Turner has argued that the movement's reluctance to support Tariff Reform was both proof and cause of its effective marginalisation.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Salisbury to Brand, 11 June 1912, and Salisbury, "Memorandum on Preference unconnected with the Taxation of Food", nd [1912], Brand Papers, box 2.

2 Cecil to Kerr, 28 Nov 1911, enclosing correspondence with C Heaton-Ellis, (Cecil file,) RT (O) Papers.

3 See his "Memorandum", Jan 1911, RT Papers c 776, fols 113-23.

4 Sir Austen Chamberlain, *Politics from Inside* (London, 1936), p 353.

5 "The Round Table and British Politics", unpublished paper presented to the Second Lothian Memorial Conference, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, London, 3 to 5 April 1989.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the arguments against commitment on this issue were substantial. Commitment would have scuppered any hopes of obtaining Liberal support. Moreover, if the views of Dominion Round Tablers were any guide, it would have entailed a far more arduous task in the Dominions. Eggleston thought Jebb's agenda "remarkably nebulous and fantastic".<sup>1</sup> From Canada, J A Stevenson was even more emphatic: "I detest the Jebb brand of imperialist and will fight them [sic] to the end".<sup>2</sup>

### "Asiatic" Migration

Perhaps the most enduring legacy of the European empires has been the extent to which they re-arranged the demographic map of the world. Migration, both voluntary and involuntary, was central to the establishment and functioning of the early British Empire. British migration, at least, was also, in the view of the "new imperialists", crucial to its future. Cecil Rhodes was not alone in contending that the British "are the finest race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race".<sup>3</sup>

The idea that people of European descent had a right to colonise whichever lands they saw fit was virtually unquestioned in Round Table circles. In 1917, Curtis proposed that a frontier belt of "Central Asia" should be lopped off from India and handed over for European colonisation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Eggleston to Grigg, 18 June 1913, RT Papers c 798, fols 39-46.

<sup>2</sup> Stevenson to Kerr, 25 Aug 1910, (Stevenson file,) RT (O) Papers.

<sup>3</sup> [Rhodes's original Will,] Milner Papers 467, fols 146-55.

<sup>4</sup> Eg Curtis to Coupland, 19 May 1917, Lothian Papers 472, item 3.

As late as 1926, Dove was asserting "that one of the still unsettled questions of the world is how far the hot countries [such as Guyana or Fiji] can be made permanently inhabitable for Europeans".<sup>1</sup>

While the Round Tablers were thus interested in schemes to extend European colonisation, it was primarily with the established colonies of settlement that they were concerned. Here, they emphasised two distinct but complementary priorities: to prevent non-European immigration, and to encourage British, as opposed to other European, immigration. During the early years of the Round Table, it was the first of these which received most attention.

Not all the early Round Tablers were "racist" in the sense of believing in inherent or genetic differences between racial groups. Nevertheless, their views on race relations generally included a belief in the inferiority of non-European cultural values, fear of economic competition (based on the notion that non-Europeans required lower living standards than Europeans), and opposition to "miscegnation" and all other forms of pluralistic development.<sup>2</sup>

Such views were commonplace in contemporary Britain. Nevertheless, they were given particular resonance by the "Kindergarten's" experience in South Africa. There, the future Round Tablers accepted uncritically the myth that South Africa was a "white man's country". They saw the greatest

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<sup>1</sup> Dove, "The Colonial Problem of Europe", 21 July 1926, Lothian Papers 20, fols 390-97.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp 178-83.

threat to this ideal arising not from the black African majority, but from "Asiatics", who were making serious inroads into white economic hegemony, and who (more than Africans) resisted European cultural assimilation. As Assistant Colonial Secretary for the Transvaal, Curtis bore a particular responsibility for combatting the "Asiatic" menace. He it was who suggested that Indians in the Transvaal be made to carry fingerprinted passes, and that further Indian immigration be halted, in order to save South Africa from "the fate which has overtaken countries like Mauritius and Jamaica".<sup>1</sup>

It was not just in South Africa that opposition to "Asiatic" immigration was in the ascendant.<sup>2</sup> Even in relatively liberal New Zealand, where Maoris and British were described as enjoying "excellent relations", the *Round Table* reported widespread hostility towards Asians.<sup>3</sup> From British Columbia, the immigration of "unassimilable material" from Asia was described as "a calamity": if unchecked, it would reduce the province to the state of Hawaii, where "only millionaire employers and coolie labourers remain".<sup>4</sup>

In Australia, unsurprisingly, such views were held most trenchantly. "White Australia" was an article of faith amongst Australian Round Tablers.

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 4 May 1907; see R A Huttenback, *Gandhi in South Africa* (Ithaca, 1971), pp 158-61 and *passim*; M K Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Madras, 1928), ch X.

<sup>2</sup> Avner Offner's essay on the "'Pacific rim' societies" in J J Eddy and D M Schreuder, *op cit*, demonstrates the extent to which such opinion was a component of contemporary "Colonial Nationalism".

<sup>3</sup> "New Zealand: History and Politics", *RT*, Feb 1911, pp 206-29.

<sup>4</sup> "Canada: Oriental Immigration: A British Columbian View", *RT*, March 1914, pp 330-36.

Eggleston was "absolutely convinced that the existence of British civilisation in the Dominions is bound up with the exclusion of Asiatics".<sup>1</sup> In a frank exchange with the London group (prompted by the latter's censorship of some particularly outspoken Australian comments) he warned that, if mis-handled, "a final difference of opinion on this point might be a difference too deep to be bridged over by any form of organisation". On the other hand he also believed that, if handled sympathetically, the Dominions' policies could provide a formidable argument for strengthening ties with the "mother-country". As an example, he forwarded some doggerel on the theme of a "union more profound" ensuring Australia's future as "an Aryan land . . . for ever".<sup>2</sup>

That the Dominions' immigration policies could be worked to the advantage of the federationist cause was recognised early on by the Moot. An article by Kerr in the second issue of the *Round Table* warned that

"In the long run the project of a 'White Empire' will only be accomplished if the Empire has the strength to resist the terrific expansive pressure of the teeming millions of Asia. And that strength it will be able to exert only if all its parts are absolutely at one on the policy they should pursue".<sup>3</sup>

In the following issue Kerr examined the prospects for Japanese colonisation in mainland Asia, and concluded that it was not alarmist to

<sup>1</sup> Eggleston to Grigg, 18 June 1913, RT Papers c 798, fols 39-46.

<sup>2</sup> Eggleston to Grigg, 14 Oct 1913, RT Papers c 798, fols 125-32; Eggleston to Curtis, 26 Feb 1913, RT Papers c 778, fols 68-71 (enclosing "A Welcome" by Bernard O'Dowd).

<sup>3</sup> [Kerr,] "The Anglo-Japanese Alliance", RT, Feb 1911, p 144.

believe that the Japanese saw far better prospects in Australasia and North America.<sup>1</sup>

The Moot was determined to dispel the impression that Britain was out of sympathy with the Dominions on this issue. Grigg reassured Eggleston that "everybody here [in Britain] believes in the white Australia policy and is determined to do the utmost to support it".<sup>2</sup> Curtis devoted a whole chapter of his *Problem of the Commonwealth* to the question, defending the Dominions' policies and urging critics to "think of London with six Asiatics to every European". The Empire, while it might have to deal with the consequences of Dominion immigration policies, should have no control over their formulation.<sup>3</sup>

By the outbreak of the First World War, discriminatory immigration policies were, of course, firmly in place in all of the Dominions. Nevertheless, Dominion opinion would not be completely satisfied until Asian immigration was stopped at source.

Curtis was the prime mover behind a wartime attempt to reach an agreement between the Governments of India and of the Dominions, based on the principle of "reciprocity". Following talks with Borden and his Minister of the Interior, Dr Roche, Curtis produced a paper outlining his proposals, which he then discussed with the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford. Again he argued that the "establishment of any Asiatic community in the

1 [Kerr,] "The Emigration Question in Japan", *RT*, May 1911, pp 263-69.

2 Grigg to Eggleston, 12 Dec 1913, *RT Papers* c 798, fols 141-42.

3 Curtis, *The Problem of the Commonwealth* (London, 1916), ch 5, esp pp 60-62.

heart of a European community, however small", was "productive of social, moral and political evils". In order to avoid charges that restrictions on Indian migration were motivated by "racial" animosity, "reciprocal" agreements should be reached whereby Indians would be allowed to visit the Dominions only for the purposes of study and business, and similar restrictions would apply to Dominion citizens wishing to travel to India.<sup>1</sup>

While Curtis was in India, Kerr pressed his proposals on a sympathetic Secretary of State, Austen Chamberlain. The India Office drafted a "Note on Emigration" substantially embodying Curtis's proposals. This was to be put forward at the 1917 Conference by Meston and Sinha, but the latter objected, sensing a betrayal of the wider interests of Indians.<sup>2</sup> The question of Indian migration was again raised at the 1921 Conference, when all the Dominions except South Africa agreed to end disabilities on domiciled Indians in return for an end to migration. The latter part of the bargain held, but the former did not: further disabilities were subsequently introduced.<sup>3</sup>

From the Dominion point of view, the issue of Asian immigration was dealt with satisfactorily, and subsided as a "live issue" between the wars.

<sup>1</sup> Curtis to Lord Chelmsford, 2 Nov 1916, Lothian Papers 33, fols 2-7; Chelmsford to Austen Chamberlain (extracts), 2 Nov 1916, *ibid* 34, fols 14-17.

<sup>2</sup> Kerr to Chamberlain, 28 Feb 1917 and 7 March 1917, Lothian Papers 32, fols 2-4 and 5-7; "Note on Emigration" and Chamberlain to Kerr, 24 April 1917, *ibid* 34, fols 10-13.

<sup>3</sup> See, eg, "Canada", *RT*, Sept 1923, pp 388-405.

The Round Table ignored pleas from correspondents in India to criticise the discrimination suffered by Asians.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the Moot was also reluctant to publish any re-statements of the Dominion case. An exception was Eggleston's "White Australia" article of 1921, which was only published after pressure from the Australian Round Tablers.<sup>2</sup> The reasons for the Moot's reticence are not hard to find. The initial expectation that the Dominions' policies could easily be worked to the advantage of "closer union" was clearly misplaced. The Dominions were suspicious of British attitudes, while the British found the effect of the Dominions' policies to be distinctly problematical. In the aftermath of the First World War, with Japan's position in the Pacific enhanced and the Raj increasingly dependent on Indian goodwill, the dangers of a divergence of interests between Britain and the Dominions was greater than ever. It was thus self-evidently politic to allow the problem to be discreetly set to one side.

#### India and the Dependencies

The *Round Table's* coverage of events and policies in Britain's dependent Empire was by no means as thorough as its treatment of the self-governing Dominions. Over the period November 1910 to June 1914, articles on Britain's dependencies accounted for only 7.5% of total *Round Table*

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<sup>1</sup> See, eg, telegram from Rushbrook Williams, 5 July 1921, Grigg Papers, MSS Microfilm 999.

<sup>2</sup> [Eggleston,] "White Australia", *RT*, March 1921, pp 312-39; L Foster, *High Hopes* (Melbourne, 1986), pp 90-91.

coverage, and just 0.6% if India is excluded.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assume that the London Round Tablers were indifferent to British rule in the dependencies. On the contrary, some regarded it as "the biggest of all reasons for the existence of this stupendous Commonwealth".<sup>2</sup>

Curtis's doctrine of the Commonwealth, of course, made this argument peculiarly his own, although both Kerr and Coupland anticipated him in this respect. After his visit to India in 1912, Kerr reported himself "now a convinced Imperialist" who believed "the British Empire to be the greatest agency for assisting and promoting the development of the non-self-governing races that exists today".<sup>3</sup> In a talk given to the Raleigh Club the same year, Coupland adopted an almost apocalyptic tone in stressing the "IMMENSE" importance of the Empire's "supreme historical mission", that of substituting order for conflict in the contact of races: without it, he contended, the world would be condemned to "the authentic Armageddon".<sup>4</sup>

Many commentators have seen the disintegration of British Imperial power as the result of collapse at the centre, or (more generously) of an acknowledgement by Britain's Imperial rulers that "Empire" was a thing best rid of. In such an interpretation the Round Table group, and in particular

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C, "Round Table Coverage, by Subject". Lady Lugard was asked to write on Nigeria, and Hugh Clifford on the Straits Settlements, but neither was able to do so.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis, *The Round Table Movement* (1913), pp 14-15.

<sup>3</sup> Kerr, *What the British Empire Really Stands For* (Toronto, 1917: address delivered to Canadian groups, 30 July 1912), pp 3 and 7.

<sup>4</sup> Coupland, "Raleigh Club", nd [1912], Coupland Papers 1/2/3.

its promotion of a "principle of the Commonwealth", holds a special place. Classically, S R Mehrotra stated in 1961 that the Commonwealth doctrine "represented almost a revolution in imperial thinking" which "repudiated the concept of the 'two empires' - the concept that there could be under the British flag one form of constitutional evolution for the west and another for the east". Thereby the Round Table was to be found "enunciating the principle . . . [and] laying the foundations of our present multi-racial Commonwealth".<sup>1</sup>

This idea, of a radical break with previous and prevailing conceptions of Empire, was assiduously cultivated by members of the Round Table themselves. Curtis (for the benefit of an Indian audience) described in revelatory terms his own conversion to a new conception of the Empire-Commonwealth.

"I remember discussing the Indian anarchist troubles with Mr Marris, as we walked through a forest on the Pacific slopes [of Canada, in 1909], and his views so startled and arrested my attention as to make a lasting impression on my mind. Self-government, he urged, however far distant, was the only intelligible goal of British policy in India. It needed a guiding principle and no other was thinkable . . . ."

"It was from that moment that I began to think of the British Commonwealth as the greatest instrument ever devised for enabling that principle to be realised, not merely for the children of Europe but for all races and all kindreds and peoples and tongues."<sup>2</sup>

From 1912 Curtis marked the juncture by substituting the term "British Commonwealth" for "British Empire", a practice subsequently adopted by the

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<sup>1</sup> S R Mehrotra, "Imperial Federation and India, 1868-1917", *JCPS*, Vol 1, No 1 (1961), pp 29-40.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis, *Dyarchy* (London, 1920), pp 41-2.

*Round Table*, originally in March 1914 and preponderantly after 1918.

What might be described as the Curtis/Mehrotra version of events, in which Curtis and, after some hesitation, the Round Table as a whole embraced a radically new conception of Imperial relations, begs a number of questions. Was the "Commonwealth doctrine" in fact so "revolutionary"? Did it effect a truly significant break with previous Imperialist traditions, including the "two empire" concept? Were its purposes and consequences entirely emancipatory?

By the time of the Round Table's foundation it was, indeed, commonplace to write of the British Empire as consisting of "two empires". Seeley urged his audience "to think much more of our Colonial than our Indian Empire"<sup>1</sup>, and Froude contrasted "empire" with a "commonwealth . . . held together by common blood".<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Milner emphasised the distinction, declaring in 1908 that the idea of "Colonial Self-Government" for India was "a hopeless absurdity".<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, the blurring of the racial and cultural aspects of British imperialism permitted the existence of a tradition, most eloquently expressed by Macaulay, which looked to the ultimate export of "European institutions", at least to India.<sup>4</sup> Sir Charles Dilke believed in "the possibility of planting free institutions among the dark-skinned races of

<sup>1</sup> J R Seeley, *The Expansion of England* (Cambridge, 1883), p 11.

<sup>2</sup> J A Froude, *Oceana, or England and Her Colonies* (London, 1886), p 12.

<sup>3</sup> Milner, "The Two Empires", *Proc RCI*, Vol 39 (1908), p 333.

<sup>4</sup> Macaulay's speech on the East India Company Charter, 10 July 1833: *Hansard (Commons)*, 3rd Series, Vol 21, col 536.

the world".<sup>1</sup> Moreover, by 1909, the year of the Morley-Minto reforms, possibility was, albeit slowly and hesitantly, in the process of becoming actuality in India. Curtis's personalisation of his own exposure to the idea of self-government for non-Europeans, if not disingenuous, must therefore be regarded as evidence of considerable naiveté. Indeed, other Round Tablers were aware of the historical tradition behind the idea: the principle that the Empire's "more civilised members are responsible for the government and training in self-government of peoples not yet able to govern themselves" Kerr described as "Empire in the old-fashioned sense".<sup>2</sup>

Early memoranda by Curtis dwelt (in terms reminiscent of Froude) on "self-government" as an "instinct" brought to the colonies by their European settlers. He and the Moot considered it essential that the self-governing colonies should share in the government of India and the dependencies. It was only when travelling round the Empire that Curtis saw the necessity of argument on this point. He met many colonials unwilling to meet the financial burdens involved. Furthermore there were those who took the view that there was something almost immoral about Empire.<sup>3</sup> As he later wrote, in "these young democratic communities the principle of self-government is the breath of their nostrils. It is almost a religion. They feel as if there were something inherently wrong in one people ruling another".<sup>4</sup> Curtis returned to England and set to work constructing his

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<sup>1</sup> C W Dilke, *Greater Britain* (London, 1868), vol 2, p 407.

<sup>2</sup> [Kerr,] "A Programme for the British Commonwealth", RT March 1922, p 246.

<sup>3</sup> Curtis to Oliver, 15 Aug 1910, Lothian Papers 2, fols 135-51 (copy in RT Papers, c 870). See also the comments printed in Curtis's "Annotated Memorandum", quoted above, pp 88-89.

<sup>4</sup> Curtis, *A Letter to Philip Kerr, 13 Nov 1916* (Bombay, 1916).

"principle of the Commonwealth", which was thus the direct result of a perceived need to propagandise the cause of empire.

Curtis contended that the Empire was worth preserving precisely as having worldwide and peculiar "responsibilities". He contrasted "the weakness of the sense of mutual duty" amongst "Orientals" with the strength of it in Britain and her self-governing colonies.<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth "does not mean and can never mean universal suffrage"; rather, it was rule by "all who are fit", ie "Aristotle's 'aristocracy'". "It recognises that there are men unfit for the task of government, who must therefore be governed by those who are fit."<sup>2</sup> Put simply, the Commonwealth entrusted political power to as many "as can be given the vote without endangering the state too much".<sup>3</sup>

The whole thrust of Curtis's argument was designed to ensure the strengthening of Imperial control over India and the dependencies, as he made clear to a Canadian correspondent in 1913:

"It would be different if I thought that the time was on hand when India, Egypt, Ceylon, the Malay Straits or Nigeria would govern themselves. Withdraw British government and so far as I can judge they would inevitably relapse into blood-stained chaos, and their chance of learning how in time to govern themselves will be thrown back for centuries".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Curtis,] *Round Table Studies, Second Series, Part A* (1912), Curtis Papers 156/9, pp 1-18.

<sup>2</sup> [Curtis,] *A Practical Enquiry into the Nature of Citizenship* . . . [the "Strawberry Memorandum"] (1914), Curtis Papers 157/6, pp 1-23; cf *The Capital Question of China* (London, 1932), p 300.

<sup>3</sup> Curtis to Lady Selborne, 8 Dec 1915, Curtis Papers 2, fols 202-3.

<sup>4</sup> Curtis to E J Kylie, 10 Jan 1913, RT Papers c 778, fols 21-4.

The main significance of Curtis's Commonwealth paradigm was thus not in stating the "ultimate goal", but in setting it within a context in which the Imperial power retained full authority over the process. As Grigg wrote, in a paraphrase of Curtis approved by the latter, "the salvation of the most backward races is not to be achieved by Europeans repudiating the task of control, but only by exercising a control from first to last in the interest of the lower races as well as the higher".<sup>1</sup>

#### "Home Rule All Round"

Ireland was the oldest and, at the time of the foundation of the Round Table, the most acute of Britain's Imperial problems. It was one which subjected the *Round Table's* claim to a non-partisan status to its severest test. Yet it was also one which the Moot could hardly avoid tackling if the group was to fulfil its other leading claim, to provide informed coverage of the most important issues confronting the Empire. The way the Moot did so revealed much about the Round Tablers' views on the conflict between Nationalism and Imperialism. Ever optimistic, they consistently under-estimated the support for and demands of Nationalism, and over-rated the extent to which Imperialism could accommodate the Nationalist challenge.

Early *Round Table* articles dwelt at length on the troubled history of Ireland, but rejected Nationalist "myths" of a separate and homogeneous

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<sup>1</sup> Grigg, "Substitute Introduction to the Whitsuntide Egg", [July 1914], RT Papers c 779, fol 58. For Curtis's approval, see Curtis to Grigg, 29 July 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 76-9.

Irish nationhood, and disputed claims of a consistent British malevolence.<sup>1</sup> Much emphasis was placed on the "tribalism" of early Irish society, which constituted a menace to the development of a stable and ordered society in Britain. It was "from this difference in the levels of civilisation in the two islands that subsequent disasters have largely sprung".<sup>2</sup> In Ireland itself, "specific features of primitive society have outlived their age and become ingrained in the character of [its] people". Such features included "blindness to realities, aversion to compromise, a morbid concentration on itself, a disregard for all interests but its own, [and] an ingrained belief in the virtue of violence".<sup>3</sup> To ascribe all Ireland's woes to her connection with Britain was itself a psychological deformity of the Irish Catholic mind, an irrational and irresponsible "paranoia".<sup>4</sup>

The members of the Round Table found it hard to understand Irish Nationalism other than by reference to such pathological symptoms. It was frequently pointed out that the Irish already enjoyed the same measure of self-government as did the other constituent parts of the United Kingdom; indeed, with 103 MPs, rather more than was equitable. Other nationalities within the United Kingdom - the Scots were always the favourite example - were content with their constitutional rights. Was there not something self-evidently retrogressive about the demands of Irish Nationalism?

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<sup>1</sup> See especially [Grigg,] "The Irish Question", *RT*, Dec 1913 (pp 1-68), pp 12-22; [Kerr,] "Ireland and the Empire", *RT*, Sept 1916 (pp 614-51), pp 615 ff.

<sup>2</sup> [Kerr,] "The Irish Crisis", *RT*, June 1918 (pp 496-525), p 497.

<sup>3</sup> [Curtis,] "Ireland", *RT*, June 1921 (pp 465-534), pp 465, 506.

<sup>4</sup> Curtis to Milner, 16 Oct 1916, *RT Papers* c 780, fols 189-95.

"If democracy . . . has made a great discovery since the cult of little nations in the middle of the last century, it is that local patriotism and self-interest are not antagonistic, but complementary and essential, to patriotism and self-interest of a broader kind."<sup>1</sup>

While all the Round Tablers' instincts were thus with the Unionists in rejecting Home Rule of any kind for Ireland, it was nevertheless clear that, as Milner put it to Balfour early in 1910, "we are in for Home Rule in some form".<sup>2</sup> The Round Tablers realised - as, indeed, did other thoughtful Unionists, such as J L Garvin - that a "purely negative" attitude on the part of the opponents of Home Rule would lead to "entire failure".<sup>3</sup> The best that could be hoped for was "a compromise under which Ireland cannot really become a nation, and the United Kingdom cannot really remain united".<sup>4</sup> The solution which seemed to offer the best hope of such a compromise - and which, in various combinations and with varying degrees of commitment, the Round Tablers were prominent in urging - was "Home Rule All Round".

The idea of an all-round devolution was by no means original to the

- 1 [Grigg,] "The Irish Question", *RT*, Dec 1913, p 63.
- 2 Milner to Balfour, 17 April 1910, quoted in J E Kendle, *Ireland and the Federal Solution* (Kingston, 1989), p 112. In this book and in his article "The Round Table Movement and 'Home Rule All Round'", *Hist Journal*, vol II (1968), pp 332-53, Kendle has described in considerable detail Round Tablers' advocacy of federalism for the UK. I have therefore confined my discussion to the salient points.
- 3 [Grigg,] "The Irish Crisis", *RT*, March 1914, p 215. For Garvin see A M Gollin, *J L Garvin and the Observer* (London, 1960), pp 168-234.
- 4 [Brand and Craik,] "Home Rule", *RT*, June 1912, p 428.

Round Tablers.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the most persistent advocate of federalism at this time was himself a Round Tabler: F S Oliver. The author of the widely-read "Pacificus" articles in *The Times* of 1910 and of many subsequent articles and pamphlets, Oliver provided a trenchant yet cogent argument for compromise on the basis of all-round devolution.

"Home Rule All Round" offered many attractions to Unionists who realised the impossibility of maintaining the status quo. It circumvented the unwelcome necessity of recognising the special character of Irish nationality, by placing Ireland on exactly the same footing as the other parts of the United Kingdom. It necessitated a scaling down of the powers the Liberals were prepared to concede ("powers . . . wider than those possessed by any state or provincial legislature in any Dominion"<sup>2</sup>). It set firm limits to Redmond's "march of a nation" by entrenching in law the supreme authority of the United Kingdom/Imperial Parliament. It obviated all the difficulties of previous Home Rule Bills which threatened to leave the Irish with a voice in mainland domestic affairs. Finally, it was a measure which could be justified in itself, as a remedy for the "congestion" of Parliament, and as a recognition of Adam Smith's maxim that nothing should be centralised that could equally well be left to local government.

Oliver's argument for all-round devolution encountered a mixed reaction in the early Moot. Hichens (himself an avowed "stick in the mud")

<sup>1</sup> See Kendle, op cit, Chapters 1-4; also George Boyce, "Federalism and the Irish Question" in A Bosco (ed), *The Federal Idea, Vol 1* (London, 1991), pp 119-38.

<sup>2</sup> [Brand and Craik,] "Home Rule", *RT*, June 1912, p 440.

mentioned Brand and Kerr as particularly "keen devolutionists".<sup>1</sup> Curtis found the "congestion" argument a useful one for the purposes of his "Green Memorandum", although rather as making a case for relieving the United Kingdom parliament of its Imperial business than for relieving it of its local business.<sup>2</sup> He subsequently put the argument for devolution to a "bootlet" in South Africa which included Amery and Cecil; the reaction was generally hostile, particularly on the grounds that Ireland could not afford a legislature of its own.<sup>3</sup> By September Curtis was convinced (in contrast to Lord Grey) that the Imperial federationists were best advised to treat the units of the Empire "as we find them".<sup>4</sup>

Back in London, others were going through a similar difficulty in deciding on the issue. A subcommittee on "congestion" was set up in January 1910, consisting of Selborne, Cecil, Steel-Maitland, Craik and Kerr. Considerable evidence of "congestion" was accumulated, providing the basis for a joint study published anonymously by Macmillans, and for two substantial articles in the *Round Table*.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the committee was unable to agree that devolution was the only solution to this problem:

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- 1 Hichens to Curtis, 19 Dec 1910, Curtis Papers 2, fols 41-44.
  - 2 *Memoranda on Canada and the British Commonwealth* (1910), pp 85-98.
  - 3 Hichens to Milner, 21 March 1910, Lothian Papers 11, fols 79-83. A committee of Hichens, Cecil and Oliver was set up to inquire into the financial relations between Britain and Ireland, concluding (as the Primrose Committee was to) that any Irish legislature would have to be heavily subsidised by Britain.
  - 4 Curtis to Kerr, 19 Sept 1910, Lothian Papers 12, fols 109-22. Oddly, Kendle, "The Round Table Movement and 'Home Rule All Round'", p 334, treats this letter as proof of Grey's influence on Curtis.
  - 5 *An Analysis of the System of Government Throughout the British Empire* (London, 1912); [W P Johnston,] "The Congestion of Business in the House of Commons", *RT*, Dec 1911, pp 58-95 and [Curtis,] "The Better Government of the United Kingdom", *RT*, Sept 1918, pp 750-77.

Cecil, for instance, was convinced that changes in Parliamentary procedure would suffice.<sup>1</sup>

The constitutional crisis and the inter-party Conference of 1910 gave a temporary boost to hopes of a compromise on devolutionist lines. Milner and Amery, reluctantly, became convinced that not all would be lost by such a solution; on the other hand, Selborne, Cecil, Steel-Maitland and Hichens remained obdurate.<sup>2</sup> As a result of further discussion, it was finally agreed that, as it dealt with the division between national and local rather than between imperial and national issues, federalism for the United Kingdom could not be regarded as in any way preliminary or essential to Imperial federation.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Kerr now suggested that "Imperialists must . . . look with disfavour on the proposal . . . for it is likely to delay the accomplishment of Imperial union by removing one of the more pressing arguments for it".<sup>4</sup>

"Home Rule All Round" again increased in attractiveness following the introduction of the third Home Rule Bill in 1912. Among the Moot there was still no unanimity on the question, although Selborne and even Hichens were now reconciled to a federalist solution. For some, it offered a welcome possibility of dishing the Liberals; for Oliver and possibly Craik, it was

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1 See Cecil to Paterson, 22 April 1913, RT Papers c 781, fol 129.

2 Kerr to Curtis, 29 July 1910, Lothian Papers 11, fols 87-98; 10 Aug 1910, *ibid* 2, fols 84-91; 31 Aug 1910, *ibid* 2, fols 92-95.

3 Minutes of RT Meeting, Blackmoor, 12-13 Nov 1910, RT Papers c 776, fols 79-81.

4 [Kerr,] "Home Rule and the Empire", [1911,] (Kerr etc file,) RT (O) Papers.

a desirable objective in itself. In either case it was clear that, as Oliver put it, "Federalism is not going to be accepted, if at all, purely on its merits, but largely because it enables a number of solemn and eminent gentlemen on both sides to save their faces".<sup>1</sup>

Oliver himself was indefatigable in pursuit of such a compromise, persuading Austen Chamberlain and Carson to accept all-round devolution should it be put forward by the Liberals; amongst the latter, however, he was only able to muster the support of Lord Charnwood, Murray Macdonald and Munro Ferguson.<sup>2</sup> Curtis and Grigg achieved a more notable success, influencing Churchill towards a federal solution, first in September 1912, and then again (with Brand) in the spring of 1914. On the latter occasion the Round Tablers drew up a scheme for amending the Home Rule Bill which was broadly accepted by Chamberlain, Carson and Bonar Law as well as Churchill. Nevertheless, as soon as Asquith was brought in, negotiations broke down. Churchill then reverted to his previous, pugnacious intransigence.<sup>3</sup>

With the exception of Oliver, the Round Tablers' advocacy of "Home Rule All Round" was sporadic and half-hearted. To all intents and purposes

1 Oliver [to Craik], 24 Oct 1913, Oliver Papers 95, fols 99-103.

2 For correspondence with Chamberlain and Carson, see Oliver Papers 91 and 87; cf correspondence with Grey and Craik, *ibid* 92 and 95. J A Spender believed that Oliver was too identified with Unionism to have any impact in Liberal circles: Spender to Oliver, 6 March 1914, Oliver Papers 96, fols 11-12.

3 "Suggestions for a Settlement of the Irish Question", with subsequent marginalia, RT Papers c 823, fols 154-57; Curtis to H Montgomery Hyde, 24 July 1950, Curtis Papers 62, fol 27; Kendle, "The Round Table Movement and 'Home Rule All Round'". Oliver regarded Churchill as "the enemy of your country": Oliver to Curtis, 10 April 1914, Curtis Papers 2, fols 161-62.

they ignored what was in fact the largest element in the problem: the aspirations of Irish Nationalists themselves. "Colonial Autonomy", the demand of the constitutional Nationalists, was ruled out entirely, on the grounds that it was a "transitional stage", which "must inevitably lead either to closer union or to something which will not be distinguishable from separation".<sup>1</sup> Unlike the peoples of the existing Dominions, the Irish could not be trusted to make the choice wisely. Indeed, the Round Tablers recognised that any solution to which they themselves could subscribe would "have to be carried over the heads of the Irish Nationalist party".<sup>2</sup>

The Round Tablers' true political colours were shown most clearly in their attitudes to Ulster. Oliver condemned "all this Ulster shouting and drum-beating and treasonable tomfoolery" in 1911; but that was mainly because it was "premature" and might alienate potential supporters on the mainland.<sup>3</sup> The *Round Table* refused to condemn Ulster's preparations for rebellion. "It is enough that these men believe themselves to be arming to defend their fundamental rights of citizenship in the United Kingdom."<sup>4</sup> Milner and Amery were leading figures in the organisation of an English Covenant: Milner thought that "the crisis . . . calls for action, which is different, not only in degree, but in kind, from what is appropriate to

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1 [Brand and Craik,] "Home Rule", *RT*, June 1912, pp 428-32.

2 Grigg to J A Spender, 12 Dec 1913, *RT Papers* c 790, fols 114-18.

3 Oliver to Robinson, 27 Sept 1911, *Oliver Papers* 84, fols 6-7.

4 [Grigg,] "The Irish Crisis", *RT*, March 1914, p 219. Grigg did worry, however, about the example which might be set to "other discontented elements of society, not only in the United Kingdom, but in our dependencies beyond the seas": *ibid*, p 213.

ordinary political controversies".<sup>1</sup> Curtis came "to the conclusion that apart from any obligations I may have to the Round Table, I ought to sign"; Grigg thought that he and Curtis should sign, whatever the propriety of Round Table employees doing so.<sup>2</sup>

In September 1914 the *Round Table* recorded that it was "only by the narrowest margin that we are not now engaged in a civil as well as a foreign war".<sup>3</sup> Had it come to such a point, many of the Round Tablers might well have been on the side of the rebels.

### The Rivalry of Empires

"Great Empires are welded together by pressure from without", Brand observed in 1909.<sup>4</sup> The connection between external pressure and internal consolidation was fundamental to the Round Table's arguments in the period 1910-14, to the extent that it is difficult to disentangle the relative weight attached to each. Was Imperial federation urged primarily as a response to international rivals, or was external pressure seized upon as a convenient pretext? The motives behind the Round Table movement were complex, and a matter of some debate within the Moot. Nevertheless, it is

<sup>1</sup> Milner to Selborne, 18 Feb 1914, Milner Papers 689, fols 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis to Grigg, 16 March 1914, RT Papers c 779, fols 12-13; Grigg to Curtis, 17 March 1914, *ibid*, fol 14. Further correspondence in RT Papers c 823, fols 118 ff.

<sup>3</sup> [W Allison Phillips et al,] "United Kingdom", *RT*, Sept 1914, p 712.

<sup>4</sup> Brand, *The Union of South Africa* (Oxford, 1909), p 131.

clear that the existence of external threats added enormously to the persuasiveness and relevance of the Round Tablers' arguments, and to their cohesion as a group.

The early Round Tablers were in no doubt as to the source of the main threat to Britain and her Empire. Anglo-German antagonism, Kerr declared in the first *Round Table*, was "an all-pervading reality" and "the central fact in the international situation to-day".<sup>1</sup> Kerr interpreted this antagonism primarily in ideological terms, as a clash between the British principles of "individualism" and "liberty" and the Prussian principles of "national efficiency" and "autocracy". The root of the problem was "the unalterable conviction, deep in the hearts of the [German] people, that it is their destiny to become the first power of the world". Only a change of heart in Germany could avert the catastrophe of a full-scale war.<sup>2</sup> A similar line was taken by Dawson's *Times*, and was indeed accepted by the Koot as a whole.

The Round Tablers, as they later realised,<sup>3</sup> are open to the charge that they contributed to the outbreak of war by dwelling on the irreconcilability of British and German aspirations. On the other hand, there is no evidence that the Round Tablers took an active rôle in lobbying British politicians on this issue. There was little need, and there were plenty of other groups to do so. In Britain, at least, the Round Table's rôle in disseminating anti-Germanism was minor, consisting mainly of accepting and therefore reinforcing attitudes already well-formed.

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1 [Kerr,] "Anglo-German Rivalry", *RT*, Nov 1910 (pp 7-40), p 7.

2 *Ibid.*, pp 23, 37 and *passim*.

3 [Kerr,] "The Foundations of Peace", *RT*, June 1915, pp 597-8.

It was not with attitudes in Britain, but with attitudes in the Dominions, that the Round Tablers were primarily concerned. Their initial soundings in the Dominions, and the reactions to Curtis's *Studies*, revealed that there was by no means a universal acceptance of the idea that a threat to Britain was a threat to the Dominions themselves. Anglo-German antagonism therefore entailed a possibility of divergence between Britain and the Dominions. Describing the origins of the Round Table, Curtis later emphasised that its founders "feared that South Africans might abstain from a future war with Germany on the grounds that they had not participated in the decision to make war".<sup>1</sup> "Colonial Neutrality" was thought to be a real possibility, especially after Laurier's assertion of Dominion rights at the 1911 Conference. It was a possibility which the Round Tablers were obviously keen to avert, and considerable space was therefore devoted to demonstrating its impracticability through the pages of the *Round Table* magazine. Neutrality, in the *Round Table's* view, was equivalent to secession, and, while Britain was unlikely to enforce unity by coercion, the Dominions would soon find that independence would "save neither their honour nor their territories". The advocates of neutrality were transparently "hoping to be able to combine the advantages of membership of the British Empire, with avoidance of its risks and obligations".<sup>2</sup>

The *Round Table's* coverage of Anglo-German relations attempted to deal with the problem from another angle, by emphasising the identity of

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis, *Dyarchy* (London, 1920), p 41; cf [Curtis,] "Abe Bailey", *RT*, Sept 1940, pp 743-46.

<sup>2</sup> "Colonial Neutrality", *RT*, Aug 1911, pp 435-42; cf [Kerr,] "The New Problem of Imperial Defence", *RT*, May 1911, pp 231-62.

British and Dominion interests. Kerr's 1910 article stressed the global rather than European range of Germany's ambitions, the existence of a "surplus" population in Germany, and the probability that the Dominions (encompassing much of the land "fit for white settlement") would fall prey to Germany should she prove successful in the struggle for naval supremacy. Kerr also stressed that

"Of all things [Germany] . . . fears the effective union of the British Empire for defence. In the long run it is mathematically just as certain that she will defeat England alone in a contest of wealth and numbers, as it is that she will be beaten by the combined peoples of the Empire".<sup>1</sup>

Kerr's initial analysis of the German threat thus tied in neatly with the Round Table's wider aim of Imperial integration. The picture he drew of German ambitions was sharp and uncompromising - perhaps too much so to be entirely convincing amongst Dominion readers. A visit to Berlin at the height of the Moroccan crisis also helped to modify Kerr's views. As he wrote to his mother, his conversations there convinced him "that the price of war is so terrific that only the most vital of national interests can justify it".<sup>2</sup> Writing in the *Round Table* after his return, Kerr retracted his earlier claim that Germany's interests compelled her to deprive Britain of her Dominions and colonies, and suggested, on the contrary, that British and German interests in the extra-European world generally coincided. In Kerr's revised analysis, Germany's true interests were not those perceived by her government; her autocracy, aristocracy and bureaucracy needed an

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<sup>1</sup> [Kerr,] "Anglo-German Rivalry", *loc cit*, pp 21-25.

<sup>2</sup> Kerr to Lady Anne Kerr, 20 Oct 1911, Lothian Papers 461, fol 10.

external threat to cling to power; previous successes had "turned their heads"; and "the more unpopular [the German government] grows at home the stronger is the bias in favour of recovering its prestige . . . by glory abroad". By standing firm, the British Empire was defending not only its own interests, but international right, and the real interests of the German people themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Kerr thus went some way towards accommodating the possibility of a reconciliation between Britain and Germany, provided that the German ruling class abandoned its irrational and illegitimate ambitions. A more active policy of appeasement was urged by Eggleston, in a memorandum which was published, with modifications and an editorial disclaimer, in the *Round Table* of September 1912. Eggleston emphasised that Germany's ambitions were on the whole "legitimate not predatory" and he suggested that Germany might make a useful partner in "the white man's mission of civilization". Britain's entente with France and Russia he described as both provocative and foolish; much better would be to work for a re-establishment of the old Concert of Powers. As an interim measure, Britain should withdraw from the Entente, and strengthen her own position with a "healthy dose" of tariff and land reform, and of Imperial and military "Organization". (Curiously, Eggleston's original memorandum envisaged this as a possible "Liberal [party] policy".)<sup>2</sup>

Eggleston's suggestions reflected an alternative view of the dangers

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<sup>1</sup> [Kerr,] "Britain, France and Germany", *RT*, Dec 1911, pp 1-57.

<sup>2</sup> Eggleston, "England and Germany: A Liberal Policy Towards Germany", [sent 18 April 1912,] *RT Papers* c 777, fols 73-83; [idem] "An Australian Note on Anglo-German Relations", *RT* Sept, 1912, pp 717-36.

confronting the British Empire as well as a more sympathetic approach to German ambitions. In his view, a Germany "dispersed through the world with interests in every land . . . would be an ally of Great Britain in the coming struggle with Eastern nations".<sup>1</sup> Eggleston and a number of other Australian Round Tablers saw Japan as the greatest threat to the Empire.

At first, the Moot was inclined to play upon such fears, as a useful argument for Imperial consolidation.<sup>2</sup> To the extent that Dominion attitudes came into conflict with British strategy, however, the Moot chose to support the calculations of British officialdom. This was shown most clearly by an article for the June 1914 *Round Table*, in which Grigg summarised two articles sent from Australia by Eggleston and W J Isbister, only to discount the fears they voiced as "beyond all reasonable reckoning". For Grigg, the "mutual value of [the British Empire's] . . . friendship with the awakened people of Japan" was demonstrable, and he once again (with an allusion to Mahan's doctrine of concentration) affirmed that the front line of Australia's defence was in the North Sea.<sup>3</sup>

The Moot's handling of Australian criticism of British foreign policy is significant. As in the parallel case of Anglo-German antagonism, the Moot was strongly supportive of official British policy. Where Dominion opinion was out of step with British policy, the Moot saw its rôle, at this stage, not as a conduit for Dominion influence, but as a means of "educating" the Dominions towards acceptance of British views.

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1 Eggleston, "England and Germany", *loc cit*, fol 79.

2 [Kerr,] "The Anglo-Japanese Alliance", *RT*, Feb 1911, pp 105-53.

3 [Grigg,] "Naval Policy and the Pacific Question", *RT*, June 1914, pp 391-463. The Moot's attitude may have been confirmed, if not influenced, by Chirol, who was a particularly strong supporter of the Alliance: see his lecture to the Raleigh Club, "The Far East" (delivered 7 June 1914), *RT Papers* c 804, fols 38-65.