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Imperial Conference, 1926.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

(Appendices published separately in Cmd. 2769.)

*Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty,
November, 1926.*

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* Published separately in Cmd. 2769.

I.—PRELIMINARY NOTE.

THE Proceedings of the Conference opened at 10, Downing Street, on the 19th October, 1925, and were continued until the 29th November. During that period sixteen plenary meetings took place, which were normally attended by the following:—

GREAT BRITAIN.

- The Right Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P., Prime Minister (Chairman).
The Right Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
The Right Hon. the Earl of Balfour, K.G., O.M., Lord President of the Council.
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, C.H., M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.
The Right Hon. L. S. Amery, M.P., Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and Secretary of State for the Colonies.

CANADA.

- The Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, C.M.G., M.P., Prime Minister.
The Hon. E. Lapointe, K.C., M.P., Minister of Justice

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

- The Right Hon. S. M. Bruce, M.C., M.P., Prime Minister.
The Hon. Sir Neville Howse, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., M.P., Minister of Defence and Health.
The Hon. J. G. Latham, C.M.G., K.C., M.P., Attorney-General.

NEW ZEALAND.

- The Right Hon. J. G. Coates, M.C., M.P., Prime Minister.
The Right Hon. Sir Francis Bell, G.C.M.G., K.C., M.L.C., Minister without Portfolio.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

- General the Hon. J. B. M. Hertzog, M.L.A., Prime Minister.
The Hon. N. C. Havenga, M.L.A., Minister of Finance.

IRISH FREE STATE.

- Mr. Kevin O'Higgins, T.D., Vice-President of the Executive Council
and Minister of Justice.
Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, T.D., Minister for External Affairs.
Mr. James McNeill, High Commissioner in London.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

- The Hon. W. S. Monroe, M.H.A., Prime Minister.
The Hon. A. B. Morine, K.C., M.L.C., Minister without Portfolio.

INDIA.

- The Right Hon. the Earl of Birkenhead, Secretary of State for
India and Head of the Indian Delegation.
The Maharaja of Burdwan, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., I.O.M.
Mr. D. T. Chadwick, C.S.I., C.I.E., Secretary to the Government
of India, Commerce Department.

SECRETARIAT.

GREAT BRITAIN.

- Sir M. P. A. Hankey, G.C.B.
Mr. E. J. Harding, C.B., C.M.G.

CANADA.

- Dr. O. D. Skelton.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

- Mr. P. E. Deane, C.M.G.

NEW ZEALAND.

- Mr. F. D. Thomson, C.M.G.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

- Mr. H. Gordon Watson, I.S.O.

IRISH FREE STATE.

- Mr. D. O'Hegarty.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

- Mr. W. J. Carew.

INDIA.

- Mr. G. H. Spence, I.C.S.

Other Ministers attended one or more of the meetings. These were :—

GREAT BRITAIN.

- The Right Hon. Sir William Joynson-Hicks, Bt., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.
- The Right Hon. Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, Bt., G.B.E., M.P., Secretary of State for War.
- The Right Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare, Bt., C.M.G., M.P., Secretary of State for Air.
- The Right Hon. W. C. Bridgeman, M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty.
- The Right Hon. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, K.B.E., M.C., M.P., President of the Board of Trade.
- The Right Hon. Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, K.C., Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
- The Earl of Clarendon, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, and Chairman of the Oversea Settlement Committee.
- The Hon. W. G. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.
- Major Sir Philip Sassoon, Bt., G.B.E., C.M.G., M.P., Under-Secretary of State for Air.

IRISH FREE STATE.

- Mr. W. T. Cosgrave, T.D., President of the Executive Council.
- Mr. P. McGilligan, T.D., Minister for Industry and Commerce.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

- The Hon. W. J. Higgins, K.C., M.H.A., Minister of Justice.

INDIA.

- The Rt. Hon. the Earl Winterton, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India.

Mr. J. C. C. Davidson, C.H., C.B., M.P., Parliamentary and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, was present at the sessions of the Conference as Minister in charge of Publicity.

The following also attended meetings of the Conference for the discussion of particular subjects :—

GREAT BRITAIN.

- His Excellency the Right Hon. the Lord Lloyd, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., D.S.O., High Commissioner in Egypt.
- Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., D.S.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.
- General Sir George F. Milne, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.
- Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh M. Trenchard, Bt., G.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Air Staff.
- Sir William G. Tyrrell, G.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., C.B., Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
- Sir Charles T. Davis, K.C.M.G., Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.
- Brigadier-General Sir Samuel H. Wilson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B., Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.
- Sir Sydney Chapman, K.C.B., C.B.E., Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade.
- Sir Percy Thompson, K.B.E., C.B., Deputy Chairman, Board of Inland Revenue.
- Sir H. Frank Heath, K.C.B., Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.
- Sir O. E. Niemeyer, K.C.B., Controller of Finance, Treasury.
- Major-General Lord Lovat, K.T., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., C.B., D.S.O., Chairman, Forestry Commission.
- The Right Hon. Sir Halford Mackinder, Chairman of the Imperial Shipping Committee and of the Imperial Economic Committee.
- Air Vice-Marshal Sir W. G. H. Salmond, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Member of the Air Council for Supply and Research.
- Air Vice-Marshal Sir W. S. Brancker, K.C.B., A.F.C., Director of Civil Aviation.
- Mr. T. Jones, Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet.
- Sir William Clark, K.C.S.I., C.M.G., Comptroller-General, Department of Overseas Trade.
- Mr. H. Fountain, C.B., C.M.G., Principal Assistant Secretary, Board of Trade.
- Mr. T. C. Macnaghten, C.M.G., C.B.E., Vice-Chairman, Oversea Settlement Committee.
- Mr. H. F. Batterbee, C.M.G., C.V.O., Assistant Secretary, Dominions Office.
- Mr. S. G. Tallents, C.B., C.B.E., Secretary to the Empire Marketing Board.

- Mr. R. B. Howorth, C.B., Assistant Secretary, Cabinet Office.
 Mr. H. W. Malkin, C.B., C.M.G., Second Legal Adviser, Foreign Office.
 Mr. R. L. Craigie, First Secretary, Foreign Office.
 Mr. W. E. Beckett, Assistant Legal Adviser, Foreign Office.
 Mr. R. B. Bannatyne, C.B., Assistant Secretary, Home Office.
 Mr. O. F. Dowson, O.B.E., Assistant Legal Adviser, Home Office.
 Mr. C. M. Knowles, Assistant Legal Adviser, Home Office.
 Mr. L. Cuthbertson, Principal, Treasury.
 Lieut.-Commander R. T. Gould, R.N., Hydrographic Department, Admiralty.
 Mr. F. G. L. Bertram, C.B.E., Principal, Air Ministry.
 Mr. R. L. Robinson, O.B.E., Forestry Commissioner.
 Professor Fraser Story, Publication Officer, Forestry Commission.
 Wing-Commander Sir Norman Leslie, Bt., C.B.E., Assistant Secretary, Committee of Imperial Defence.
 Mr. H. J. Hutchinson, Principal, Board of Trade (Assistant Secretary to the Conference for Economic Subjects).
 Mr. G. H. Creasy, Assistant Principal, Dominions Office.
 Mr. P. J. Grigg, Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
 Major R. D. Furse, D.S.O., Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.
 Mr. C. Ll. Bullock, C.B.E., Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Air.
 Mr. W. B. Brown, Private Secretary to the President of the Board of Trade.

CANADA.

- The Hon. Vincent Massey, Minister-designate at Washington.
 Major-General J. H. MacBrien, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Chief of the General Staff.
 Commodore W. Hose, C.B.E., R.C.N., Director of the Naval Service.
 Dr. J. H. Grisdale, Deputy Minister of Agriculture.
 Dr. A. G. Doughty, C.M.G., Deputy Minister of Archives.
 Mr. F. C. Blair, Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Immigration and Colonisation.
 Mr. S. A. Cudmore, Technical Adviser.
 Mr. Jean Désy, Counsellor, Department of External Affairs.
 Lieut.-Col. J. Reid Hyde, C.B.E., Secretary to the Delegation.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

- Mr. H. W. Gepp, Chairman, Development and Migration Commission.
- Captain J. B. Stevenson, C.M.G., R.A.N., Naval Representative in London.
- Brigadier-General T. H. Dodds, C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O., Senior Military Representative in London.
- Mr. F. L. McDougall, C.M.G., Economic Adviser.
- Flight-Lt. J. Renison Bell, Air Liaison Officer in London.
- Mr. R. G. Casey, D.S.O., M.C., Political Liaison Officer in London.
- Major O. C. Fuhrman, Private Secretary to the High Commissioner in London.

NEW ZEALAND.

- Rear-Admiral A. G. Hotham, C.B., C.M.G., R.N., Naval Adviser.
- Captain L. M. Isitt, New Zealand Air Force.
- Mr. C. A. Berendsen, Imperial Affairs Officer.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

- Sir William Hoy, K.C.B., General Manager of Railways.
- Brigadier-General W. E. C. Tanner, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Adjutant-General.
- Colonel Sir Pierre van Ryneveld, K.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., Director of Air Services.
- Dr. A. J. Bruwer, Chairman, Board of Trade and Industries.
- Mr. J. Collie, O.B.E., Department of Finance.
- Mr. J. H. Heddon, Deputy Commissioner of Customs and Excise.
- Mr. D. Steyn, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.

IRISH FREE STATE.

- Mr. J. Costello, K.C., Attorney-General.
- General P. McMahon, Chief of Staff.
- Major-General M. Brennan, Adjutant-General.
- Colonel S. O'Higgins, Chief Staff Officer.
- Mr. J. P. Walshe, Secretary, Department of External Affairs.
- Mr. J. Dulanty, C.B., C.B.E., Commissioner for Trade in Great Britain.
- Mr. E. J. Smyth, Principal Officer, Department of Industry and Commerce.
- Mr. T. J. Kiernan, Secretary to the Delegation.

INDIA.

Major-General W. M. St. G. Kirke, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Deputy Chief of the General Staff.

Mr. H. A. F. Lindsay, C.I.E., C.B.E., I.C.S., Trade Commissioner in London.

The Maharaj Kumar of Burdwan, Private Secretary to the Maharaja of Burdwan.

In addition to the meetings of the full Conference, there were 146 meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees, and technical discussions on Defence Questions at the Admiralty, War Office, and Air Ministry. There was also a meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence which was attended by all the Prime Ministers and Heads of Delegations, at which certain matters were remitted to a technical Sub-Committee; the latter held one meeting.

II.—OPENING STATEMENTS.

In opening the Proceedings on the 19th October, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, as Chairman, extended a welcome to the Representatives of the Dominions and India, and referred to the loss which the Empire had sustained in the death since the last Conference of the Right Honourable W. F. Massey and of the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.

Mr. Baldwin then reviewed the results which had been achieved by past Conferences and referred to the progress which had been made in the spheres of inter-Imperial relations, foreign policy, defence, and Empire trade and oversea settlement. He also suggested certain directions in which further progress was possible.

Speeches were made in reply by the Prime Ministers of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, and Newfoundland, by the President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, and by the Maharaja of Burdwan for India. The Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs also made a short statement on the establishment in 1925 of the Dominions Office as a separate Office from the Colonial Office. In the course of this statement he mentioned that, Southern Rhodesia being now a self-governing Colony, he proposed to ask the High Commissioner in London to assist him in matters arising at the Conference, particularly on the economic side, where the interests of Southern Rhodesia were concerned.

These opening speeches were published in full immediately afterwards.*

* See Appendix I in Cmd. 2760.

III.—MESSAGE TO THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN.

In accordance with the practice followed on previous occasions, the first official act of the Conference was to send a message of greeting to Their Majesties the King and Queen.

The words of this message were :—

“The Prime Ministers and other Representatives of the Governments of the British Empire assembled in Conference, at their first meeting and as their first official act, desire to express their respectful greetings and fidelity to the King, and their earnest hope that Your Majesty and Her Majesty the Queen may long be spared to strengthen the ties of affection and devotion which unite the peoples of the British Commonwealth under the Crown.”

His Majesty's gracious reply was read aloud by the Prime Minister of Great Britain at the meeting on the 20th October, and was in the following terms :—

“I have received with feelings of appreciation and gratitude the message which, as your first official act, you have been good enough to address to me. The Queen joins with me in thanking you for your good wishes. I shall follow with interest and sympathy your discussions of those important questions which will come before you and the settlement of which, I trust, will promote the unity and greatness of the Commonwealth of the British Nations.—GEORGE, R.I.”

IV.—LOSS OF H.M.S. “VALERIAN.”

At the meeting held on the 26th October, the Conference passed the following Resolution of sympathy in the loss of H.M.S. “Valerian,” which was sunk off Bermuda in a hurricane on the 22nd October with the loss of 85 lives :—

“The Conference desires on behalf of all parts of the Empire to place on record their deep sorrow at the loss of H.M.S. “Valerian” with so many valuable lives of officers and men, whilst returning from a cruise undertaken to enable His Excellency the Governor of the Bahamas to survey and relieve the damage done to the Islands by the previous hurricane.

“As representatives of the Governments of the Empire we are profoundly conscious of the services rendered by the Royal Navy not only in war, but also in peace, and of the risks and dangers constantly endured by officers and men in carrying out their duties, and we desire to express our deep sympathy with the relatives and friends of those who have lost their lives whilst so engaged.”

V.—PUBLICITY.

The Conference decided that as regards the question of publicity the procedure and arrangements should be similar to those adopted in 1923.*

At the unanimous wish of the Conference, Mr. J. C. C. Davidson, C.H., C.B., M.P., Parliamentary and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, who had been in charge of the general arrangements as to publicity in 1923, was asked again to undertake the work in consultation with the members of the Conference and their staffs, and to be present at the meetings of the Conference.

Mr. Davidson was assisted in this work by Mr. D. Caird, C.B.E., Director of Information, Dominions Office, and by Sir Arthur Willert, K.B.E., Head of the News Department, Foreign Office. It was thus possible for touch to be kept with the current work of the various Committees and Sub-Committees of the Conference, so that adequate publicity could be given to their work as it progressed.

The arrangements made were again found to be most satisfactory, and at the conclusion of the meetings the Conference thanked Mr. Davidson and those who had assisted him for the valuable help they had given.

VI.—INTER-IMPERIAL RELATIONS.

All the questions on the Agenda affecting Inter-Imperial Relations were referred by the Conference to a Committee of Prime Ministers and Heads of Delegations, of which Lord Balfour was asked to be Chairman. The members of the Committee included the Prime Ministers of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, and Newfoundland, the Vice-President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, the Secretary of State for India, as head of the Indian Delegation, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. Other Ministers and members of the Conference attended particular meetings.

The Report of this Committee is printed *in extenso* below. It was unanimously adopted by the Conference on the 19th November and was published on the following day. In approving it, the Conference placed on record the great debt of gratitude which it owed to Lord Balfour for the services which he had rendered by presiding over the work of this Committee, and its hope that the Report would prove of permanent value and help to all parts of the British Empire.

* Vide Section VI of Cmd. 1987.

Report of Inter-Imperial Relations Committee.

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I.—INTRODUCTION.

We were appointed at the meeting of the Imperial Conference on the 25th October, 1926, to investigate all the questions on the Agenda affecting Inter-Imperial Relations. Our discussions on these questions have been long and intricate. We found, on examination, that they involved consideration of fundamental principles affecting the relations of the various parts of the British Empire *inter se*, as well as the relations of each part to foreign countries. For such examination the time at our disposal has been all too short. Yet we hope that we may have laid a foundation on which subsequent Conferences may build.

II.—STATUS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE DOMINIONS.

The Committee are of opinion that nothing would be gained by attempting to lay down a Constitution for the British Empire. Its widely scattered parts have very different characteristics, very different histories, and are at very different stages of evolution; while, considered as a whole, it defies classification and bears no real resemblance to any other political organisation which now exists or has ever yet been tried.

There is, however, one most important element in it which, from a strictly constitutional point of view, has now, as regards all vital matters, reached its full development—we refer to the group of self-governing communities composed of Great Britain and the Dominions. Their position and mutual relation may be readily defined. *They are autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.*

A foreigner endeavouring to understand the true character of the British Empire by the aid of this formula alone would be tempted to think that it was devised rather to make mutual interference impossible than to make mutual co-operation easy.

Such a criticism, however, completely ignores the historic situation. The rapid evolution of the Oversea Dominions during the last fifty years has involved many complicated adjustments of old political machinery to changing conditions. The tendency towards equality of status was both right and inevitable. Geographical and other conditions made this impossible of attainment by the way of federation. The only alternative was by the way of autonomy; and along this road it has been steadily sought. Every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny. In fact, if not always in form, it is subject to no compulsion whatever.

But no account, however accurate, of the negative relations in which Great Britain and the Dominions stand to each other can do more than express a portion of the truth. The British Empire is not founded upon negations. It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security, and progress are among its objects. Aspects of all these great themes have been discussed at the present Conference; excellent results have been thereby obtained. And, though every Dominion is now, and must always remain, the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation, no common cause will, in our opinion, be thereby imperilled.

Equality of status, so far as Britain and the Dominions are concerned, is thus the root principle governing our Inter-Imperial Relations. But the principles of equality and similarity, appropriate to *status*, do not universally extend to function. Here we require something more than immutable dogmas. For example, to deal

with questions of diplomacy and questions of defence, we require also flexible machinery—machinery which can, from time to time, be adapted to the changing circumstances of the world. This subject also has occupied our attention. The rest of this Report will show how we have endeavoured not only to state political theory, but to apply it to our common needs.

III.—SPECIAL POSITION OF INDIA.

It will be noted that in the previous paragraphs we have made no mention of India. Our reason for limiting their scope to Great Britain and the Dominions is that the position of India in the Empire is already defined by the Government of India Act, 1919. We would, nevertheless, recall that by Resolution IX of the Imperial War Conference, 1917, due recognition was given to the important position held by India in the British Commonwealth. Where, in this Report, we have had occasion to consider the position of India, we have made particular reference to it.

IV.—RELATIONS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Existing administrative, legislative, and judicial forms are admittedly not wholly in accord with the position as described in Section II of this Report. This is inevitable, since most of these forms date back to a time well antecedent to the present stage of constitutional development. Our first task then was to examine these forms with special reference to any cases where the want of adaptation of practice to principle caused, or might be thought to cause, inconvenience in the conduct of Inter-Imperial Relations.

(a.) *The Title of His Majesty the King.*

The title of His Majesty the King is of special importance and concern to all parts of His Majesty's Dominions. Twice within the last fifty years has the Royal Title been altered to suit changed conditions and constitutional developments.

The present title, which is that proclaimed under the Royal Titles Act of 1901, is as follows:—

“George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.”

Some time before the Conference met, it had been recognised that this form of title hardly accorded with the altered state of affairs arising from the establishment of the Irish Free State as a Dominion. It had further been ascertained that it would be in accordance with His Majesty's wishes that any recommendation for change should be submitted to him as the result of discussion at the Conference.

We are unanimously of opinion that a slight change is desirable, and we recommend that, subject to His Majesty's approval, the necessary legislative action should be taken to secure that His Majesty's title should henceforward read:—

“George V, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.”

(b.) *Position of Governors-General.*

We proceeded to consider whether it was desirable formally to place on record a definition of the position held by the Governor-General* as His Majesty's representative in the Dominions. That position, though now generally well recognised, undoubtedly represents a development from an earlier stage when the Governor-General was appointed solely on the advice of His Majesty's Ministers in London and acted also as their representative.

In our opinion it is an essential consequence of the equality of status existing among the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations that the Governor-General of a Dominion is the representative of the Crown, holding in all essential respects the same position in relation to the administration of public affairs in the Dominion as is held by His Majesty the King in Great Britain, and that he is not the representative or agent of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain or of any Department of that Government.

It seemed to us to follow that the practice whereby the Governor-General of a Dominion is the formal official channel of communication between His Majesty's Government in Great Britain and His Governments in the Dominions might be regarded as no longer wholly in accordance with the constitutional position of the Governor-General. It was thought that the recognised official channel of communication should be, in future, between Government and Government direct. The representatives of Great Britain readily recognised that the existing procedure might be open to criticism and accepted the proposed change in principle in relation to any of the Dominions which desired it. Details were left for settlement as soon as possible after the Conference had completed its work, but it was recognised by the Committee, as an essential feature of any change or development in the channels of communication, that a Governor-General should be supplied with copies of all documents of importance and in general should be kept as fully informed as is His Majesty the King in Great Britain of Cabinet business and public affairs.

(c.) *Operation of Dominion Legislation.*

Our attention was also called to various points in connection with the operation of Dominion legislation, which, it was suggested, required clarification.

* The Governor of Newfoundland is in the same position as the Governor-General of a Dominion.

The particular points involved were :—

- (a.) The present practice under which Acts of the Dominion Parliaments are sent each year to London, and it is intimated, through the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, that " His Majesty will not be advised to exercise his powers of disallowance " with regard to them.
- (b.) The reservation of Dominion legislation, in certain circumstances, for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure which is signified on advice tendered by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain.
- (c.) The difference between the legislative competence of the Parliament at Westminster and of the Dominion Parliaments in that Acts passed by the latter operate, as a general rule, only within the territorial area of the Dominion concerned.
- (d.) The operation of legislation passed by the Parliament at Westminster in relation to the Dominions. In this connection special attention was called to such Statutes as the Colonial Laws Validity Act. It was suggested that in future uniformity of legislation as between Great Britain and the Dominions could best be secured by the enactment of reciprocal Statutes based upon consultation and agreement.

We gave these matters the best consideration possible in the limited time at our disposal, but came to the conclusion that the issues involved were so complex that there would be grave danger in attempting any immediate pronouncement other than a statement of certain principles which, in our opinion, underlie the whole question of the operation of Dominion legislation. We felt that, for the rest, it would be necessary to obtain expert guidance as a preliminary to further consideration by His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and the Dominions.

On the questions raised with regard to disallowance and reservation of Dominion legislation, it was explained by the Irish Free State representatives that they desired to elucidate the constitutional practice in relation to Canada, since it is provided by Article 2 of the Articles of Agreement for a Treaty of 1921 that " the position of the Irish Free State in relation to the Imperial Parliament and Government and otherwise shall be that of the Dominion of Canada."

On this point we propose that it should be placed on record that, apart from provisions embodied in constitutions or in specific statutes expressly providing for reservation, it is recognised that it is the right of the Government of each Dominion to advise the Crown in all matters relating to its own affairs. Consequently, it would not be in accordance with constitutional practice for advice to be tendered to His Majesty by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain in any matter appertaining to the affairs of a Dominion against the views of the Government of that Dominion.

The appropriate procedure with regard to projected legislation in one of the self-governing parts of the Empire which may affect

the interests of other self-governing parts is previous consultation with His Majesty's Ministers in the several parts concerned.

On the question raised with regard to the legislative competence of members of the British Commonwealth of Nations other than Great Britain, and in particular to the desirability of those members being enabled to legislate with extra-territorial effect, we think that it should similarly be placed on record that the constitutional practice is that legislation by the Parliament at Westminster applying to a Dominion would only be passed with the consent of the Dominion concerned.

As already indicated, however, we are of opinion that there are points arising out of these considerations, and in the application of these general principles, which will require detailed examination, and we accordingly recommend that steps should be taken by Great Britain and the Dominions to set up a Committee with terms of reference on the following lines:—

“To enquire into, report upon, and make recommendations concerning—

- (i.) Existing statutory provisions requiring reservation of Dominion legislation for the assent of His Majesty or authorising the disallowance of such legislation.
- (ii.)—(a.) The present position as to the competence of Dominion Parliaments to give their legislation extra-territorial operation.
- (b.) The practicability and most convenient method of giving effect to the principle that each Dominion Parliament should have power to give extra-territorial operation to its legislation in all cases where such operation is ancillary to provision for the peace, order, and good government of the Dominion.
- (iii.) The principles embodied in or underlying the Colonial Laws Validity Act, 1865, and the extent to which any provisions of that Act ought to be repealed, amended, or modified in the light of the existing relations between the various members of the British Commonwealth of Nations as described in this Report.”

(d.) *Merchant Shipping Legislation.*

Somewhat similar considerations to those set out above governed our attitude towards a similar, though a special, question raised in relation to Merchant Shipping Legislation. On this subject it was pointed out that, while uniformity of administrative practice was desirable, and indeed essential, as regards the Merchant Shipping Legislation of the various parts of the Empire, it was difficult to reconcile the application, in their present form, of certain provisions of the principal Statute relating to Merchant Shipping.

viz., the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, more particularly Clauses 735 and 736, with the constitutional status of the several members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In this case also we felt that, although, in the evolution of the British Empire, certain inequalities had been allowed to remain as regards various questions of maritime affairs, it was essential in dealing with these inequalities to consider the practical aspects of the matter. The difficulties in the way of introducing any immediate alterations in the Merchant Shipping Code (which dealt, amongst other matters, with the registration of British ships all over the world) were fully appreciated and it was felt to be necessary, in any review of the position, to take into account such matters of general concern as the qualifications for registry as a British ship, the status of British ships in war, the work done by His Majesty's Consuls in the interest of British shipping and seamen, and the question of Naval Courts at foreign ports to deal with crimes and offences on British ships abroad.

We came finally to the conclusion that, following a precedent which had been found useful on previous occasions, the general question of Merchant Shipping Legislation had best be remitted to a special Sub-Conference, which could meet most appropriately at the same time as the Expert Committee, to which reference is made above. We thought that this special Sub-Conference should be invited to advise on the following general lines:—

“To consider and report on the principles which should govern, in the general interest, the practice and legislation relating to merchant shipping in the various parts of the Empire, having regard to the change in constitutional status and general relations which has occurred since existing laws were enacted.”

We took note that the representatives of India particularly desired that India, in view of the importance of her shipping interests, should be given an opportunity of being represented at the proposed Sub-Conference. We felt that the full representation of India on an equal footing with Great Britain and the Dominions would not only be welcomed, but could very properly be given, due regard being had to the special constitutional position of India as explained in Section III of this Report.

(e.) *Appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.*

Another matter which we discussed, in which a general constitutional principle was raised, concerned the conditions governing appeals from judgments in the Dominions to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. From these discussions it became clear that it was no part of the policy of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain that questions affecting judicial appeals should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the wishes of the part of the Empire primarily affected. It was, however, generally recognised that, where changes in the existing system were proposed which, while primarily affecting one part, raised issues in which other parts

were also concerned, such changes ought only to be carried out after consultation and discussion.

So far as the work of the Committee was concerned, this general understanding expressed all that was required. The question of some immediate change in the present conditions governing appeals from the Irish Free State was not pressed in relation to the present Conference, though it was made clear that the right was reserved to bring up the matter again at the next Imperial Conference for discussion in relation to the facts of this particular case.

V.—RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

From questions specially concerning the relations of the various parts of the British Empire with one another, we naturally turned to those affecting their relations with foreign countries. In the latter sphere, a beginning had been made towards making clear those relations by the Resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1923 on the subject of the negotiation, signature, and ratification of treaties.*

* This Resolution was as follows :—

“The Conference recommends for the acceptance of the Governments of the Empire represented that the following procedure should be observed in the negotiation, signature, and ratification of international agreements.

The word ‘treaty’ is used in the sense of an agreement which, in accordance with the normal practice of diplomacy, would take the form of a treaty between Heads of States, signed by plenipotentiaries provided with Full Powers issued by the Heads of the States, and authorising the holders to conclude a treaty.”

I.

“ 1. Negotiation.

“(a) It is desirable that no treaty should be negotiated by any of the governments of the Empire without due consideration of its possible effect on other parts of the Empire, or, if circumstances so demand, on the Empire as a whole.

“(b) Before negotiations are opened with the intention of concluding a treaty, steps should be taken to ensure that any of the other governments of the Empire likely to be interested are informed, so that, if any such government considers that its interests would be affected, it may have an opportunity of expressing its views, or, when its interests are intimately involved, of participating in the negotiations.

“(c) In all cases where more than one of the governments of the Empire participates in the negotiations, there should be the fullest possible exchange of views between those governments before and during the negotiations. In the case of treaties negotiated at International Conferences, where there is a British Empire Delegation, on which, in accordance with the now established practice, the Dominions and India are separately represented, such representation should also be utilised to attain this object.

“(d) Steps should be taken to ensure that those governments of the Empire whose representatives are not participating in the negotiations should, during their progress, be kept informed in regard to any points arising in which they may be interested.

“ 2. Signature.

“(a) Bilateral treaties imposing obligations on one part of the Empire only should be signed by a representative of the government of that part. The Full Power issued to such representative should indicate the part of the Empire in respect of which the obligations are to be

But it seemed desirable to examine the working of that Resolution during the past three years and also to consider whether the principles laid down with regard to Treaties could not be applied with advantage in a wider sphere.

(a.) *Procedure in Relation to Treaties.*

We appointed a special Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Justice of Canada (The Honourable E. Lapointe, K.C.) to consider the question of treaty procedure.

The Sub-Committee, on whose report the following paragraphs are based, found that the Resolution of the Conference of 1923 embodied on most points useful rules for the guidance of the Governments. As they became more thoroughly understood and established, they would prove effective in practice.

undertaken, and the preamble and text of the treaty should be so worded as to make its scope clear.

"(b.) Where a bilateral treaty imposes obligations on more than one part of the Empire, the treaty should be signed by one or more plenipotentiaries on behalf of all the governments concerned.

"(c) As regards treaties negotiated at International Conferences, the existing practice of signature by plenipotentiaries on behalf of all the governments of the Empire represented at the Conference should be continued, and the Full Powers should be in the form employed at Paris and Washington.

3. *Ratification.*

"The existing practice in connection with the ratification of treaties should be maintained.

II.

"Apart from treaties made between Heads of States, it is not unusual for agreements to be made between governments. Such agreements, which are usually of a technical or administrative character, are made in the names of the signatory governments, and signed by representatives of those governments, who do not act under Full Powers issued by the Heads of the States: they are not ratified by the Heads of the States, though in some cases some form of acceptance or confirmation by the governments concerned is employed. As regards agreements of this nature the existing practice should be continued, but before entering on negotiations the governments of the Empire should consider whether the interests of any other part of the Empire may be affected, and, if so, steps should be taken to ensure that the government of such part is informed of the proposed negotiations, in order that it may have an opportunity of expressing its views."

The Resolution was submitted to the full Conference and unanimously approved. It was thought, however, that it would be of assistance to add a short explanatory statement in connection with part I (3), setting out the existing procedure in relation to the ratification of treaties. This procedure is as follows:—

- (a) The ratification of treaties imposing obligations on one part of the Empire is effected at the instance of the government of that part:
- (b) The ratification of treaties imposing obligations on more than one part of the Empire is effected after consultation between the governments of those parts of the Empire concerned. It is for each government to decide whether Parliamentary approval or legislation is required before desire for, or concurrence in, ratification is intimated by that government.

Some phases of treaty procedure were examined however in greater detail in the light of experience in order to consider to what extent the Resolution of 1928 might with advantage be supplemented.

Negotiation.

It was agreed in 1928 that any of the Governments of the Empire contemplating the negotiation of a treaty should give due consideration to its possible effect upon other Governments and should take steps to inform Governments likely to be interested of its intention.

This rule should be understood as applying to any negotiations which any Government intends to conduct, so as to leave it to the other Governments to say whether they are likely to be interested.

When a Government has received information of the intention of any other Government to conduct negotiations, it is incumbent upon it to indicate its attitude with reasonable promptitude. So long as the initiating Government receives no adverse comments and so long as its policy involves no active obligations on the part of the other Governments, it may proceed on the assumption that its policy is generally acceptable. It must, however, before taking any steps which might involve the other Governments in any active obligations, obtain their definite assent.

Where by the nature of the treaty it is desirable that it should be ratified on behalf of all the Governments of the Empire, the initiating Government may assume that a Government which has had full opportunity of indicating its attitude and has made no adverse comments will concur in the ratification of the treaty. In the case of a Government that prefers not to concur in the ratification of a treaty unless it has been signed by a plenipotentiary authorised to act on its behalf, it will advise the appointment of a plenipotentiary so to act.

Form of Treaty.

Some treaties begin with a list of the contracting countries and not with a list of Heads of States. In the case of treaties negotiated under the auspices of the League of Nations, adherence to the wording of the Annex to the Covenant for the purpose of describing the contracting party has led to the use in the preamble of the term "British Empire" with an enumeration of the Dominions and India if parties to the Convention but without any mention of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Colonies and Protectorates. These are only included by virtue of their being covered by the term "British Empire." This practice, while suggesting that the Dominions and India are not on a footing of equality with Great Britain as participants in the treaties in question, tends to obscurity and misunderstanding and is generally unsatisfactory.

As a means of overcoming this difficulty it is recommended that all treaties (other than agreements between Governments) whether negotiated under the auspices of the League or not should be made in the name of Heads of States, and, if the treaty is signed on behalf

of any or all of the Governments of the Empire, the treaty should be made in the name of the King as the symbol of the special relationship between the different parts of the Empire. The British units on behalf of which the treaty is signed should be grouped together in the following order: Great Britain and Northern Ireland and all parts of the British Empire which are not separate members of the League, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Irish Free State, India. A specimen form of treaty as recommended is attached as an appendix to the Committee's Report.*

In the case of a treaty applying to only one part of the Empire it should be stated to be made by the King on behalf of that part.

The making of the treaty in the name of the King as the symbol of the special relationship between the different parts of the Empire will render superfluous the inclusion of any provision that its terms must not be regarded as regulating *inter se* the rights and obligations of the various territories on behalf of which it has been signed in the name of the King. In this connection it must be borne in mind that the question was discussed at the Arms Traffic Conference in 1925, and that the Legal Committee of that Conference laid it down that the principle to which the foregoing sentence gives expression underlies all international conventions.

In the case of some international agreements the Governments of different parts of the Empire may be willing to apply between themselves some of the provisions as an administrative measure. In this case they should state the extent to which and the terms on which such provisions are to apply. Where international agreements are to be applied between different parts of the Empire, the form of a treaty between Heads of States should be avoided.

Full Powers.

The plenipotentiaries for the various British units should have Full Powers, issued in each case by the King on the advice of the Government concerned, indicating and corresponding to the part of the Empire for which they are to sign. It will frequently be found convenient, particularly where there are some parts of the Empire on which it is not contemplated that active obligations will be imposed, but where the position of the British subjects belonging to these parts will be affected, for such Government to advise the issue of Full Powers on their behalf to the plenipotentiary appointed to act on behalf of the Government or Governments mainly concerned. In other cases provision might be made for accession by other parts of the Empire at a later date.

Signature.

In the cases where the names of countries are appended to the signatures in a treaty, the different parts of the Empire should be designated in the same manner as is proposed in regard to the list of plenipotentiaries in the preamble to the treaty. The signatures of the plenipotentiaries of the various parts of the Empire should be grouped together in the same order as is proposed above.

* See p. 29.

The signature of a treaty on behalf of a part of the Empire should cover territories for which a mandate has been given to that part of the Empire, unless the contrary is stated at the time of the signature.

Coming into Force of Multilateral Treaties.

In general, treaties contain a ratification clause and a provision that the treaty will come into force on the deposit of a certain number of ratifications. The question has sometimes arisen in connection with treaties negotiated under the auspices of the League whether, for the purpose of making up the number of ratifications necessary to bring the treaty into force, ratifications on behalf of different parts of the Empire which are separate Members of the League should be counted as separate ratifications. In order to avoid any difficulty in future, it is recommended that, when it is thought necessary that a treaty should contain a clause of this character, it should take the form of a provision that the treaty should come into force when it has been ratified on behalf of so many separate Members of the League.

We think that some convenient opportunity should be taken of explaining to the other Members of the League the changes which it is desired to make in the form of treaties and the reasons for which they are desired. We would also recommend that the various Governments of the Empire should make it an instruction to their representatives at International Conferences to be held in future that they should use their best endeavours to secure that effect is given to the recommendations contained in the foregoing paragraphs.

(b.) Representation at International Conferences.

We also studied, in the light of the Resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1928 to which reference has already been made, the question of the representation of the different parts of the Empire at International Conferences. The conclusions which we reached may be summarized as follows :—

1. No difficulty arises as regards representation at conferences convened by, or under the auspices of, the League of Nations. In the case of such conferences all members of the League are invited, and if they attend are represented separately by separate delegations. Co-operation is ensured by the application of paragraph I.1. (c) of the Treaty Resolution of 1923.

2. As regards international conferences summoned by foreign Governments, no rule of universal application can be laid down, since the nature of the representation must, in part, depend on the form of invitation issued by the convening Government.

(a.) In conferences of a technical character, it is usual and always desirable that the different parts of the Empire should (if they wish to participate) be represented

separately by separate delegations, and where necessary efforts should be made to secure invitations which will render such representation possible.

- (b.) Conferences of a political character called by a foreign Government must be considered on the special circumstances of each individual case.

It is for each part of the Empire to decide whether its particular interests are so involved, especially having regard to the active obligations likely to be imposed by any resulting treaty, that it desires to be represented at the conference, or whether it is content to leave the negotiation in the hands of the part or parts of the Empire more directly concerned and to accept the result.

If a Government desires to participate in the conclusion of a treaty, the method by which representation will be secured is a matter to be arranged with the other Governments of the Empire in the light of the invitation which has been received.

Where more than one part of the Empire desires to be represented, three methods of representation are possible :—

- (i.) By means of a common plenipotentiary or plenipotentiaries, the issue of Full Powers to whom should be on the advice of all parts of the Empire participating.
- (ii.) By a single British Empire delegation composed of separate representatives of such parts of the Empire as are participating in the conference. This was the form of representation employed at the Washington Disarmament Conference of 1921.
- (iii.) By separate delegations representing each part of the Empire participating in the conference. If, as a result of consultation, this third method is desired, an effort must be made to ensure that the form of invitation from the convening Government will make this method of representation possible.

Certain non-technical treaties should, from their nature, be concluded in a form which will render them binding upon all parts of the Empire, and for this purpose should be ratified with the concurrence of all the Governments. It is for each Government to decide to what extent its concurrence in the ratification will be facilitated by its participation in the conclusion of the treaty, as, for instance, by the appointment of a common plenipotentiary. Any question as to whether the nature of the treaty is such that its ratification should be concurred in by all parts of the Empire is a matter for discussion and agreement between the Governments.

(c.) *General Conduct of Foreign Policy.*

We went on to examine the possibility of applying the principles underlying the Treaty Resolution of the 1923 Conference to matters arising in the conduct of foreign affairs generally. It was frankly recognised that in this sphere, as in the sphere of defence, the major

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(a.) In conferences of a technical character, it is usual and always desirable that the different parts of the Empire should (if they wish to participate) be represented

separately by separate delegations, and where necessary efforts should be made to secure invitations which will render such representation possible.

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It is for each part of the Empire to decide whether its particular interests are so involved, especially having regard to the active obligations likely to be imposed by any resulting treaty, that it desires to be represented at the conference, or whether it is content to leave the negotiation in the hands of the part or parts of the Empire more directly concerned and to accept the result.

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(c.) *General Conduct of Foreign Policy.*

We went on to examine the possibility of applying the principles underlying the Treaty Resolution of the 1923 Conference to matters arising in the conduct of foreign affairs generally. It was frankly recognised that in this sphere, as in the sphere of defence, the major

share of responsibility rests now, and must for some time continue to rest, with His Majesty's Government in Great Britain. Nevertheless, practically all the Dominions are engaged to some extent, and some to a considerable extent, in the conduct of foreign relations, particularly those with foreign countries on their borders. A particular instance of this is the growing work in connection with the relations between Canada and the United States of America which has led to the necessity for the appointment of a Minister Plenipotentiary to represent the Canadian Government in Washington. We felt that the governing consideration underlying all discussions of this problem must be that neither Great Britain nor the Dominions could be committed to the acceptance of active obligations except with the definite assent of their own Governments. In the light of this governing consideration, the Committee agreed that the general principle expressed in relation to Treaty negotiations in Section V (a) of this Report, which is indeed already to a large extent in force, might usefully be adopted as a guide by the Governments concerned in future in all negotiations affecting foreign relations falling within their respective spheres.

(d.) *Issue of Exequaturs to Foreign Consuls in the Dominions.*

A question was raised with regard to the practice regarding the issue of exequaturs to Consuls in the Dominions. The general practice hitherto, in the case of all appointments of Consuls de Carrière in any part of the British Empire, has been that the foreign Government concerned notifies His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, through the diplomatic channel, of the proposed appointment and that, provided that it is clear that the person concerned is, in fact, a Consul de Carrière, steps have been taken, without further formality, for the issue of His Majesty's exequatur. In the case of Consuls other than those de Carrière, it has been customary for some time past to consult the Dominion Government concerned before the issue of the exequatur.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed us that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain accepted the suggestion that in future any application by a foreign Government for the issue of an exequatur to any person who was to act as Consul in a Dominion should be referred to the Dominion Government concerned for consideration and that, if the Dominion Government agreed to the issue of the exequatur, it would be sent to them for counter-signature by a Dominion Minister. Instructions to this effect had indeed already been given.

(e.) *Channel of Communication between Dominion Governments and Foreign Governments.*

We took note of a development of special interest which had occurred since the Imperial Conference last met, viz., the appointment of a Minister Plenipotentiary to represent the interests of the

Irish Free State in Washington, which was now about to be followed by the appointment of a diplomatic representative of Canada. We felt that most fruitful results could be anticipated from the co-operation of His Majesty's representatives in the United States of America, already initiated, and now further to be developed. In cases other than those where Dominion Ministers were accredited to the Heads of Foreign States, it was agreed to be very desirable that the existing diplomatic channels should continue to be used, as between the Dominion Governments and foreign Governments, in matters of general and political concern.

VI.—SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION.

Sessions of the Imperial Conference at which the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and of the Dominions are all able to be present cannot, from the nature of things, take place very frequently. The system of communication and consultation between Conferences becomes therefore of special importance. We reviewed the position now reached in this respect with special reference to the desirability of arranging that closer personal touch should be established between Great Britain and the Dominions, and the Dominions *inter se*. Such contact alone can convey an impression of the atmosphere in which official correspondence is conducted. Development, in this respect, seems particularly necessary in relation to matters of major importance in foreign affairs where expedition is often essential, and urgent decision necessary. A special aspect of the question of consultation which we considered was that concerning the representation of Great Britain in the Dominions. By reason of his constitutional position, as explained in section IV (b) of this Report, the Governor-General is no longer the representative of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain. There is no one therefore in the Dominion capitals in a position to represent with authority the views of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain.

We summed up our conclusions in the following Resolution, which is submitted for the consideration of the Conference:—

“The Governments represented at the Imperial Conference are impressed with the desirability of developing a system of personal contact, both in London and in the Dominion capitals, to supplement the present system of inter-communication and the reciprocal supply of information on affairs requiring joint consideration. The manner in which any new system is to be worked out is a matter for consideration and settlement between His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and the Dominions, with due regard to the circumstances of each particular part of the Empire, it being understood that any new arrangements should be supplementary to, and not in replacement of, the system of direct communication from Government to Government and the special arrangements which have been in force since 1918 for communications between Prime Ministers.”

VII.—PARTICULAR ASPECTS OF FOREIGN RELATIONS DISCUSSED BY COMMITTEE.

It was found convenient that certain aspects of foreign relations on matters outstanding at the time of the Conference should be referred to us, since they could be considered in greater detail, and more informally, than at meetings of the full Conference.

(a.) *Compulsory Arbitration in International Disputes.*

One question which we studied was that of arbitration in international disputes, with special reference to the question of acceptance of Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, providing for the compulsory submission of certain classes of cases to the Court. On this matter we decided to submit no Resolution to the Conference, but, whilst the members of the Committee were unanimous in favouring the widest possible extension of the method of arbitration for the settlement of international disputes, the feeling was that it was at present premature to accept the obligations under the Article in question. A general understanding was reached that none of the Governments represented at the Imperial Conference would take any action in the direction of the acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court, without bringing up the matter for further discussion.

(b.) *Adherence of the United States of America to the Protocol establishing the Permanent Court of International Justice.*

Connected with the question last mentioned, was that of adherence of the United States of America to the Protocol establishing the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The special conditions upon which the United States desired to become a party to the Protocol had been discussed at a special Conference held in Geneva in September, 1926, to which all the Governments represented at the Imperial Conference had sent representatives. We ascertained that each of these Governments was in accord with the conclusions reached by the special Conference and with the action which that Conference recommended.

(c.) *The Policy of Locarno.*

The Imperial Conference was fortunate in meeting at a time just after the ratifications of the Locarno Treaty of Mutual Guarantee had been exchanged on the entry of Germany into the League of Nations. It was therefore possible to envisage the results which the Locarno Policy had achieved already, and to forecast to some extent the further results which it was hoped to secure. These were explained and discussed. It then became clear that, from the standpoint of all the Dominions and of India, there was complete approval of the manner in which the negotiations had been conducted and brought to so successful a conclusion.

Our final and unanimous conclusion was to recommend to the Conference the adoption of the following Resolution :—

“ The Conference has heard with satisfaction the statement of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with regard to the efforts made to ensure peace in Europe, culminating in the agreements of Locarno ; and congratulates His Majesty’s Government in Great Britain on its share in this successful contribution towards the promotion of the peace of the world. ”

Signed on behalf of the Committee,
BALFOUR, *Chairman.*

November 18, 1926.

APPENDIX.

(See Section V (a).)

SPECIMEN FORM OF TREATY.

The President of the United States of America, His Majesty the King of the Belgians, His Majesty the King [*here insert His Majesty’s full title*], His Majesty the King of Bulgaria, &c., &c.

Desiring.....

Have resolved to conclude a treaty for that purpose and to that end have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries :

The President

His Majesty the King [*title as above*] :

for Great Britain and Northern Ireland and all parts
of the British Empire which are not separate
Members of the League (of Nations),

AE.

for the Dominion of Canada,

CD.

for the Commonwealth of Australia,

EF.

for the Dominion of New Zealand,

GH.

for the Union of South Africa,

IJ.

for the Irish Free State,

KL.

for India,

MN

who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows :

In faith whereof the above-named Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty.

AB.....
CD.....
EF.....
GH.....
IJ.....
KL.....
MN.....

(or if the territory for which each Plenipotentiary signs is to be specified :

(for Great Britain, &c.).....*AB*
 (for Canada).....*CD*
 (for Australia).....*EF*
 (for New Zealand).....*GH*
 (for South Africa).....*IJ*
 (for the Irish Free State).....*KL*
 (for India).....*MN*)

VII.—FOREIGN RELATIONS.

On the 20th October, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made to the Conference a comprehensive statement on foreign affairs, and on the invitation of the Conference His Majesty's High Commissioner in Egypt attended and made a more detailed statement on the position and prospects in that country.

These statements were followed on the 25th October by a general discussion on foreign affairs, in which the Prime Ministers of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, and Newfoundland, Mr. O'Higgins for the Irish Free State, Lord Winterton on behalf of the Indian Delegation, and Mr. Lapointe for Canada, took part. General appreciation was expressed of Sir Austen Chamberlain's review.

Opportunity was also taken to explain those aspects of foreign relations with which the Dominion Governments had been specially concerned during the last three years, in particular the various matters on which negotiations had been carried on between His Majesty's Government in Canada and the Government of the United States of America.

As in 1923, emphasis was laid on the vital importance to the British Empire of the maintenance of the route to the East and South Pacific via the Suez Canal, and attention was directed to the bearing of these interests on the conduct of foreign relations.

Satisfaction was expressed at the improvement in the relations of the European Powers since the Conference of 1923, and it was felt that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain were to be congratulated on their contribution towards the promotion of the peace of the world.

The discussion made it clear that the Governments of the British Empire remain firmly attached to a policy of peace and to support of the League of Nations as the great instrument of peace.

It was decided not to publish any part of the Foreign Secretary's statement or of the resulting discussion.

Subsequent sections of this Report give an account of particular questions affecting foreign affairs which were studied during the Conference by the representatives of the Governments particularly concerned. Certain other questions, which raised more general issues, were remitted to the Committee on Inter-Imperial Relations under the Chairmanship of Lord Balfour, viz. :—

- (a.) Compulsory arbitration in international disputes.
- (b.) Adherence of the United States of America to the Protocol establishing the Permanent Court of International Justice.
- (c.) The policy of Locarno.

The parts of the Report of Lord Balfour's Committee dealing with these three questions will be found above. As already indicated, that Report and the Resolution submitted by the Committee with regard to the policy of Locarno were unanimously approved by the Conference.

VIII.—COLONIES, PROTECTORATES, AND MANDATED TERRITORIES.

On the 21st October, the Secretary of State for the Colonies made a statement to the Conference in which he reviewed the developments in the Colonies, Protectorates, and Mandated Territories since 1923.

Mr. Amery opened by a description of the variety and size of the Colonial Empire ranging from small self-governing communities like the island of Malta to the vast possessions in Tropical Africa. He then emphasised its interest and economic importance to other parts of the Empire, pointing out that its total trade, which had expanded enormously in recent years, was now over £500,000,000 per annum. He laid stress on the importance for the future to the rest of the Empire of the adequate development of these great areas, over 2,000,000 square miles in extent, lying mainly in the tropics, and on the fact that production in the tropics was complementary to the industrial production of the temperate zones. Development had hitherto been retarded owing to lack of transport facilities and also to under-population. He made a comparison with the United States of America, pointing out that the British Empire included greater territory and more diversified resources.

After describing the openings for candidates from the Dominions in the services of the various Colonies, Mr. Amery reviewed briefly events in the different portions of the Colonial Empire during the last three years. He mentioned that the outstanding event for the West Indies had been the holding of a most successful conference in

London which had evolved a scheme for the establishment of a standing body to deal with their common affairs; while there had been a conference on Trade and Shipping with the Government of Canada at Ottawa in 1925 which had further strengthened and developed the relations established in 1920.

He referred to the great potential value of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad to the future of agriculture in the tropical Empire. In other spheres of research the needs of the whaling industry were being carefully examined through the work being carried out by R.R.S. "Discovery" in the Antarctic.

Passing to Tropical Africa, Mr. Amery described the extremely successful tour of the Prince of Wales in 1925, and referred to the spontaneous enthusiasm with which His Royal Highness was greeted wherever he went. He proceeded to lay stress on the importance of policy in regard to public health and native education. He referred to the visits of Mr. Ormsby-Gore to East Africa two years ago with a Parliamentary Commission, and to West Africa this year.

He pointed out the great expansion in trade in both East and West Africa, and alluded to the £10,000,000 which His Majesty's Government in Great Britain had decided to guarantee for increasing transport facilities in East Africa. He also mentioned the recent establishment of a Governors' Conference in East Africa and the successful completion in the past summer of the negotiations as to control of the Rhodesian railway system. He then referred to the great prosperity of Ceylon and Malaya, alluding to the importance of the rubber restriction scheme. Hong Kong, on the other hand, had been through a difficult period owing to the serious situation in China and the Canton boycott of shipping. After describing the great improvement in the political situation in Palestine and its steady development, Mr. Amery ended his review with a reference to the successful conclusion of the negotiations regarding the Mosul Frontier and to the undeveloped resources of the Kingdom of Iraq.

This review was followed by statements from the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa, regarding the position in New Guinea, Western Samoa, and South-West Africa, and by a statement from the Prime Minister of Canada regarding the Canada and West Indies Trade Agreement, 1925.

Mr. Bruce emphasised the great importance of New Guinea to Australia. He dwelt especially on the public health policy now being pursued there, on the need for a system of training for its administrative officers, and on its possibilities of economic development. Mr. Coates described, in particular, the economic progress made and also the development of self-government amongst the natives of Western Samoa. General Hertzog gave a short account of the progressive stages in the constitutional and administrative development of South-West Africa during the last few years; he also mentioned the recent negotiations between the Union and Portuguese Governments as to the Angola-South-West Africa Boundary.

All these statements were subsequently published.*

Discussion also took place as to various matters of common interest affecting Mandated Territories. These are dealt with in Section IX of this Report.

IX.—QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH THE WORK OF THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Questions of common interest in relation to Mandated Territories were referred to a special Committee which included representatives of Great Britain, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa. This Committee had under consideration two questions raised by the Permanent Mandates Commission in their report to the Council of the League upon which the Council had invited all the Mandatory Governments to express an opinion, namely, whether petitioners from Mandated Territories should be heard in person by the Commission, and whether the *questionnaire* proposed by the Commission should be adopted by the Council of the League as a basis for the annual reports on "B" and "C" Mandated Territories.

The Governments represented on the Committee found themselves in complete agreement on these matters, and, at the instance of the Committee, the Conference approved the terms of a Note which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, proposed to send to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations.

The Report of the Committee and the Note sent by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Secretary-General of the League have been published.†

X.—CONDOMINIUM IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

The further developments in the New Hebrides since the Imperial Conference of 1923 were examined by representatives of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain in consultation with the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand, and agreement reached on the policy to be followed.

XI.—BRITISH POLICY IN THE ANTARCTIC.

The question of Antarctic exploration was discussed between representatives of the Governments interested. There are certain areas in these regions to which a British title already exists by virtue of discovery. These areas include:—

- (i.) The outlying part of Coats Land, viz., the portion not comprised within the Falkland Islands Dependencies.
- (ii.) Enderby Land.

* See Appendix III in Cmd. 2769.

† See Appendix VI in Cmd. 2769.

- (iii.) Kemp Land.
- (iv.) Queen Mary Land.
- (v.) The area which lies to the west of Adélie Land and which on its discovery by the Australian Antarctic Expedition in 1912 was denominated Wilkes Land.
- (vi.) King George V Land.
- (vii.) Oates Land.

The representatives of the Governments concerned studied the information available concerning these areas with special reference to their possible utilisation for further developing exploration and scientific research in the Antarctic regions.

XII.—DEFENCE.

The Conference gave much consideration to the question of defence, and to the methods by which the defence arrangements of each part of the Empire could be most effectively co-ordinated.

The Prime Minister of Great Britain initiated the discussions on the 26th October by a review of the work and organisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence, in the course of which he emphasised the purely advisory and consultative character of this body. He also outlined the chief developments which had taken place since the last Conference, notably the creation of the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee and the decision to establish an Imperial Defence College.

After a reference to the progress already made and to the further steps to be taken in the development of the Naval Base at Singapore, Mr. Baldwin mentioned that the pursuance of this policy had been greatly facilitated by the contributions of the Federated Malay States, Hong Kong, and the Straits Settlements.

Mr. Baldwin was followed by the Senior Officer of the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee (Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty) in a survey of the general strategic situation, and by the Secretary of State for India in a summary of the special problems of Indian defence.

The discussions were renewed on the 15th November, when statements were made by the Prime Ministers of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, and Newfoundland, by Mr. Havenga for the Union of South Africa, by Mr. O'Higgins for the Irish Free State, and by the Maharaja of Burdwan for India.*

Meetings also took place at the Admiralty, the War Office, and the Air Ministry, at which the situation from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain was presented in greater detail, and other phases of common interest were considered at a meeting held at the Offices of the Committee of Imperial Defence.

Much interest attached to the opportunities afforded for observation of the various arms of the Service in operation, notably the Naval review off Portland, the Army mechanical display at Camberley, and the Air demonstrations at Croydon and Cardington.

* Extracts from the speeches made on 26th October and 15th November will be found in Appendix IV in Cmd. 2769.

Apart from their interest from the point of view of defence, these displays revealed technical developments in mechanical traction and in aviation which may prove of importance in their application for civilian purposes.

The information thus obtained and the opinions exchanged will, it is believed, prove of much practical value in aiding the several Governments of the Empire in the determination of their policies of defence, and are commended to their most careful consideration.

The Conclusions reached by the Imperial Conference on the subject of Defence may be summarised as follows :—

1. The Resolutions on Defence adopted at the last session of the Conference (see page 36) are re-affirmed.
2. The Imperial Conference regrets that it has not been possible to make greater progress with the international reduction and limitation of armaments referred to in these Resolutions. It is the common desire of the Governments represented at this Conference to do their utmost in pursuit of this object so far as this is consistent with the safety and integrity of all parts of the Empire and its communications.
3. The Conference recognises that, even after a large measure of reduction and limitation of armaments has been achieved, a considerable effort will be involved in order to maintain the minimum standard of naval strength contemplated in the Washington Treaty on Limitation of Armament, namely, equality with the naval strength of any foreign power. It has noted the statements set forth by the Admiralty as to the formidable expenditure required within coming years for the replacement of warships, as they become obsolete, by up-to-date ships.
4. Impressed with the vital importance of ensuring the security of the world-wide trade routes upon which the safety and welfare of all parts of the Empire depend, the representatives of Australia, New Zealand, and India note with special interest the steps already taken by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain to develop the Naval Base at Singapore, with the object of facilitating the free movement of the Fleets. In view of the heavy expenditure involved, they welcome the spirit of co-operation shown in the contributions made with the object of expediting this work.
5. The Conference observes that steady progress has been made in the direction of organising military formations in general on similar lines; in the adoption of similar patterns of weapons; and in the interchange of Officers between different parts of the Empire; it invites the Governments concerned to consider the possibility of extending these forms of co-operation and of promoting further consultation between the respective General Staffs on defence questions adjudged of common interest.
- 6.—(a.) The Conference takes note with satisfaction of the substantial progress that has been made since 1923 in building up the Air Forces and resources of the several parts of the Empire.
- (b.) Recognising that the fullest mobility is essential to the effective and economical employment of air power, the Conference

recommends, for the consideration of the several Governments, the adoption of the following principle :—

The necessity for creating and maintaining an adequate chain of air bases and refuelling stations.

(c.) Impressed with the desirability of still closer co-ordination in this as in all other spheres of common interest, and in particular with the advantages which should follow from a more general dissemination of the experience acquired in the use of this new arm under the widely varying conditions which obtain in different parts of the Empire, the Conference recommends for consideration by the Governments interested the adoption in principle of a system of mutual interchange of individual Officers for liaison and other duties, and of complete air units, so far as local requirements and resources permit.

7. The Conference recognises that the defence of India already throws upon the Government of India responsibilities of a specially onerous character, and takes note of their decision to create a Royal Indian Navy.

8. The Conference notes with satisfaction that considerable progress in the direction of closer co-operation in Defence matters has been effected by the reciprocal attachment of naval, military, and air Officers to the Staff Colleges and other technical establishments maintained in various parts of the Empire, and invites the attention of the Governments represented to the facilities afforded by the new Imperial Defence College in London for the education of Officers in the broadest aspects of strategy.

9. The Conference takes note of the developments in the organisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence since the session of 1923. It invites the attention of the Governments represented at the Conference to the following Resolutions adopted, with a view to consultation in questions of common defence, at a meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence held on the 30th May, 1911, in connection with the Imperial Conference of that year :—

“(1.) That one or more representatives appointed by the respective Governments of the Dominions should be invited to attend meetings of the Committee of Imperial Defence when questions of naval and military* defence affecting the Oversea Dominions are under consideration.

(2.) The proposal that a Defence Committee should be established in each Dominion is accepted in principle. The Constitution of these Defence Committees is a matter for each Dominion to decide.”

Note.—The Resolutions of the Imperial Conference of 1923 on Defence were as follows :—

- 1. The Conference affirms that it is necessary to provide for the adequate defence of the territories and trade of the several countries comprising the British Empire.

* The words “and air” would be required to bring the Resolution up to date.

2. In this connection the Conference expressly recognises that it is for the Parliaments of the several parts of the Empire, upon the recommendations of their respective Governments, to decide the nature and extent of any action which should be taken by them.
3. Subject to this provision, the Conference suggests the following as guiding principles:—

(a.) The primary responsibility of each portion of the Empire represented at the Conference for its own local defence.

(b.) Adequate provision for safeguarding the maritime communications of the several parts of the Empire and the routes and waterways along and through which their armed forces and trade pass.

(c.) The provision of Naval bases and facilities for repair and fuel so as to ensure the mobility of the fleets.

(d.) The desirability of the maintenance of a minimum standard of Naval Strength, namely, equality with the Naval Strength of any foreign power, in accordance with the provisions of the Washington Treaty on Limitation of Armament as approved by Great Britain, all the self-governing Dominions, and India.

(e.) The desirability of the development of the Air Forces in the several countries of the Empire upon such lines as will make it possible, by means of the adoption, as far as practicable, of a common system of organisation and training and the use of uniform manuals, patterns of arms, equipment and stores (with the exception of the type of aircraft), for each part of the Empire as it may determine to co-operate with other parts with the least possible delay and the greatest efficiency.

4. In the application of these principles to the several parts of the Empire concerned the Conference takes note of—

(a.) The deep interest of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and India, in the provision of a Naval Base at Singapore, as essential for ensuring the mobility necessary to provide for the security of the territories and trade of the Empire in Eastern Waters.

(b.) The necessity for the maintenance of safe passage along the great route to the East through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

(c.) The necessity for the maintenance by Great Britain of a Home Defence Air Force of sufficient strength to give adequate protection against air attack by the strongest air force within striking distance of her shores.

5. The Conference, while deeply concerned for the paramount importance of providing for the safety and integrity of all parts of the Empire, earnestly desires, so far as is consistent with this consideration, the further limitation of armaments, and trusts that no opportunity may be lost to promote this object.

XIII.—NATIONALITY QUESTIONS.

Certain questions connected with the Law of Nationality were referred to a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and the Conference, on the recommendation of this Committee, passed the following Resolutions:—

1. *Revised Draft Nationality Bill to give effect to the recommendations of the Imperial Conference, 1923.*

“The Imperial Conference recommends that the provisions contained in the draft of the Nationality Bill (as revised) for giving effect to the recommendations of the Imperial Conference, 1923, be approved, subject, however, to the inclusion of such further amendments as are recommended at the present Conference and to such consequential modifications as may be required.”

2. *Facilities for the acquisition of British Nationality by children of the third generation born abroad of British parents during the war, and for further time for the registration of the births of children of the second generation born abroad.*

"The Imperial Conference recommends the amendment of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914—

(1.) So as to provide facilities—by means of the registration of birth—for the acquisition of British nationality by children of the third generation born abroad of British parents during the period between the date of the commencement of the War (the 4th August, 1914) and the 4th August, 1922 (the date when the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1922, came into operation).

(2.) So as to make provision for further time for the registration, pursuant to section 1 (1) (b) (v) of the Act of 1914, of the births of children of the second generation born abroad of British parents."

3. *Amendment of Section 12 (1) of the Principal Act.*

"The Imperial Conference recommends that section 12 (1) of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914, be amended so as to remove certain doubts which have arisen in its interpretation."

4. *Registration at British Consulates.*

"The Imperial Conference recommends the amendment of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914, so as to provide that a British subject by naturalisation shall be under an obligation to register annually at a British Consulate while resident in a foreign country."

5. *Revocation of Certificates of Naturalisation.*

"The Imperial Conference recommends that the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914, be amended so as to provide power for revocation of certificates of naturalisation granted or deemed to be granted in the following cases:—

(1.) A widow of deceased British subject by naturalisation.

(2.) A person who has acquired British nationality by residence with a parent in the United Kingdom pursuant to section 10 (5) of the Naturalisation Act, 1870, or by inclusion of his name, during his minority, in a certificate of naturalisation granted to his father or mother pursuant to section 5 (1) of the Act of 1914.

(3.) A person who has, for a period of not less than two years, failed to comply with the new proposed statutory obligation to register at a British Consulate."

Nationality of Married Women.

The Committee also considered the question of the nationality of married women. On this matter some divergence of view was disclosed and the Committee were unable to arrive at a unanimous conclusion. Since, however, they attached great importance to the maintenance of uniformity throughout the various parts of the Empire in the law relating to British Nationality, they decided to recommend to the Conference that further consideration of the question should be postponed pending the Report of the Committee of Experts referred to in the Report of the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee—*vide* Section VI of this Report—which, it is proposed, should deal with various matters connected with the operation of Dominion legislation, and in view of the possibility of an attempt being made to regulate the problem of dual nationality and no nationality by international agreement. The Conference adopted this recommendation.

The Report of the Nationality Committee has been published.*

XIV.—IMPERIAL COMMUNICATIONS (OTHER THAN AIR COMMUNICATIONS).

Certain questions relating to Imperial Communications (other than Air Communications) were referred to a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.

The Committee considered the possibility of improving ocean communications between various parts of the Empire, and, at the instance of the Committee, the Conference adopted the following Resolution:—

“The Conference are impressed with the necessity of improving the speed of Ocean communications between various parts of the Empire, and especially between Great Britain, India, and Australia and between Great Britain and New Zealand. They are unable on the information now available to make any recommendation on the specific proposal that was placed before them for an improved service between Great Britain, India, and Australia. They nevertheless believe that an acceleration on this route as well as in the communications between all parts of the Empire, and especially between Great Britain and the more distant Dominions, can be brought about, and they suggest that the Governments concerned should further investigate the possibilities in this respect.”

The Committee also considered the experiments in Long-Distance Wireless Telephony which are being carried out from the Rugby Wireless Station. The Conference took note of the position.

The Committee received a deputation from the Empire Press Union on the subject of facilities for the dissemination of British news throughout the Empire.

A record of the proceedings at this meeting will be published later.†

* See Appendix VII in Cmd. 2769.

† See Appendix VIII in Cmd. 2769.

XV.—PACIFIC CABLE.

Outstanding questions connected with the management of the Pacific Cable undertaking were discussed between representatives of the partner Governments interested in the undertaking (Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand). General agreement was reached in principle on all points, and it was settled that the necessary legislation would be introduced as soon as possible to provide—

- (a.) For the future composition of the Pacific Cable Board, the method of appointment of the Chairman of the Board, and the remuneration of the Chairman and members of the Board.
- (b.) For the settlement of the amount to be set aside annually by the Board to the reserve fund.
- (c.) For the disposal of annual surpluses which may accrue in the future.

It was also agreed that a clearer definition should be made of the relations between the Board and the partner Governments. Full details are being published.*

XVI.—IMPERIAL AIR COMMUNICATIONS.

An interesting discussion on Imperial Air Communications took place at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference on the 28th October, when statements were made regarding the progress achieved in civil aviation in the various parts of the British Empire. The Conference was deeply impressed with the great possibilities offered by the development of Imperial air communications and their importance from the political as well as the economic point of view.

The Secretary of State for Air in an opening statement outlined the policy which was being pursued by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain for the development of civil aviation. The ultimate objective of this policy was to bring the most distant parts of the Empire within a fortnight's journey of London, and in the first instance he suggested that it would be advisable to concentrate on two main routes, namely, from England to Australia and South Africa respectively. The first links in these routes were being forged by the Cairo-Karachi and Khartoum-Kisumu services which were to come into operation in 1927. Sir Samuel Hoare suggested that these links might be extended by service flights to be undertaken by the Royal Air Force and the Australian and South African Air Forces in co-operation, whilst generally, having regard to financial limitations, the best prospect of progress appeared to lie in each of the countries of the Empire undertaking responsibility for developing the sections lying within its own territory, and so gradually building up (on what might be called a mosaic plan) a complete system of Imperial air routes. He also drew attention to the great potentialities of the airship as providing a safe, comfortable, and rapid means of non-stop transport over long distances, aeroplanes being ultimately more suitable for comparatively short-distance flights. Sir Samuel Hoare stated that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain would probably be ready to undertake

* See Appendix IX in Cmd. 2769.

airship demonstration flights to the Dominions and India in about two years' time, and enquired whether the latter would be prepared to co-operate by providing mooring masts and the organisation for procuring the essential meteorological information.*

The representatives of the oversea parts of the Empire expressed their readiness to give immediate and sympathetic consideration to these suggestions; and the matter was referred to a Special Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Samuel Hoare for examination in detail.

This Sub-Committee, after reviewing the present state of air communications in the various parts of the Empire and considering what concrete steps can be taken to further the development of Imperial air services in the immediate future, reported their conviction that the development of Imperial air communications, both by airship and by aeroplane, is of sufficient importance to merit the early and continuous attention of the Governments of the several parts of the Empire, and accordingly recommended that the Imperial Conference should place on record the following Resolutions:—

"The Imperial Conference, being impressed with the great benefits, both political and commercial, to be derived from the speeding up of Imperial communications by air—

(1.) Takes note with satisfaction—

- (a.) Of the prospective opening of a regular air service between Cairo and Karachi and an experimental service between Khartoum and Kisumu;
- (b.) Of the decisions of His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and in the Union of South Africa to carry out a series of experimental flights to connect so far as possible with this latter service; and
- (c.) Of the decision of His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia to arrange for flights by the Royal Australian Air Force from Australia towards Singapore to link up with similar flights of the Royal Air Force from Singapore towards Australia.

(2.) Recommends that the development of other air services should receive the early consideration of the Governments concerned; and that in this connection particular attention should be paid to the maintenance of existing and the construction of new aerodromes so far as local resources permit with a view to the ultimate creation of a complete system of Empire air routes.

(3.) In view of—

- (a.) The great potentialities of the airship; and
- (b.) The present lack of constructional and other facilities which must prove a serious obstacle to the early development of regular airship services—

* A Memorandum prepared for the Imperial Conference by the Secretary of State for Air, entitled "The Approach towards a System of Imperial Air Communications," is being published separately.

recommends that the Governments of the Dominions concerned and of India should examine the possibility of erecting nucleus mooring mast bases to be available for demonstration flights in 1928/29 by the two airships now under construction, and of instituting such preliminary meteorological investigations as may be necessary to facilitate these demonstration flights; and that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain should consider the erection of a second shed at the Royal Airship Works at Cardington.

(4.) Recommends that an Imperial Air Conference should be held in 1928 or 1929—the precise date to be determined later—at some suitable Imperial centre, to report progress and to consider what further action can be taken for the development of Imperial air communications; and takes note with appreciation of the invitation of the Dominion of Canada that this Conference should take place in Canada."

These Resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Imperial Conference at its Fifteenth Meeting on the 19th November.

The statements made at the opening discussion and the Report of the Sub-Committee have been published.*

XVII.—OVERSEA SETTLEMENT.

The subject of Oversea Settlement was examined by a Special Sub-Committee presided over by the Chairman of the Oversea Settlement Committee in London (Lord Clarendon). Their Report was considered and adopted by the Conference on the 19th November, when the Prime Ministers of the Dominions most closely concerned—Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, and New Zealand—expressed their appreciation of the advance which had been made in practical co-operation since the Conference of 1923, and emphasised the earnest desire of those Dominions to further the peopling of their countries with settlers from Great Britain up to the limit of their capacity. As was pointed out at the previous Conference, however, the rate at which the redistribution of population within the Empire can take place must be governed by the rate at which the Dominions can satisfactorily absorb new settlers; and it was generally recognised that a sound policy must be based upon scientific and carefully considered schemes designed to secure the settlement of suitable persons under conditions conducing both to their own well-being and to the prosperous development of the Dominion in which they are established.

The Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa pointed out that while South Africa was anxious to increase its European population, and had in the last few years taken further measures to encourage the settlement of white people on the land, the position

* See Appendix V in Cmd. 2769.

there was a special one owing to the large native population, and it was necessary that settlers coming to that country should have a fair amount of initial capital.

General Arrangements.

The Sub-Committee in their Report dealt in the first place with matters relating to the selection and recruiting of migrants, assisted passages, and arrangements for the reception and welfare of settlers in the Dominions; it was noted that the Canadian authorities had decided to establish in Great Britain a medical service to systematise and conduct free of charge the medical examination of prospective settlers, and that the Australian authorities also were carefully reviewing the whole position in regard to medical examination. A system under which permanent matrons will be appointed on board ship for parties of single and unaccompanied women proceeding to Australia, at the joint expense of His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and the Commonwealth of Australia, will be brought into operation at an early date. Permanent conductresses are already employed on board vessels carrying unaccompanied women to Canada and New Zealand.

The ideal form of migration was considered to be the settlement of families overseas. The 3,000 families scheme has been a conspicuous success in Canada, and it is proposed to take steps to promote the settlement of families on undeveloped Crown lands in that Dominion, and upon unoccupied farm lands in private ownership. In Australia it is anticipated that the recent appointment of a Development and Migration Commission will result in a considerable acceleration of settlement and development under the Agreement of 1925 between His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and the Commonwealth, in which it is proposed to make certain modifications. A new agreement is contemplated with a view to encouraging the provision of rural housing in Australia. With a view to providing inducements to settlers to remain on the land overseas the Sub-Committee recommended that facilities should be provided for assisting suitable settlers from Great Britain to acquire farms of their own. A definite scheme to supplement the existing arrangements in New Zealand was outlined.

Training.

The Sub-Committee were agreed as to the importance of continuing and, if possible, extending the experimental centres established in Great Britain to give training for land work as a means of preparation for farm life. The Dominion representatives were unable to see their way at present to recommend financial contributions towards the cost of training schemes in Great Britain, but the representatives of Canada and Australia both expressed their willingness to consider the question of providing instructors, implements, and equipment. The general opinion of the Dominion representatives was that their needs would be met by a short intensive course of training adjusted to meet the requirements of

the individual, the object being to eliminate unsuitable types and to provide those undergoing the course with certain essential qualifications.

The Australian representatives agreed to recommend contributions towards the cost of a scheme for training women in Great Britain with a view to domestic employment in Australia.

Social Insurance.

The Sub-Committee agreed as to the advantages of co-ordination throughout the Empire in social insurance schemes, such as health insurance, and widows' and orphans' and old age pensions, and they suggested that future legislation on this subject should be drafted in such a manner as to facilitate reciprocity. As a first step towards this end, it was suggested that an endeavour should be made, if necessary with the aid of financial adjustments between the Governments concerned, to ameliorate the position of migrants in regard to old age pensions.

Interchange of Teachers.

It was also suggested that reciprocal arrangements as to pensions should be made in order to facilitate the interchange of teachers between Great Britain and the Dominions.

On the recommendation of the Sub-Committee the following Resolution was adopted by the Conference:—

“The Conference approves the Report of the Oversea Settlement Sub-Committee. The Conference is of opinion that the problem of oversea settlement, which is that of a redistribution of the white population of the Empire in the best interests of the whole British Commonwealth, is one of paramount importance, especially as between Great Britain on the one hand and Canada, Australia, and New Zealand on the other. The Conference notes with satisfaction that the desired redistribution of population is being accelerated by the policy which has been consistently pursued since its acceptance by the Resolution of the Conference of Prime Ministers in 1921.*

* This Resolution was as follows:—

“The Conference having satisfied itself that the proposals embodied in the Report of the Conference on State-Aided Empire Settlement are sound in principle, and that the several Dominions are prepared, subject to Parliamentary sanction and to the necessary financial arrangements being made, to co-operate effectively with the United Kingdom in the development of schemes based on these proposals, but adapted to the particular circumstances and conditions of each Dominion, approves the aforesaid Report.

The South African representatives wish to make it clear that the limited field for white labour in South Africa will preclude co-operation by the Union Government on the lines contemplated by the other Dominions.

2. The Conference expresses the hope that the Government of the United Kingdom will, at the earliest possible moment, secure the

It endorses the view expressed at that Conference that the policy should be a permanent one. It recognises that it would be impracticable, owing to financial, economic, and political considerations, to promote mass movements of population, but it is satisfied that, by continuous adherence to the present policy, it should be possible steadily to increase the flow of population to those parts of the British Commonwealth where it is most needed for development and general security, and where it will find the greatest opportunities."

The Report of the Sub-Committee has been published.*

XVIII.—WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

A Special Sub-Committee was appointed, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, to consider the present position in regard to the Resolutions of the Imperial Economic Conference of 1923 on the subject of Workmen's Compensation,† and also

necessary powers to enable it to carry out its part in any schemes of co-operation which may subsequently be agreed on, preferably in the form of an Act which will make it clear that the policy of co-operation now adopted is intended to be permanent.

3. The Conference recommends to the Governments of the several Dominions that they should consider how far their existing legislation on the subject of land settlement, soldier settlement, and immigration may require any modification or expansion in order to secure effective co-operation, and should work out, for discussion with the Government of the United Kingdom, such proposals as may appear to them most practicable and best suited to their interests and circumstances."

* See Appendix X in Cmd. 2769.

† These Resolutions were as follows:—

RESOLUTION I.

Non-resident Workmen.

"That this Imperial Economic Conference, taking note of the existing restrictions in the Workmen's Compensation laws of certain parts of the British Empire on the payment of benefits to workmen and their dependants on the ground of non-residence in the State in which the accident happened, and having regard to the tendency of such restrictions to discourage movement within the Empire, is of opinion that no British subject who is permanently incapacitated, and no dependant of a British subject who has been killed, by accident due to his employment in any part of the Empire should be excluded from any benefit to which he would otherwise be entitled under the Workmen's Compensation law of that part of the Empire on the ground of his removal to or residence in another part of the Empire."

RESOLUTION II.

Seamen.

"That this Imperial Economic Conference, having had its attention drawn to cases where British sailors injured by accident while serving on ships registered in some part of the Empire have had no claim to compensation owing to the law of that part of the Empire being restricted, in its application to seamen, to accidents occurring within territorial

the question of reciprocal arrangements between the different parts of the British Empire for the administration of money awarded as compensation.

Non-resident Workmen.

The Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that with certain minor exceptions the laws of the various parts of the Empire now conform generally to the principle of Resolution I of the 1923 Conference, namely, that no British subject who is permanently incapacitated, and no dependant of a British subject who has been killed, by accident due to his employment in any part of the Empire should be excluded from any benefit to which he would otherwise be entitled under the workmen's compensation law in force there, on the ground of removal to, or residence in, another part of the Empire.

The Conference took note of the position.

Seamen.

Resolution II of the 1923 Conference related to compensation in respect of accidents to British sailors occurring outside the territorial waters of the part of the Empire in which their ship is registered. The Sub-Committee found that such compensation was provided for in the laws of most of the Dominions and India as well as of Great Britain, but called attention to certain exceptions.

Aliens.

The position in regard to the treatment of aliens was reconsidered in the light of the International Draft Convention and Recommendation adopted by the International Labour Conference at Geneva in

waters or other limited area, is of opinion that the Government of any such part of the Empire should ensure that the benefits of its compensation law will extend to all accidents to seamen serving on ships registered within such part of the Empire wherever the ship may be when the accident takes place. And furthermore the Conference invites the Government of any British Colony or Protectorate where there is a register of shipping, but where legislation giving compensation rights to seamen does not at present exist, to consider the adoption of such legislation."

RESOLUTION III.

Aliens.

"That this Imperial Economic Conference, taking note of the disabilities imposed under the Workmen's Compensation laws of certain foreign countries on British subjects residing in those countries and their dependants, invites each Government of the Empire, regard being had to its own particular conditions, to consider the possibility of adopting in workmen's compensation legislation the principle of reciprocity, that is, that the benefits of such legislation should be accorded to subjects of foreign countries upon the condition that, and to the extent to which, such foreign countries accord reciprocal treatment to British subjects."

The Conference notes in adopting the foregoing Resolutions that, in certain of the Dominions, Workmen's Compensation falls wholly or partially within Provincial or State jurisdiction and is in those cases and to that extent outside the control of the Dominion Government.

1925.* The conclusion was reached that the adoption by all parts of the Empire of a common policy based on this Draft Convention would conduce to the removal of disabilities still imposed under the workmen's compensation laws of certain foreign countries on British subjects residing in those countries and on their dependants.

The Conference accordingly adopted the following Resolution on this subject :—

“ The Conference, taking note of Resolution III of the Imperial Economic Conference, 1923, on the subject of workmen's compensation and the Draft Convention on Equality of Treatment for National and Foreign Workers as regards Workmen's Compensation for Accidents which was adopted by the International Labour Conference at Geneva in 1925, recommends that the Governments of the several parts of the Empire should consider the desirability of giving effect, in so far as they have not already done so, to the principle of the Draft Convention in their workmen's compensation legislation.”

Administration of Compensation Monies.

As regards the administration of compensation monies, it appeared that the Courts of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and generally speaking of the other parts of the Empire, have at present no authority to transfer or receive for administration compensation money awarded in any part of the Empire other than their own. The Conference adopted the following Resolution :—

“ The Conference, taking note of the difficulties arising under the law relating to workmen's compensation in the administration of money awarded in one part of the Empire to beneficiaries resident or becoming resident in another part of the Empire, is of opinion that arrangements should be made between the different parts of the Empire whereby any sum awarded to such beneficiaries may, at the request of the authority by which the award is made, be transferred to and administered by the competent authority in that part of the Empire in which such beneficiaries reside. It accordingly invites the several Governments of the Empire to take such steps by way of legislation or otherwise as each may consider necessary and appropriate for the purpose of promoting such arrangements.”

The Report of the Sub-Committee has been published.†

XIX.—RESEARCH.

The subject of Research was considered by a Special Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of Lord Balfour. The Report of this Sub-Committee, which was prefaced by a special introduction by Lord Balfour, was adopted by the Imperial Conference on the 19th November and has been published.‡

* Cmd. 2536, pp. 17-20.

† See Appendix XI in Cmd. 2769.

‡ See Appendix XII in Cmd. 2769.

The Sub-Committee were deeply impressed with the value of consultation and co-operation between all parts of the Empire in regard to research matters, and they gave careful consideration to the methods by which such co-operation can best be extended.

General Organisation.

As regards the general organisation of research, dealt with in Part I. of the Sub-Committee's Report, it was suggested that at special expert conferences which may be called from time to time, such as those already arranged for Forestry and Agriculture, the question should be considered whether there is need for establishing further scientific bureaux on the lines of the Imperial Bureaux of Entomology and Mycology; and also organisations based not on a particular science, as are the existing Bureaux, but on a particular practical art. Organisations of the latter kind would communicate scientific and technical information to those concerned anywhere throughout the Empire with the particular art concerned—agriculture, forestry, medicine, horticulture, mining or manufacturing industry. It was further pointed out that organisations of either kind might be situated in whatever part of the Empire was found to be most appropriate. Attention was also called to the desirability that official organisations in the Empire engaged in similar branches of scientific research should freely and directly inter-communicate on all topics of common interest, and it was suggested that each part of the Empire should, as and when possible, nominate a representative to take part in the quarterly Standing Conference of the Departments concerned with research in Great Britain.

The following Resolution, proposed by the Sub-Committee, was adopted by the Conference:—

“ The Conference, impressed by the need of—

- (a.) An active prosecution of research in all fields of applied science;
- (b.) The fullest practicable co-operation between the organisations respectively responsible for agricultural, fisheries, forestry, medical, and industrial research;
- (c.) The quick and orderly exchange of the results of research between the various Governments and research establishments of the Empire;
- (d.) The fullest possible discussion of problems of common interest;

commends Part I. of the Report of the Research Special Sub-Committee and the suggestions therein contained to the favourable consideration of the respective Governments.”

Man Power.

The Sub-Committee next considered the question of man power. They drew attention to the serious shortage of recruits for most

branches of scientific services supported by Governments within the Empire, and urged that the basic remedy lies in the adoption of a settled policy in regard to the application of research to development in the various parts of the Empire. In this way continuity of work would be ensured and confidence established, educational institutions would feel free to encourage students to take up appropriate lines of training, and parents would be more ready to incur the necessary expense. Far from financial stringency rendering such a policy unwise, the poorer a country the greater its need to employ its scientific resources to the fullest extent. At the same time, the conditions offered by Government services must be such as to attract the best men and offer them good avenues for promotion either in the service or elsewhere, and status and recognition must be considered no less than material conditions. Nevertheless, while Government scientific services must rely for recruits on their own intrinsic attractions, scholarships or probationerships offer a useful means of meeting the current shortage, and will possibly always be necessary in the case of a few services where highly specialised training is required and few openings available. The importance of publicity was emphasised, and the issue was suggested of a comprehensive official publication containing full information as to the appointments available in all Government services and the qualifications required.

On this branch of the subject the Sub-Committee recommended and the Conference adopted the following Resolution:—

“The Conference recognises that the progress of scientific research and its effective application to the development of the Empire depend ultimately on an adequate supply of well-trained scientific men; and that the utmost care is needed in devising suitable conditions for the selection, training, and employment of scientific staffs appointed or aided by Government. Accordingly the Conference commends Part II of the Report of the Research Special Sub-Committee and the suggestions therein contained to the favourable consideration of the respective Governments.”

Imperial Agricultural Research Conference.

The proposal for an Imperial Agricultural Research Conference in London in 1927 was, at the instance of the Sub-Committee, endorsed by the Imperial Conference in the following terms:—

“The Conference notes with approval the proposal to hold a conference in London in 1927 representative of the organisations of the Empire concerned in agricultural research and its administration, for the purpose of discussing such questions as the extension of co-operation between the organisations; the promotion of joint programmes of research; the utilisation of the results obtained; and the training, supply, and interchange of scientific workers.

The Conference urges the respective Governments to give the fullest possible support to the proposed Imperial Agricultural Research Conference.”

In accordance with the recommendations of the Sub-Committee, Resolutions were also adopted relating to certain particular bodies.—

Imperial Bureau of Entomology and Mycology.

- (a.) "The Conference records its appreciation of the valuable work of the Imperial Bureau of Entomology and Mycology, and notes with pleasure that the Empire Marketing Board has made a grant to the Imperial Bureau of Entomology for the establishment of a laboratory for the breeding of beneficial parasites."

Empire Cotton Growing Corporation.

- (b.) "The Conference notes with pleasure the success attending the activities of the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation and commends to the favourable notice of the respective Governments the steps which the Corporation is taking to co-operate with the administrative and agricultural Departments concerned in the promotion of cotton-growing within the Empire."

Empire Marketing Board.

- (c.) "The Conference notes with satisfaction the attention given by the Empire Marketing Board, in addition to its other activities, to the encouragement of scientific research into the problems of Empire agriculture; and approves the general principle adopted by the Board, wherever possible, of making financial grants for research conditional on proportionate contributions from other sources.

"The Conference, in particular, expresses its cordial approval of the project envisaged by the Board of fostering a chain of research stations situated in appropriate centres in tropical and sub-tropical parts of the Empire, and commends this project to the sympathetic consideration of Governments, institutions, and private benefactors throughout the Empire."

Imperial Institute.

- (d.) "The Conference approves the steps taken to carry out the recommendations* of the Imperial Economic Conference of 1923 for the reorganisation of the Imperial Institute, and expresses its satisfaction at the progress which has been made since the reorganisation."

XX.—FORESTRY.

Another Sub-Committee of the Conference was set up, presided over by the Chairman of the Forestry Commission in London (Lord Lovat), to report upon Empire Forestry questions. The Sub-Committee

* See Resolutions on pp. 13-14 of Cmd. 1990 and pp. 517-519 of Cmd. 2009.

pointed out that the available world supplies of the principal timbers of commerce, and especially of softwoods, which constitute 80 per cent. of the wood used for industrial purposes, are rapidly approaching exhaustion. For this reason, as well as on internal social and economic grounds, it is of the utmost importance that the various countries of the Empire should take effective measures for maintaining, and where possible extending, their forest areas under a system of management based on sustained production of timber. The importance that afforestation schemes may have in relation to Empire settlement should also not be overlooked.

The holding of Empire Forestry Conferences has become an established practice, and the Sub-Committee recommended that approval should be given to the preliminary arrangements for the third such Conference to be held in Australia and New Zealand in 1928. At this meeting are to be considered, in addition to matters concerning forest policy, timber supply and consumption, and forestry technique, the question of further research in the Empire in regard to forest products, and also that of establishing an Imperial Forestry Bureau to act as a clearing house for information of all kinds.

The Sub-Committee expressed appreciation of the valuable work already done by the Empire Forestry Association, and by the Imperial Forestry Institute which was established at Oxford in 1924 to undertake the higher training of forest officers.

On the recommendation of the Sub-Committee the Conference adopted the following Resolution :—

“The Conference, appreciating the importance of forestry to the Empire as a whole and to its constituent parts,

- (a.) Takes favourable note of recent developments of effective organisation within the Empire as exemplified by the Standing Committee on Empire Forestry, the Imperial Forestry Institute, and the Empire Forestry Association, and draws special attention to the need for co-operation in all lines of forest research ;
- (b.) Welcomes the invitation of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to hold the third Empire Forestry Conference in those Dominions in 1928, and recommends to the Governments of the various parts of the Empire active preparation for and participation in that Conference ; and, further, notes with appreciation the invitation by the Government of the Union of South Africa for the Empire Forestry Conference of 1933 to be held in that Dominion ;
- (c.) Refers the important question of constituting an Empire Forestry Bureau to the Empire Forestry Conference of 1928.”

The Report of the Sub-Committee has been published.*

* See Appendix XIII in Cmd. 2769.

XXI.—OTHER ECONOMIC QUESTIONS.

GENERAL DISCUSSION.

The Agenda on the economic side was briefly reviewed by the Conference as a whole on the 21st and 22nd October, when an interesting and stimulating discussion took place, the greater part of which was published immediately afterwards.* From this discussion it became at once apparent that there was a strong desire on the part of all the Governments represented to concert methods for encouraging the further development of Empire trade. It was realised that this development, with which the economic progress of the various parts of the Empire is closely bound up, must depend mainly upon the individual or combined activities of those concerned in the different countries, whether as manufacturers, merchants, or consumers. Great emphasis was laid by one speaker after another on this aspect of the matter. It was felt, however, that, even in the restricted sphere of Government activity, much more could be done.

Stress was laid in this connection upon the value of scientific and economic research and its application, and of the collection and dissemination of information useful to producers, traders, and consumers, in increasing efficiency in production and distribution, and appreciation was expressed of the advantages to be derived from inter-Imperial co-operation in these directions. It was generally agreed that the Imperial Economic Committee, on which all the Governments of the Empire were represented, established as a result of the Economic Conference of 1923, had done admirable work in the reports so far compiled, and that the Board established by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain to administer the Empire Marketing Grant voted by the Parliament at Westminster provided a most valuable means of assisting in bringing into practical operation the improvements which as the result of this Committee's investigations, or from further enquiries, were shown to be desirable.

The Prime Minister of Canada intimated that he and his colleagues were contemplating further steps with a view to improving the export trade of Canada to Great Britain. The Prime Minister of Newfoundland announced that it was the intention of the Newfoundland Government, following the example of the larger Dominions, favourably to consider the propriety and feasibility of introducing Empire preference in the forthcoming revision of the Customs tariff. As a practical example of co-operation, the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand drew attention to the possibility of largely increasing—with the aid of the Customs preferences—the sales of British motor cars within the Empire if suitable efforts were made, and they (as well as other representatives at the Conference) expressed their readiness to meet the leading motor-car manufacturers of Great Britain in order to emphasise to them the opportunities and requirements of the Empire market in this important and expanding trade. Meetings were arranged accordingly.

* See Appendix II in Cmd. 2769.

(a.) *Exhibition within the Empire of Empire Films.*

A further matter to which attention was given during this preliminary discussion was the encouragement of the production and exhibition of Empire films. There was agreement as to the great importance of dealing with this matter, having regard to the influence exerted by the cinema, considered from the general cultural and social point of view as well as with reference to the development of trade, and to its potential value as a means of giving the people of the various parts of the Empire a more vivid realisation of one another's lives and surroundings. The question was referred for consideration in detail with other economic questions to a General Economic Sub-Committee.*

The Sub-Committee pointed out† that in all parts of the Empire only a small proportion of the films exhibited are of Empire production; few Empire films are produced, and the arrangements for the distribution of these are far from adequate. State action could contribute to the solution of the problem, but could not be effective unless by private enterprise a substantial output of films of real and competitive exhibition value was attained, and satisfactory distributing arrangements were developed throughout the Empire. Various suggested methods were considered by means of which the several Governments might assist in securing a larger production within the Empire of films of high entertainment value and films of sound educational merit, and their exhibition throughout the Empire and the rest of the world on an increasing scale. It was recognised that circumstances vary in different parts of the Empire, but the opinion was expressed that any action which it might be found possible to take in Great Britain, the largest producer and largest market for films in the Empire, would undoubtedly be of the greatest assistance to the other parts of the Empire in dealing with the problem.

On the recommendation of the Sub-Committee the Conference adopted the following Resolution:—

"The Imperial Conference, recognising that it is of the greatest importance that a larger and increasing proportion of the films exhibited throughout the Empire should be of Empire production, commends the matter and the remedial measures proposed to the consideration of the Governments of the various parts of the Empire with a view to such early and effective action to deal with the serious situation now existing as they may severally find possible."

(b.) *Industrial Standardisation.*

Attention was also drawn, during the general discussion by the Conference of the economic side of the Agenda, to the advantages that might accrue to Empire trade from an extension in regard to industrial products of standardisation, using that term not only in its strict sense but also in the wider sense of what is commonly known

* NOTE.—All the reports of the General Economic Sub-Committee referred to in the following paragraphs have been published, and are reprinted as Appendix XIV in Cmd. 2769.

† Thirteenth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

as "simplification", that is, the elimination of unnecessary varieties of patterns and types of articles. It was pointed out that there was an extensive field over which, provided the standards were drawn up by agreement between manufacturers and users, in such a form as to meet the requirements of the buyer, standardisation was in the interests of all parties concerned.

As the result of detailed examination of the matter it appeared that great saving, to the advantage both of manufacturers and consumers, had already been effected in various Empire countries from the standardising of a number of products, and that the time was ripe for a further advance. Attention was also called to the benefits that might accrue from establishing common standards for all parts of the Empire, where this is found feasible after a study of local needs. While it would be inexpedient that there should be anything in the nature of the determination by Governmental authority of industrial standards (except for a limited purpose where Government departments are users of the goods), the Governments concerned might with advantage take further steps to stimulate the movement in the various parts of the Empire, and to co-operate both in the exchange of information and in encouraging the establishment of common standards. In accordance with the recommendation in the Sub-Committee's Report,* the following Resolution was adopted by the Conference:—

"The Imperial Conference, recognising the advantages of standardisation in its widest sense both to producers and to consumers, and appreciating that when it is practicable to adopt standards common to the Empire these advantages are augmented and great benefit results to trade within the Empire and Empire trade generally, recommends to the favourable consideration of the several Governments of the Empire that they should take steps to promote the further development of standardisation, should arrange for the exchange of information with the other parts of the Empire, and, when common standards are possible and mutually advantageous, should co-operate with the other parts of the Empire in regard thereto."

(c.) *Imperial Shipping Committee and Imperial Economic Committee.*

After further consideration had been given to the work performed by the Imperial Shipping Committee and the Imperial Economic Committee, a Resolution of thanks was adopted by the Conference in the following terms:—

"The Imperial Conference desires to convey to the Chairman and members of the Imperial Shipping Committee and the Imperial Economic Committee an expression of its appreciation of the valuable work which has been done by those Committees."

It was recommended that the Imperial Shipping Committee should be continued on its present basis,† as indicated in the following Resolution of the Conference:—

"The Imperial Conference is of opinion that the work of the Imperial Shipping Committee is of importance to the Empire and

* Fourth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

† Tenth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

that it is desirable to maintain the Committee on its present basis, deriving authority from, and being responsible to, the Governments represented in the Imperial Conference."

At the same time the views of the Conference as to the future of the Imperial Economic Committee were expressed as follows:—

"The Imperial Conference is of opinion that the Imperial Economic Committee should continue on its present *ad hoc* basis with the following general reference:—

- (1) to complete the series of investigations into the marketing of Empire foodstuffs in Great Britain, and while this work is proceeding
- (2) to put forward for the consideration of the various Governments concerned (a) a list of raw materials for possible further marketing enquiries, and (b) suggestions for the preparation and circulation of brief preliminary surveys, as suggested by the General Economic Sub-Committee of the Conference,* of any branch of Empire trade and marketing, such preliminary surveys, if the Governments concerned so desire, to be followed up by further enquiries."

(d.) *Maritime Conventions.*

Unification of Rules relating to Bills of Lading.

The Imperial Economic Conference of 1923 recommended the adoption of the Rules relating to Bills of Lading which had been drawn up by an International Conference at Brussels in October, 1922. These Rules were embodied in the Bills of Lading Convention of October, 1923. It was reported† by the General Economic Sub-Committee that effect had been given to this Convention in many parts of the Empire, and that the passing of the necessary legislation was under consideration in most of the other parts. It was agreed that international uniformity, which appeared to be in a fair way to achievement, would greatly facilitate overseas trade by removing an element of doubt from the minds of shippers and shipowners concerning their liability under a contract of carriage, and that the adoption of the Convention in all parts of the Empire, in addition to being of advantage to Empire trade, would assist in securing such international uniformity. At the instance of the Sub-Committee the Conference passed the following Resolution:—

"The Imperial Conference, having considered the steps taken to bring into force the Rules relating to Bills of Lading which were embodied in the International Bills of Lading Convention signed at Brussels in October, 1923, and were recommended by the Imperial Economic Conference of 1923 for adoption by the Governments and Parliaments of the Empire, notes with satisfaction that there is good prospect of the general adoption of

* Fourteenth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

† Sixth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

these Rules throughout the Empire, and also welcomes the progress which has been made towards the achievement of international uniformity upon the basis of these Rules."

Conventions relating to Limitation of Shipowners' Liability and to Maritime Mortgages and Liens.

The object of the Limitation of Shipowners' Liability Convention, adopted at Brussels in 1922 and 1923, is to secure international uniformity in this important branch of maritime law so that all parties interested in a ship, her cargo and passengers, may have reasonable assurance as to the extent of their rights and liabilities no matter where the ship may be. It was considered* that the Convention represented a fair compromise between the law in operation in the various parts of the Empire and the law of the principal continental countries (with which the law of the United States of America largely corresponds), and was likely to secure a wide measure of international acceptance.

The laws in different countries with regard to maritime mortgages and liens vary widely, and this lack of uniformity often has serious consequences for those who lend money on the security of ships or who have claims against ships on account of services rendered or damage done. An International Convention aiming at the unification of the law on this subject was adopted at Brussels in April, 1926, and the General Sub-Committee were of opinion that the uniformity which would result from its wide adoption would be of great advantage to all concerned.

In the light of the Sub-Committee's Report the following Resolution was adopted by the Conference concerning these two Conventions:—

"The Imperial Conference notes with satisfaction the progress which has been made towards the unification of maritime law in regard to the limitation of shipowners' liability and to maritime mortgages and liens by the preparation at Brussels of draft International Conventions on these subjects, and, having regard particularly to the advantages to be derived from uniformity, commends these Conventions to the consideration of the Governments of the various parts of the Empire."

Convention relating to Immunity of State-owned Vessels.

The Imperial Economic Conference of 1923 approved a proposal for the conclusion of an International Convention which, subject to such limitations or safeguards as were necessary from the point of view of defence, should secure to claimants against State-owned or State-operated vessels the hearing of their claims before Courts of Law as a matter of right.† It was stated in a further Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee that an amended draft Convention

* Seventh Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

† Eighth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

‡ See Resolution on p. 16 of Cmd. 1990 which quotes the draft convention on immunity of State-owned ships drawn up in 1923.

had been drawn up at Brussels in April, 1926, which would in general give effect on suitable lines to this policy, although certain points were outstanding on which the draft did not appear to be satisfactory from the standpoint of defence. In accordance with the suggestion of the Sub-Committee the Conference adopted the following Resolution:—

“The Imperial Conference notes with satisfaction the steps taken to give effect to the policy approved at the Imperial Economic Conference in 1923 with regard to the immunity of State-owned ships, and, subject to a satisfactory settlement of the points still outstanding, commends the draft International Convention drawn up at the Conference at Brussels in April, 1926, to the consideration of the Governments of the various parts of the Empire.”

(e.) *Oil Pollution of Navigable Waters.*

The inconvenience and loss due to the pollution by oil of coastal waters and fishing grounds are well known. Steps have been taken in several parts of the Empire and in a number of foreign countries to prohibit the discharge of oil in territorial waters or in harbour waters. It is generally recognised, however, that the nuisance cannot be effectively abated unless the discharge of oil or oily mixtures within certain limits outside territorial waters can be prevented, and with this object in view an International Conference held at Washington in June, 1926, recommended* that areas should be prescribed on the coasts of maritime countries and on recognised fishing grounds within which oil or oily mixtures should not be discharged, and that each Government should require vessels flying its flag to respect all such areas.

The Conference, on the recommendation of the General Economic Sub-Committee,† adopted the following Resolution:—

“The Imperial Conference welcomes the efforts that are being made to reach international agreement upon measures for abolishing the evils resulting from the discharge of oil in navigable waters, and recommends the principles of the draft Convention for this purpose recently prepared at Washington to the consideration of the Governments of the Empire.”

(f.) *Statistical Questions.*

On the subject of *Wool Statistics*,‡ the Conference adopted the following Resolution:—

“The Imperial Conference, impressed by the need for more complete, more uniform, and more prompt statistics regarding the production, stocks, and consumption of wool throughout the world, recommends that such steps as are found to be most suitable should be taken to secure the co-operation of foreign

* Cmd. 2702.

† Fifth Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

‡ First Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

countries in this matter, and, further, that the Governments of the Empire represented at this Conference should consider the adoption of such measures as are necessary and feasible to secure the provision and publication of such statistics, provided that foreign countries materially concerned, either as producers or consumers, are prepared to take similar action."

Proposals which had been made from several quarters for the collection and publication of *Statistics of Foodstuffs in Cold Storage* were considered and the conclusion was reached by the General Economic Sub-Committee* that international returns relating to such commodities would be most valuable. The following Resolution on the subject was adopted:—

"The Imperial Conference, impressed by the need for international statistics of the quantities of foodstuffs held in cold storage, recommends that suitable steps should be taken to obtain the co-operation of foreign countries in securing the compilation and prompt publication of such international statistics."

Attention was drawn† to the Resolution of the Imperial Economic Conference of 1923‡ which had as its object to render the *Statistics of Trade, Production, &c., of the different parts of the Empire*, published by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, as valuable as possible with reference to the development of inter-Imperial trade. It had now been suggested that an effective method of approaching this end would be gradually to modify and expand future issues of the existing Abstract for the British Oversea Dominions and Protectorates prepared by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, for which purpose the Board of Trade in London would keep in touch with the several Government authorities concerned. It was considered that after one or two further issues of the Abstract it might be found desirable to hold a meeting of statisticians from the various parts of the Empire to review the progress made and consider the lines of further advance. The Conference endorsed the views of the General Economic Sub-Committee on the subject.

(g.) *Taxation Questions.*

The Conference adopted Reports§ of the General Economic Sub-Committee on certain matters relating to taxation. A review of the

* Second Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

† Third Report of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

‡ This Resolution was as follows:—

"This Imperial Economic Conference, recognising the importance of rendering the trade statistics published by the Government of the United Kingdom as valuable as possible with reference to the development of inter-Imperial trade, recommends that the United Kingdom Board of Trade, after reviewing the statistics in question from this point of view, should draw up a detailed scheme and submit it to the Governments of the several parts of the Empire for their consideration."

§ Ninth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Reports of the General Economic Sub-Committee.

steps which had been taken in the various parts of the Empire to give effect to the Resolution of the Imperial Economic Conference of 1923* on the subject of the *immunity of State enterprises from taxation* showed that there was a measure of agreement within the Empire sufficient to warrant the opening of negotiations with the Governments of foreign countries with a view to the conclusion of reciprocal agreements for the mutual taxation of Government trading enterprises.

With regard to *taxation of non-resident traders*, it was pointed out that, when a manufacturer or producer resident in one part of the Empire sells his goods through an agent or branch in another part, he is subject to taxation in both countries, though his burden is eased by the arrangements which have already been made between many parts of the Empire for relief in respect of double taxation. There was general though not complete agreement that the charge to income tax in the country of sale might with advantage be restricted to the "merchandising" profit which arises from activities exercised in that country, excluding the "manufacturing" or "producing" profit. The representative of India, however, was unable to accept this principle and the representatives of Canada and of the Commonwealth of Australia were not in a position to speak on behalf of, or to bind, Provincial or State Governments.

The question was also considered from the point of view of inter-Imperial trade of the *valuation for customs duty purposes*—in those parts of the Empire in which duty is based on the domestic value of the goods in the country of export—of goods in respect of which a drawback of duty has been given in the country of export. It was understood that certain points will be examined, especially with regard to special or dumping duties, by the responsible authorities in the light of the discussion which took place in the General Economic Sub-Committee.

XXII.—ADDRESS TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING, EMPEROR OF INDIA.

The following Address to His Majesty was moved by the Prime Minister of Great Britain at the concluding Meeting of the Conference, and was unanimously adopted.† Mr. Baldwin, as Chairman of the Conference, was asked to submit the Address to His Majesty :—

"To His Majesty the King, Emperor of India,

"We, the Prime Ministers and Representatives of the Governments of the British Empire who have taken counsel together during the last few weeks, desire before we separate to express once again our fidelity and devotion to Your Majesty and Her Majesty the Queen.

* This Resolution is set out in full on p. 15 of Cmd. 1990.

† For the reply from His Majesty, see Appendix XVI in Cmd. 2769.

“ We have found in all our deliberations a spirit of mutual goodwill and an earnest desire for co-operation in promoting the prosperity of the several parts of the Empire. The foundation of our work has been the sure knowledge that to each of us, as to all Your Majesty’s subjects, the Crown is the abiding symbol and emblem of the unity of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

“ We pray that, under Divine Providence, Your Majesty may long be spared, with Her Majesty the Queen, to watch over the destinies of all the Nations and Peoples of your Empire.”

XXIII.—CONCLUDING RESOLUTIONS.

As the preceding sections of this Report have shown, a large number of questions on the Agenda, particularly those of a more technical character, were referred to Committees and Sub-Committees for examination and report to the Imperial Conference. This arrangement was, in part, due to the fact that it had been settled, in the course of the correspondence between the Governments which preceded the Conference, that there should be no separate Imperial Economic Conference as in 1923. It was also partly caused by the length of the Agenda and the short time at the disposal of the Conference.

The plan adopted, under which many matters were first discussed by Committees, the Reports and recommendations subsequently coming before the Conference for endorsement, turned out to be most successful. On the one hand, it extended the time available for the examination of a series of complicated subjects, since Committees could sit simultaneously. On the other hand, it enabled the conclusions reached and the Resolutions adopted to be recommended to the various Governments of the Empire with the full authority of the Imperial Conference.

At the concluding meeting, the Conference adopted the following Resolution :—

“ The Imperial Conference desires to express its appreciation of the work accomplished by the Chairmen and Members of the various Committees and Sub-Committees which have been engaged in the discussion of particular subjects.

“ The Conference feels that the detailed study of these subjects in Committee has been of great value, and should also prove most useful in promoting future collaboration between the expert advisers of the various Governments who have worked together so successfully in the preparation of Reports and recommendations for the Conference.”

The Conference also passed the following Resolution at its last meeting :—

“ At the conclusion of the session of the Imperial Conference, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and his colleagues desire to

place on record the great pleasure which it has been to them to welcome in London the Prime Ministers of the Dominions and other Representatives from overseas. On their part, the Prime Ministers and Representatives of the Dominions and India wish to express their thanks to the Prime Minister and other members of the Government in Great Britain for the constant attention which they have given to the organisation and work of the Conference in spite of the pressure of other important duties.

"The members of the Conference are convinced that not only the actual work done during the past few weeks, but also the opportunity which the Conference has afforded for intimate consultation and the strengthening of friendship, will be of the greatest importance in promoting in all parts of the Empire unity of thought and co-operation in action."

The concluding speeches have been published.*

2, *Whitehall Gardens*, S.W. 1,
November 23, 1926.

* See Appendix XV in Cmd. 2769.