

be able, upon all subjects submitted to them, to give really effective and valuable advice. If such a council were to be created it would at once assume an immense importance, and it is perfectly evident that it might develop into something still greater. It might slowly grow to that Federal Council to which we must always look forward as our ultimate ideal.

And to a council of this kind would be committed, in the first instance, the discussion of all minor subjects of common interest, and their opinion would be taken and would weigh most materially in the balance before any decision were come to either by this country or by the legislatures of the several Colonies in regard to such matters.

There is only one point in reference to this which it is absolutely necessary that we all should bear in mind. It may be that the time has come, and if not I believe it will come, when the Colonies will desire to substitute for the slight relationship which at present exists a true partnership, and in that case they will want their share in the management of the Empire which we like to think is as much theirs as it is ours. But, of course, with the privilege of management and of control will also come the obligation and the responsibility. There will come some form of contribution towards the expense for objects which we shall have in common. That, I say, is self-evident, but it is to be borne in mind, even in these early stages of the consideration of the subject.

Now, gentlemen, in connection with this subject we have already made a small advance, upon which I congratulate myself, since it was accomplished during my term of office, though it was prepared by my predecessors; and it may have in the future important results. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is the great Judicial Court of Appeal of the Empire. It is the nearest approach, the closest analogy, to the Supreme Court of the United States. It is a body of almost universal and world wide reputation and authority, and it is our desire naturally, in pursuit of the ideas which I am venturing to put before you, to increase its authority, if that be possible, and to give it a more representative character, and with that view we have most gladly secured the appointment as Privy Councillors of distinguished Judges from the courts of Canada, of Australia, and of South Africa, and they now will take their seats on equal terms with the other members of the Judicial Committee. Well, gentlemen, that is a good beginning, but I do not think that you can feel that at present the arrangement is on a permanent footing. There are objections to the present system which will present themselves to every mind. The Judges who have been chosen have hitherto been Judges who are still in active practice. That at the outset raises a considerable difficulty. It will be difficult for these Judges, even if it were consistent with our general idea of what is right, to take part in appeals in regard to cases upon which they have already decided. And another difficulty is that by the necessity of their position the greater part of their time will be spent in the colonies from which they come. They will only be here for indefinite periods, and, as it were on casual occasions. It is impossible to arrange the business of the Privy Council or to delay the suitors to meet their convenience, and the result of that is that though they would sit as Judges of the Privy Council, it may very often happen that they would not be present or be able to serve precisely on the occasions on which they might be most useful. Now all that could be altered by the Colonies themselves, and this is one of the subjects which I recommend to your attention. If these gentlemen were appointed solely and entirely for the purpose of representing the groups of Colonies on the Privy Council, they could reside permanently in this country, and not being themselves actively engaged in judicial work at home, they could sit and assist the Privy Council in all cases in which