

both Houses of the Imperial Parliament sitting together. [Messrs. C., F., G., M. and McD. have devised a scheme for which the Dependencies might be represented as such in the Imperial Parliament. The other members of the Group considered that sufficient provision had been made for Dependencies in the last clause.]

It is the unanimous opinion of the Group that the cause of organic union would be much advanced if the initiative in demanding it were to come from the Dominions. Some grounds of hesitation felt by the people of the United Kingdom would then be removed. We should like to be perfectly sure that the Dominions wanted closer union, in view of the greater burdens which it might ultimately impose on them. Their initiative would give us this assurance. It would also go far to remove the natural reluctance of many Englishmen to see the British Parliament made subordinate to a new Imperial Legislature in which the Dominions would eventually predominate. It is true that, as was said above, no attempt has been made in this report to construct a scheme that would be specially acceptable to the Dominions. Evidently the scheme here offered is not compatible with a claim of separate nationality for the Dominions in the full sense of the term. The real nation, if such a thing exists here, must be sought in the whole people of the Empire, the ultimate sovereignty over whom is vested in the central power. It seemed better to make plain that these appear the only conditions of lasting union than to produce a compromise which might be more acceptable but could not be guaranteed to work.

IS A SECOND CHAMBER NECESSARY?

The reasons most commonly urged in favor of a Second Chamber are:—

(1) That, as a chamber of revision or delay, it is a check on hasty legislation, and ensures that the reasoned second thoughts and deliberate will of the people shall prevail.

(2) That it is the best organ for representing the experience of the community, or of representing certain interests to which it is desirable to give representation, and which are not represented as such in the Lower House.

(1) The usefulness of a Second Chamber as a check on rash legislation is a matter for argument. It is, however, unnecessary to enter on this controversial ground here, because legislation, in the accepted sense, will not be the business of the Imperial Parliament. The only bills which will come before it in the ordinary course are finance bills, and the right of Second Chambers to deal with finance is, by modern practice, either denied or much restricted. The veto which a Second Chamber would exercise under the proposed Imperial constitution would be practically confined to questions of policy and administration, and would thus resemble the executive veto of the American Senate. But (A) the reasons, historical and