

a propaganda of certain great questions of policy. That, I think, is not the object of the League, nor the desire of its members; but, on the contrary, we desire that proper freedom should exist in that respect as regards the branches so as to promote the cohesion and smooth working of the institution as a whole. I suppose some of us here may hear statements and recommendations which we may not personally see our way to concur with. That is no reason for the slightest perturbation on our part. We wish to hear Mr. Ross's views as a statesman, a statesman of mark, and especially as a statesman of one of the great Colonies of the Empire, and I am sure we shall listen to what he has to say with great respect and appreciation too. Without further words I now beg to ask him to address us.

Mr. Ross, who was cordially greeted, said: My lords and gentlemen, you have conferred on me a high honour in asking me to address the Council of the League. It is an honour I greatly appreciate. I have been for some time connected with the League in Canada and a constant reader of the *League Review*, and I think that I have a pretty comprehensive idea as to its work here, and what it attempts to do for the Colonies. This opportunity of meeting the members of the League is one I greatly appreciate, and the more so as it is presided over by your lordship, whose associations with myself and my Government while in Canada were of the most pleasant and satisfactory character. I am delighted to give expression to this view here as I was delighted to do over and over again at home. The work of the League is, as the chairman has said, a very comprehensive one, its efforts being to promote the autonomy and unity of the Empire. I need not recall what is known to all of you, but what is particularly felt in the Colonies, and it is that there was a time when we did not feel that there was the sympathy of the Motherland towards us Canadians—and perhaps the same feeling existed elsewhere—that we had reason to expect. That, however, was very largely removed by the Confederation Act of 1867, with which my distinguished friend, Lord Knutsford, was intimately associated, and for the part he played I desire to express my sincere thanks to him. A new era dawned on us Canadians with that Act, one in which the friendship between the Colonies and the Mother Country has grown greatly, and one which has witnessed other federations, and, notably, the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia. (Hear, hear.) Out of these federations