

would always look upon the Imperial Parliament as the senior partner in the concern. The Imperial policy would always be subject to the principles laid down at such a meeting as he suggested. This would lead to greater publicity. Nations in future would want to know more about foreign affairs." On the 17th inst., two days after the delivery of General Smuts' speech, the Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons "that the holding of an annual Imperial Cabinet to discuss foreign affairs and other aspects of Imperial policy will become an accepted convention of the British Constitution." The use by the Prime Minister in this connection of the term "convention of the British Constitution" in relation to the establishment of an institution which he said "grew not by design, but out of the necessities of the war," reminds us that the British Constitution is, in the words of Lord Courtney of Penwith, "a living and a changing organism." By the side of our written law there has grown up an unwritten or conventional Constitution. The work, as Professor Freeman maintains, of legislation, of strictly constitutional legislation, has never ceased, but there has also been a series of political changes of no less moment than those recorded in the statute-book which have been made without any legislative enactment whatever.

NOTES FROM THE ENGLISH INNS OF COURT.

CRIMINALS AND THE WAR.

The great war has undoubtedly affected all classes of the community in these islands. Those members of the Bar who practice in the criminal courts have been heard to deplore its consequences from the purely professional point of view. And with good reason. Statistics recently published have shown a remarkable falling off in crime. It is now possible to compare the years 1913, 1914 and 1915. According to the *Law Times* (June 23, 1917), the number of persons for trial at assizes and quarter-sessions in 1913 was 12,511. In 1914 it fell to 10,800; while in 1915 the figure was 6,010—less than half the pre-war figure.