

The International Institute of Agriculture

ADDRESS BY HON. SYDNEY FISHER

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The International Institute of Agriculture is an organization specially formed for the purpose of establishing a sort of clearing house of agricultural information and investigation—an International Clearing House.

A word about the history of its formation. The idea was originated in the mind of David Lubin, an American citizen of San Francisco, who, some years ago made a large sum of money, and became struck with certain things affecting the agricultural interests of the world, especially its food producing interests. He believed there was an opportunity for international work along this line. While traveling in Europe he attracted the attention of leading citizens of Italy to this subject, and eventually, that of King Victor Emmanuel III. of Italy, a man of wide interests. The King seized upon this subject as one capable of wide development for the good of his own country as well as others. As a result he issued through his foreign minister invitations to the great States of the world to a conference which was held at Rome in the spring of 1905. The British Empire was represented by Lords Jersey and Minto and Sir Thomas Elliott, the permanent head of the department of agriculture at London.

Over thirty states were represented and as a result of the conference there was formulated a scheme for an International Institute which was submitted to the governments with an invitation to join the Institute. The British government accepted the invitation, and also asked that its Dominions beyond the seas be included, and an opportunity given Canada, Australia, South Africa, India and Egypt, under the aegis of the British flag to form part of this Institute. The result was that in 1906 the government of Canada received an invitation through the British Colonial office to join the Institute, and this invitation was accepted early in 1907.