

## MEMORANDUM.

---

On Thursday, the 24th of June, the Prime Ministers of Canada, New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand, Queensland, Cape Colony, South Australia, Newfoundland, Tasmania, Western Australia, and Natal, assembled at the Colonial Office, Downing Street, for the discussion of certain Imperial questions with the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was decided that the proceedings should be informal and that the general results only should be published. With the view of giving a definite direction to the discussion, the Secretary of State, in opening the proceedings, set forth the subjects which he considered might usefully be discussed, so as to secure an interchange of views upon them, and where they were ripe for a statement of opinion, a definite resolution in regard to them, in the following speech:—

“I have made arrangements for a full shorthand report of all our proceedings, which will be confidential, unless we otherwise desire, but copies, of course, will be furnished to every gentleman for reference, and possibly later on, if we come to any conclusions, we may consider further whether it is desirable or not that any public statement should be made. In the meantime, until we come to a united conclusion upon the subject, the proceedings will be treated as absolutely confidential.

I desire at the outset of these proceedings to offer to you, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, a hearty and cordial welcome. You will have seen in your short visit to this country that all parties, and all classes, are animated by the most affectionate feelings of regard towards our Colonial fellow subjects. I think that you may also feel that the main object of your visit has already been to a great extent accomplished. The great pageant to which you contributed so interesting a feature has shown to this country, to the Colonies, and to all the world, the strength, the power, the resources, and the loyalty of the British Empire. It was, I think we shall all agree, a most remarkable and absolutely unparalleled demonstration of personal loyalty to a Sovereign and of the essential unity of the Empire.

Her Majesty's Government, while very anxious to take this opportunity of an interchange of views with you on many matters of common interest, have carefully avoided suggesting anything in the nature of a formal Conference. We do so, in the first place because we do not wish to detract in any way from the personal character of this visit, and also because we do not desire to take advantage of your presence to force upon you discussions on which you might be unwilling at this moment to enter. On the other hand we are open to consider in the most friendly and the most favourable way any representations which may be made to us by the representatives of the self-governing Colonies, having regard to the present or the future relations between the different parts of the Empire, and in this respect we are in the position of those who desire rather to learn your views than to press ours upon you. I might, I think, upon this sit down and invite your opinions, but it has been suggested to me, and it seems reasonable to suppose, that it might be convenient to you at this, our preliminary meeting, if I were to state as briefly as I can the subjects which appear to us to be most worthy of our joint consideration, and then it will be for you to say whether these subjects, or any of them,