

time to consider the report of the Committee appointed to consider the question last year. It was, however, pointed out to the members of the Conference that the matter was not one in which the United Kingdom was taking the initiative, although Her Majesty's Government were ready to consider any proposal for working with and assisting the Colonies if they attached great importance to the project; and that they would now await definite proposals from the Colonies interested before proceeding further in the matter.

At the last meeting of the Conference a resolution was passed unanimously by those of the Premiers who were still present, to the following effect:—

INVESTMENT OF
TRUST FUNDS.

Those assembled are of the opinion that the time has arrived when all restriction which prevents investments of trust funds in Colonial stock should be removed.

This resolution will be communicated to and commended to the consideration of the proper authorities.

Amongst minor questions discussed, was that of the representation of the Colonies at the Paris Exhibition of 1900. Her Majesty's Government had originally desired that the Empire as a whole should exhibit in one building, but this was found to be impracticable, the French Government not being able to put the requisite amount of space at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government.

PARIS
EXHIBITION.

Under the changed conditions, only the Premiers of Canada, New South Wales, Queensland, and Cape Colony, declared their intention of being represented; while the Premiers of the other Colonies reserved their decision, with the exception of the Premier of South Australia who stated that his Colony was not prepared to take part in the exhibition under any circumstances.

A discussion arose upon the alteration of the date of departure from Adelaide of the mail steamers under the new contracts with the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Companies. There was considerable difference of opinion, but it was decided to accept Thursday as the most suitable date under all the circumstances.

DATE OF
DEPARTURE OF
AUSTRALIAN
MAILS.

The question of Load Lines was discussed privately with the Premiers of the Colonies in connexion with recent legislation on the subject as to which difficulties have arisen.

LOAD LINES.

The subject of the future Administration of British New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the New Hebrides was introduced, but no decision was arrived at upon it.

NEW HEBRIDES,
&c.

At the concluding meeting the Premiers unanimously passed the following resolution:—

The Premiers, before they separate, beg to put on record their appreciation of the many courtesies which they have received at the hands of Mr. Chamberlain personally, and of the kind treatment which has been extended to them by the Government and People of the United Kingdom.

July 31, 1897.