

TIGHT BINDING.

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British Commonwealth represented at the Conference that all practicable steps should be taken to secure the stimulation of international trade. It was recognised that in the last resort the prosperity of the countries of the Commonwealth depends on that of the world as a whole and that a healthy growth of international trade, accompanied by an improvement in the general standard of living, is an essential step to political appeasement.

Further reference to the international aspect of these problems is also made under Section IX above.

XII.—COLONIAL AFFAIRS.

On the 31st May, the Secretary of State for the Colonies made a statement to the Conference reviewing the affairs of the Colonial Empire during recent years.

Mr. Ormsby Gore dealt first with the economic progress of the Colonial Empire. He laid stress on the fact that, generally speaking, trade between the Colonial Empire and the rest of the British Commonwealth was complementary and not competitive. As an instance of this, he referred to the increasing trade between Canada and the British West Indies, and expressed the hope that the Canadian-West Indies trade agreement would be renewed when the present period of its operation expired.

He considered that the main political problem which confronted the Colonial Office was still the relationship between natives and non-natives, both European and Asiatic, in many territories, following the growth of education and the awakening of political consciousness. He also made reference, in particular, to the present difficulties in Palestine, where the two opposing elements had become increasingly hostile to each other and critical of the administration, which had the unenviable task of trying to be fair and just to both sides.

Mr. Ormsby Gore referred to the machinery which had been established in the Dominions for the recruitment of personnel for the various Colonial Services, and expressed the hope that the number of young Dominion applicants for appointment would continue to increase. He also mentioned the invaluable work performed by the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad in connection with the training of future Colonial officers in agriculture, which was the basis of the prosperity of the Colonial Empire.

Mr. Ormsby Gore's review was welcomed by the Delegates generally. Mr. Dunning, in reference to the Canadian-West Indies trade agreement, observed that while he was by no means pessimistic about the possibility of concluding a fresh agreement which might be mutually satisfactory to both parties, he feared that some difficulties would have to be overcome.

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Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan referred to the great interest taken in India in the future of Palestine, and stressed the urgency for an equitable solution of the problem. He also alluded to the varying position of Indians in different territories of the Colonial Empire. Mr. Ormsby Gore briefly reviewed the conditions of the Indian communities in various Colonial territories and expressed his willingness to discuss with Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan the questions which had been raised by him.

XIII.—WORK OF THE IMPERIAL WAR GRAVES COMMISSION.

The Conference considered a Memorandum from His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, President of the Imperial War Graves Commission, communicating to the Conference a Report on the work of the Commission during the 20 years which have elapsed since its establishment in 1917, on the recommendation of the Imperial War Conference of that year, and decided to place on record its warm appreciation of the work which had been accomplished and of the manner in which the Commission had discharged and was continuing to discharge the duties entrusted to it.

The Conference desired that, in view of the wide interest that was taken in this work, the Imperial War Graves Commission should make arrangements for the Report to be published.

XIV.—CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

Certain constitutional questions which had been raised by His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa were considered by a Committee on Constitutional Questions under the Chairmanship of the Right Hon. E. Lapointe, K.C., M.P., Minister of Justice, Canada. Questions as to the Nationality of Married Women, which had been raised by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia were referred to the same Committee.

The Committee presented the following Report, which was adopted by the Conference:—

(i) NATIONALITY.

The Committee considered certain questions which had been raised in regard to the relationship between the common status possessed by subjects of His Majesty and the particular status of membership of any one of the individual communities forming the British Commonwealth of Nations. This subject was dealt with in paragraphs 73 to 79 of the Report of the Conference on the Operation of Dominion Legislation, 1929, and Section VI (b) of the Summary of Proceedings of the Imperial

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