

foundation for a closer and a more permanent union of the colonies with the Motherland.

London, 1907.—The conditions under which the conference of 1907 met were very different from those of 1897 and 1902. Not only was Mr. Chamberlain no longer Secretary of State for the Colonies, but the Unionist Government had been replaced by a Liberal one, thoroughly committed to free-trade and not at all convinced of the necessity for a more highly centralized government for the Empire. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the new Prime Minister, Lord Elgin, the new Colonial Secretary, and other ministers, represented the British Government. Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Messrs. F. Borden and Brodeur represented Canada. Among the other colonial representatives the more prominent ones were Mr. Alfred Deakin of Australia, Joseph Ward of New Zealand, Dr. Jameson of Cape Colony, and General Botha of the Transvaal.

Three main questions came up, all of which had been discussed at previous conferences. With regard to the constitution of the conference it was decided that an *Imperial Conference* should meet *every four years*, that a permanent secretariat for the conference should be provided by the Colonial Office, and that subsidiary conferences might be called on special occasions, or for the discussion of special topics. Thus was the colonial conference changed into an imperial conference with a definite constitution and with arrangements for regular meetings.

Once more (British ministers urged greater colonial participation in defence.) Mr. Haldane wanted an expeditionary force in each of the self-governing colonies, an imperial general staff, and an exchange of officers. Lord Tweedmouth wanted contributions in kind for the navy, preferably in submarines. This time less was secured than at the two last conferences. (The plan for an imperial general staff was approved, but the staff was to be advisory only. New Zealand, Cape Colony, and Natal agreed, either to continue their contributions to the cost of the navy, or to supply ships; but Canada made no proposal, and Australia announced her determination to create a navy of her own.)

(On one subject the colonial representatives were unanimous. They all supported a resolution moved by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, urging the British Government to grant "in the United Kingdom preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the colonies, either by exemptions from, or reduction of, duties now or hereafter imposed".) Mr. Deakin supported the resolution in a speech that took up more than a whole session, and he was ably supported by others; (but the British Government was utterly opposed to the proposal,) and Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Churchill all presented elaborate arguments