

its practical usefulness. He advocated a system of economic co-operation to meet the challenges of the day. In this volume is included documentation of the attempt to work this out at the 1932 Imperial Economic Conference in Ottawa. In some respects this was the last attempt to create an imperial system which would meet the wider needs of the member countries. By and large it failed. Perhaps this is the ultimate failure of the Empire. Although it yet had a certain strategic and military value and although there were still those "mystic ties" which have been so widely acclaimed, there was never again a serious effort to develop a satisfactory imperial system for the community of "British" nations.

As economic and trading questions dominate the imperial scene in this volume so also they loom large in other Canadian relationships. The negotiation of a new trade agreement with the United States which led to the 1937 treaty began in this period. The documents selected show how far these negotiations were carried. The economic war carried on with Japan is of similar interest. R. B. Bennett met the Japanese challenge head on. The result was a rapidly deteriorating situation which ended in impasse. The Editor may quarrel with the straight line analysis of King's foreign policy; he would not argue with King's skill as a conciliator of conflicting interests. His deftness in restoring the shattered Canadian-Japanese trading relationship provides an excellent example of that skill.

Coincidental with the great economic issues of the age was the menacing security question. As the dream of disarmament is quietly laid to rest, the deterioration in international affairs which led ultimately to World War II gets underway in this period. At the League of Nations the atmosphere of crisis grows until in 1935 the fatal challenge to the Geneva experiment unfolds on mid-stage in the form of the Italo-Ethiopian war. The Canadian role in that crisis has come to be known as the Riddell Affair and has been the subject of considerable discussion. It will doubtless be discussed further. The documents selected do not show that any of the participants can be "blamed" for the incident, nor, unfortunately, do they show the effect of the repudiation of Riddell on British policy, particularly the effect on Sir Samuel Hoare's thinking as he met with Pierre Laval in Paris six days later. That remains in doubt. What the documents do show is the clear divergence between Bennett's and King's policy. Bennett and King maintained consistent positions on sanctions; but their respective positions were miles apart.

The criteria of selection have remained essentially as outlined in the preceding volume. It might, however, be of some value to restate the general concept of this series. It is designed to make public a selection of documents which tell the basic story of the formulation and implementation of Canadian external relations. The main events, issues and problems of the era, naturally command more space and attention than the smaller issues. It is felt, however, that the handling of major items can only be kept in perspective when the myriad of day to day problems are borne in mind. For this reason many minor topics are included. In selecting documents for publication, the Editor has first and foremost tried to demonstrate what transpired. He has also tried to select documents which reveal how policy was carried out and why a particular policy was adopted.