

Winter, Premier of Newfoundland, representing the Empire. On the American side the original representatives were Senator Chas. O. Fairbanks of Indiana; Senator George Gray of Delaware; General John W. Foster, Mr. Nelson Dingley, Mr. John Adam Kasson and Mr. Thos. Jefferson Coolidge of Boston. Subsequently, upon his appointment as one of the American Peace Commissioners, Senator Gray retired, and was succeeded by Senator Chas. J. Faulkner of West Virginia.

The first definite announcement that the Convention would actually meet was made on the floor of Parliament by Sir Louis Davies on May 31st and after considerable time spent in preliminaries the inaugural meeting was held on August 23rd. After sitting continuously until September 2nd an adjournment was made until the 20th; sessions were then resumed until October 10th, when once again adjournment was had until early in November, when the deliberations were resumed at Washington.

With a brief break for the Christmas holidays, the Commission worked assiduously until the third week in February, when its deliberations were brought to an abrupt conclusion for the time being by the apparent impossibility of an agreement being reached on the question of arbitrating the Alaska boundary. Substantial progress had been made in many other directions, but the British Commissioners refused to settle part, without coming to a final agreement on all points. The Commission has adjourned until August 2nd, and it is hoped diplomatic correspondence between London and Washington will have so far arranged the Alaska difficulty by that time as to allow of a resumption of the negotiations and a final settlement satisfactory to all concerned.

The protocol which defined the scope of the Commission and which was drawn up in Washington by representatives on both sides, towards the end of May last, covered a very wide field, as will be seen from the following partial list:—The regulations of the Behring Sea fisheries, the participation of the United States in the Atlantic fisheries, the defining of the Alaskan boundary, the protection of the fisheries that were contiguous to both countries, reciprocal trade relations, the Bonding Privilege, International Mining Regulations, the Importation of Alien Labor, etc. Originally, as far as the United States was concerned, the idea was to consider the first of these questions only, for the republic had never been satisfied with

the results of the Paris arbitration of 1893, but as far back as November, 1897, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Louis Davies, with Mr. Adam of the British Embassy, in conference with General Foster, representing the United States, insisted that as a basis for future negotiations not only the sealing question, but many other matters, as mentioned above, must be taken into consideration.

The acknowledged goal towards which the Commission has striven is, Sir Louis Davies intimated from his seat in the Commons, the settling and putting into the form of a treaty the existing differences which have been unsettled for years back. Just how far success will crown their efforts it would be, at this time, premature to conjecture. That the plenipotentiaries have in hand as difficult and momentous a task as has ever perhaps fallen to the skill of statesmen to carry through to success, will be recognized on all hands, and this has been aggravated by the great loss sustained on both sides by the death of Lord Herschell and Mr. Dingley. If any further evidence of this had been necessary, the presence at Quebec and at Washington, during the sittings of the Conference, of influential representatives of nearly every known industry in the two countries, which was anxious to present its views and claim its special privileges and exemptions, would satisfy the most incredulous of the very real and serious obstacles to be overcome. So much discretion and diplomatic reserve have been observed by the Commissioners that no authoritative, or even semi-official, statement of the progress made has been published, further than is contained in the announcement made when the Commission adjourned, and which is quoted above.

The Prohibition Plebiscite.

The most interesting incident in domestic politics during the year has been the submission of the question of the prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquors to a popular plebiscite, which was taken on September 29th. This action of the Government was in fulfilment of a pre-election promise to the Prohibition party, the members of which had long been claiming that the country was ripe for prohibition and that it was therefore the duty of the Government to place such an enactment upon the statute books. The result of the vote showed that Ontario,