

Mr. Osler (President of the Toronto Board of Trade) rose to move the first resolution on the paper reading thus: "Whereas, in view of recent events, and the attitude of other nations towards Great Britain, and of the fact that there exists within the British Empire resources in men and materials and arable land for its every requirement: whereas, while the trade legislation of other nations is framed to subserve their local interests, all British trade and other legislation should aim to secure within the Empire a union of interest of a federal character, and the policy of each British Community should be designed to retain within the Empire subject, whose labor would otherwise go to foreign lands, whereas Canada has already formed a basis for closer relations with the Mother Country and other Colonies by building a highway across British America, by creating steamship connection between Vancouver, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Australia, by offering a large subsidy for a fast Atlantic steamship service, as well as by her established precedent of Confederation, making for British unity; and whereas closer commercial relations between the Mother Country, her Colonies and Dependencies, will be hastened by further subsidising fast steamship services and completing postal, wire and cable, communication with the different portions of the Empire, thus making such routes for commerce, food supply, and munitions of war the fastest and most secure from attack: resolved, that in the opinion of this Congress the advantages to be obtained by a closer union between the various portions of the British Empire are so great as to justify an arrangement as nearly as possible of the nature of a Zollverein, based upon principles of the freest exchange of commodities with the Empire, consistent with the tariff requirements incident to the maintenance of the local government of each Kingdom, Dominion, Province or Colony, now forming part of the British family of nations." There were in Canada (Mr. Osler pointed out)—as there were wherever there was life—differences of opinion. They had free traders and protectionists. It had been the policy of the country for years past to have a fair amount of protection for home manufactures, and he thought that this feeling still holds with the great body of the people of Canada. They had, they believed, within their Empire land awaiting emigrants sufficient with reasonable cultivation to supply Great Britain with all the wheat and produce she required, and Canadians were especially anxious that emigration from this country should be directed to the Colonies, and so build up the Empire. Canada had spent money freely in building the Canadian Pacific Railway, and looked forward to the fast Atlantic service as helping in the cause of unity. They in Canada believed that certain concessions must be made if they were to get England to join in a confederation, and they as Canadians were willing to make concessions in the best interests of themselves and the whole Empire.

Lord Londonderry (Belfast) seconded the motion.

Mr. McFee (Montreal) said his instructions made it clear that the Montreal Corn Exchange Association, while supporting the spirit of the Canadian proposal, was strenuously opposed to any arrangement whereunder the tariff discrimination in favor of the Mother Country and the Colonies would be other than a reduction of present tariffs. Following the resolution of the Dominion Parliament on April 26, 1892, they held that any arrangement should involve a substantial reduction of the Colonial tariffs in favor of the Mother Country,

and should not allow any Colony to fulfil the letter of the arrangement, but evade its spirit by placing a prohibitive tariff on imports from Great Britain and the Colonies and a still higher one on imports from foreign countries.

Sir Donald Smith moved in amendment to the Toronto Board of Trade resolution this proposition:—"Whereas the stability and progress of the British Empire can be best assured by drawing continually closer the bonds that unite the Colonies with the Mother Country, and by the continuous growth of a practical sympathy and co-operation in all that pertains to the common welfare, and whereas this co-operation and unity can in no way be more effectually promoted than by the cultivation and extension of the mutual and profitable interchange of their products, therefore resolved—That this Congress records its belief in the advisability and practicability of a Customs arrangement between Great Britain and her Colonies and India on the basis of preferential treatment, and recommends that steps should be taken by Her Majesty's Government to bring about an interchange of opinions on the subject between the Mother Country and the other Governments of the Empire." In the course of his speech Sir Donald Smith said: In moving this amendment I do so in no spirit of opposition to the proposal of the Toronto Board of Trade. I am indeed acting in unison with my friends from Toronto and other Canadian representatives in putting forward the amendment, and the object is to place before this Congress a resolution which represents I hope the views of all the Canadian delegates and will receive their support, and thus render more or less unnecessary the discussion of the other resolutions of a similar nature which are on the paper. We hope also that the terms of the amendment are such as will commend themselves to our friends from Australasia, from South Africa, and the other Colonies, and we are not without hope also that it may commend itself to the representatives of the commercial interests of the United Kingdom who are present to-day. What we are striving for here is not the discussion of the details of a commercial arrangement between the Mother Country and the other Colonies. That must be left to the Government of the different parts of the Empire to formulate and arrange. What we want to do is to secure the acceptance by this Congress of the principle that has been in one way and another so ably advocated. Quite recently it has been referred to by Mr. Chamberlain. It has also been discussed by the Canadian Parliament, by Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in Canada, in South Africa and Australasia, and also in other Colonies. It was also adopted by the delegates of the different Colonies who met together at Ottawa in 1894. Indeed, it will be seen that the two introductory paragraphs of the amendment are precisely the same as the Ottawa resolutions. The only difference is that the third paragraph of the amendment takes us a step further, and that the principle being conceded, Her Majesty's Government are to be requested to approach the other Governments of the Empire with a view to the interchange of opinions on this important subject, which, if I may say so, is very closely connected with the future development of the trade and commerce of this great Empire. If Her Majesty's Government will grasp the matter boldly and invite an expression of opinion from the Governments of the Colonies, we are not without hope that it may lead to the calling together of another great Colonial Conference in