

mixed up with the management of the Crown colonies. He and Mr. Deakin went further, and they argued for taking the presidency of that council or conference out of the hands of the Colonial Secretary, and vesting it in the Prime Minister, thinking to give it additional status and additional standing by removing it entirely from the imputation of being in any way under the Colonial Office, the old Colonial Office. Now let us see what Dr. Jamieson says, on page 33 :

Nothing will be done unless we are all unanimous, and I was very glad to hear the extremely moderate and very lucid statement of Mr. Deakin on the question of conferences. I was glad to see from that lucid statement that he was able to remove from the mind of Sir Wilfrid Laurier the idea that he had any elaborate scheme to propose with regard to the constitution of this so-called imperial council, which I may say at once I would be glad to see changed in name to the Imperial Conference. We did not wish to initiate any new scheme whatever, as Mr. Deakin has explained; all that we desired was to make more efficient the work of the conference as the conference stands at present.

Mr. Moor, representative from Natal made almost exactly the same statement; and General Botha did not want to have things disturbed at all. In fact General Botha gave me the impression of being rather disinclined for any changes of any account at the present time, in any regard, largely I think from the idea that in a short time when his own and the other provinces should be united as Canada and Australia have been, they could speak with more power and occupy a more representative position. However, I think I have read enough to prove that there was no member of that conference who proposed to take a position derogatory to the outside dominions; every one of them declared it to be his intention that the autonomy, rights and position of the outside dominions should be kept as good as they were, and enhanced as far as they could be. How has the legend then grown up that in some manner the right hon. gentleman stood as the champion of the autonomy of the outside dominions, and made a valiant and successful battle against those who would have demanded the colonies of that position, and put them into the position of humiliation? So much on that point.

There is another point. I have heard it attributed to my right hon. friend by one of his ardent supporters that for the first time the conference came together as a consultation between government and government, and that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's hand was the guiding and powerful hand which brought that about. Sir, before my right hon. friend opened his mouth in this conference, the chairman of the meeting—no, the right hon. gentleman who leads the government, Sir Campbell Bannerman, made the pronouncement on behalf of the British

government that this was no longer a conference between a British Minister and the outside Dominions, not a colonial conference, but that it was to be then and henceforth a conference between the government at home and the governments outside—governments outside—governments with governments which idea was hailed with delight by my right hon. friend and by every other member of the conference. Give every one his due, but why should enthusiastic supporters wish to place the right hon. gentleman in a position which is historically inaccurate? We give him credit for standing for Canada, but we do not want to discredit the other sister colonies who stood equally for the status and position of all the Dominions with the right hon. gentleman.

Now, there is another legend. That is the legend of this French treaty which was placed on the table. The legend was given credence and currency by the right hon. gentleman himself who came down to the Manufacturers Association banquet in the city of Toronto and declared—I will not have time to read the whole of his utterances—that heretofore British diplomacy had ruled the affairs of Canada, that heretofore British diplomacy had been only a blundering diplomacy, that now, without any revolution, in the twinkling of an eye, all that had been changed and to-day Canada had the negotiation absolutely to herself of her own commercial treaties and that a treaty had just been signed in which two of his colleagues, without any help, without any intervention, without any mechanism at all from Great Britain or her Minister in Paris, had made a treaty, had signed the treaty and had finished and completed the whole business. Canada herself. And, Sir, where do we find the fruit? Everywhere. The very first indication we saw of it was down in the city of Quebec where these gentlemen, who brought home the treaty, before they had divulged what it was, were banqueted, because they had made a treaty and where the address to the ministers declared in so many words: This is the first treaty that was ever negotiated and completed by Canada herself—honour to the braves who have wrought this great victory for us. And so it has gone from place to place, editorial to editorial, and has been given currency by the right hon. gentleman himself that this is the first. What is the use of trying to read history backwards? If the right hon. gentleman wants the facts of the case here they are. The time is not so very long ago when Britain made the treaties and the colonies had no say one way or the other about them. That was followed by a better and more generous method when Canada and the other great colonies, but Canada especially, were invited to send their representatives who became representatives of the British government working along with the British representa-