

What then is to be the next step in the forward movement? Surely means will be devised, in spite of all difficulties, real or imaginary, to make the conference a permanent institution, with some organized body in connexion with it to do work preliminary and subsequent to its periodical meetings. Australia, Cape Colony, and New Zealand have put in the forefront of the agenda paper, with creditable unanimity, the constitution of further conferences, including the question of an Imperial Council, and in a despatch dated 4th. January, 1907, Lord Elgin intimates that this is the subject he would desire to discuss at the outset, in connexion with the proposals outlined by his predecessor in office. The second place is given to preferential trade. Every one knows what a thorny subject this is for the British Government. To reduce duties in favour of the Empire and even to tax food is more than the ordinary voter is ready for. Yet it is a fact of history that the last conference (1902) adopted the following resolution: "That this conference recognizes that the principle of preferential trade between the United Kingdom and His Majesty's Dominions beyond the seas would stimulate and facilitate mutual commercial intercourse, and would, by promoting the development of the resources and industries of the several parts, strengthen the Empire." To this Australia now proposes to add "that it is desirable that the preferential treatment accorded by the colonies to the products and manufactures of the United Kingdom be also granted to the products and manufactures of other self-governing colonies." Here is an opportunity for such treaties of trade as Sir Wilfrid Laurier has always been prepared to negotiate,—“articles on which you can give us a preference, and articles on which we can give you a preference.” It will be rather awkward for the British authorities if the daughter states take advantage of the invitation to their mother's house to talk matters over in the absence of their hostess, and to go forward with arrangements among themselves, apart from her! A bargain-made Empire is certainly to be deprecated, but all the same there is a good deal of practical truth in Mr. Garvin's dictum that “the economic