

Defence and Foreign Affairs

CHAPTER I

THE PRESENT POSITION

The question as to the future relations of the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire towards the Mother Country, especially with reference to Foreign Affairs, is now occupying the thoughts of many in Great Britain and in the Dominions, as the present great war has made it apparent to thoughtful men and women that, (to use the words of Sir Robert Borden, Premier of Canada) "the great policies and questions which concern and govern the issues of peace and war cannot in future be assumed by the people of the British Islands alone."

The great majority take it for granted that changes must be made, but they speak only in general terms. A few say that no changes are required other than those which will come of themselves by gradual process and development, as have come most of the changes in the constitutional position of the Empire itself. Many say that it will be time enough, when the war is over, to think about or discuss any changes which may be required. A few, a very few, have suggested plans outlining the changes which they would advocate. Among these plans, "The Problem of the Commonwealth" by Mr. Lionel Curtis, is the most definite and studious yet published, and, because it is definite and in the concrete, it is of immense value to the discussion and sets people thinking in a way which no amount of abstract discussion and general statements could do. Abstract