

The Hon. Alfred Deakin then proposed, and the Hon. Charles C. Kingston seconded, the following resolution, which was unanimously carried: "That the thanks of the Conference be given to Mr. Alex. C. Budge for the efficient services rendered by him as Secretary."

The Conference then adjourned.

TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE TO SIR W. C. F. ROBINSON, Governor of South Australia, to be forwarded to the Governors of the other Colonies.

REFERRING to your telegram of 22nd May, inform Conference Her Majesty's Government anxious to meet views of Australian Colonies with regard to limiting Chinese immigration, but measures adopted by New South Wales create obstacles to present negotiations with China. It is therefore important to ascertain whether, in substitution for legislation of a similar kind, other arrangements more in accordance with feelings and views of Chinese Government, and at the same time fully effective for the purpose of restricting Chinese immigration, may not be adopted. Having regard to political and commercial interests of Empire, and particularly to commercial interests of Australian Colonies, no avoidable obstacles should be placed in the way of trade which are likely to afford valuable market for products of Australian Colonies. Chinese Government specially objects to legislation for placing Chinese emigrants on different footing to subjects of any other Power; and it seems desirable to consider whether laws and regulations equally restricting immigration into colonies of all foreign labourers, with powers of relaxing regulations in special cases reserved to Governments, may not meet requirements of case. If thus placed on equal footing with other nations Chinese Government, if it were still thought necessary to come to an international arrangement, might be willing to accept conditions more or less of a similar kind to conditions laid down in treaty concluded with United States of America, and limitation of numbers which would be permitted to embark for any of Australian Colonies. In any case it should be clearly understood that, while Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to consider any representations from Conference, they are not at present able to give any assurance that negotiations with Chinese Government can be opened, as it depends on nature of proposals to be made to that Government; but I confidently believe that Conference will endeavour to conciliate susceptibilities of Chinese Government as far as possible.

KNUTSFORD.

The PRESIDENT of the CONFERENCE to His Excellency Lord CARRINGTON.

MY DEAR LORD CARRINGTON,—

14th June, 1888.

As President of the Conference on the Chinese question, I am instructed to request your Excellency to transmit to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies the enclosed telegrams as unanimously agreed upon by the Conference. I enclose also a draft Bill agreed upon to be introduced in the respective Parliaments to carry out the decisions of the Conference.

Yours very sincerely,

HENRY PARKES.

CABLEGRAM TO SECRETARY OF STATE.

At the Australasian Conference, held in Sydney on the 12th, 13th, and 14th instant, at which the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, and Western Australia were represented, the question of Chinese immigration, and your cablegram to the Governor of South Australia in connection therewith, were fully considered.

The members of the Conference are sensible of the wish of Her Majesty's Government to meet the views of the colonies, and have specially deliberated upon the possibility of securing legislation which, while effective, should be of a character so far as possible in accordance with the feeling and views of the Chinese Government. They have not overlooked the political and commercial interests of the Empire, nor the commercial interests of the colonies.

In 1886 the total exports to China from New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania were valued at £16,000, out of a total export trade amounting to £38,700,000. Our imports from China in the same year were valued at £846,000. While the custom of the colonies, therefore, is very valuable to China, that country offers no present outlet of importance for Australasian trade. There has never been any attempt on the part of any of the colonies to close their markets to the exports of the Chinese Empire, although most, if not all, of them are now produced in great quantities in the British Empire of India. The suggestion that any restrictions which are to be imposed should be of a general nature, so as to give power to exclude European or American immigrants, has been very carefully deliberated upon, but no scheme for giving effect to it has been found practicable.

As the length of time to be occupied in negotiations between the Imperial Government and the Government of China is uncertain, and as the colonies in the meantime have reason to dread a large influx from China, the several Governments feel impelled to legislate immediately to protect their citizens against an invasion which is dreaded because of its results, not only upon the labour market, but upon the social and moral condition of the people. At the same time the Conference is most anxious that Her Majesty's Government should enter into communication with the Government of China, with a view to obtaining as soon as possible a treaty under which all Chinese, except officials, travellers, merchants, students, and similar classes, should be entirely excluded from the Australasian Colonies. By way of assisting to bring about such an understanding, the Conference has recommended the abolition of the poll-tax now levied upon Chinese immigrants. While believing that the local legislation now proposed will accomplish its object, the colonies would prefer that the exclusion of the Chinese should be brought about by international agreement.