

should add to the expert authority, which has from time to time to decide the load-line, representatives of the colonies concerned. In that way the voice of the colonies and the interests of the colonies in any local question would be fully heard before a joint line was agreed upon.

PARIS EXHIBITION OF 1900.

"I have also a small matter to ask your instructions upon in regard to the Paris Exhibition for the year 1900. We were very anxious, if possible, to secure an united representation of the Empire in one building. That has proved to be impossible owing to the French arrangements, and the way in which they have divided the exhibition; but what we hope we have secured is this: that a special colonial building for the whole of the colonial exhibition, in a first-rate situation, and exactly opposite the French colonial exhibition, shall be reserved, and all the colonies will then exhibit together in a single building. In the other one would be the French colonial exhibits, but the exhibits of the Mother-country of France and of the Mother-country of the United Kingdom will be in each case in a separate building. In regard to this matter, it has been proposed to put representatives of all the colonies upon the Royal Commission. It will be a position of honour and of importance. But we are in this difficulty: that the Agents-General, who would naturally suggest themselves, are, I believe, rather a varying body, that some of them are likely no longer to be holding office in 1900, and that therefore it will be necessary to make a special appointment *ad hoc* for this purpose; and what we wish to know is whether that would be agreeable to the colonies, and, if so, if they would each of them nominate some one as their representative upon the Commission, that some one being either the Agent-General or any one else whom they thought better to nominate for the purpose.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

"One other question I have to mention, and only one—that is, I wish to direct your attention to certain legislation which is in process of consideration, or which has been passed by some of the colonies, in regard to the immigration of aliens, and particularly of Asiatics.

"I have seen these Bills, and they differ in some respects one from the other, but there is no one of them, except perhaps the Bill which comes to us from Natal, to which we can look with satisfaction. I wish to say that Her Majesty's Government thoroughly appreciate the object and the needs of the colonies in dealing with this matter. We quite sympathize with the determination of the white inhabitants of these colonies, which are in comparatively close proximity to millions and hundreds of millions of Asiatics, that there shall not be an influx of people alien in civilisation, alien in religion, alien in customs, whose influx, moreover, would most seriously interfere with the legitimate rights of the existing labour population. An immigration of that kind must, I quite understand, in the interest of the colonies, be prevented at all hazards, and we shall not offer any opposition to the proposals intended with that object, but we ask you also to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which makes no distinction in favour of or against race or colour; and to exclude by reason of their colour, or by reason of their race, all Her Majesty's Indian subjects, or even all Asiatics, would be an Act so offensive to those peoples that it would be most painful, I am quite certain, to Her Majesty to have to sanction it. Consider what has been brought to your notice during your visit to this country. The United Kingdom owns as its brightest and greatest dependency that enormous Empire of India, with three hundred million of subjects, who are as loyal to the Crown as you are yourselves, and among them there are hundreds and thousands of men who are every whit as civilised as we are ourselves, who are, if that is anything, better born in the sense that they have older traditions and older families, who are men of wealth, men of cultivation, men of distinguished valour, men who have brought whole armies and placed them at the service of the Queen, and have in times of great difficulty and trouble, such, for instance, as on the occasion of the Indian Mutiny, saved the Empire by their loyalty. I say, you, who have seen all this, cannot be willing to put upon those men a slight which I think is absolutely unnecessary for your purpose, and which would be calculated to provoke ill-feeling, discontent, irritation, and would be most unpalatable to the feelings not only of Her Majesty the Queen but of all her people.

"What I venture to think you have to deal with is the character of the immigration. It is not because a man is of a different colour from ourselves that he is necessarily an undesirable immigrant, but it is because he is dirty, or he is immoral, or he is a pauper, or he has some other objection which can be defined in an Act of Parliament, and by which the exclusion can be managed with regard to all those whom you really desire to exclude. Well, gentlemen, this is a matter I am sure for friendly consultation between us. As I have said, the Colony of Natal has arrived at an arrangement which is absolutely satisfactory to them, I believe, and, remember, they have, if possible, an even greater interest than you, because they are closer to the immigration which has already begun there on a very large scale, and they have adopted legislation which they believe will give them all that they want, and to which the objection I have taken does not apply, which does not come in conflict with this sentiment which I am sure you share with us; and I hope, therefore, that during your visit it may be possible for us to arrange a form of words which will avoid hurting the feelings of any of Her Majesty's subjects, while at the same time it would amply protect the Australian Colonies against any invasion of the class to which they would justly object. Now, gentlemen, I really owe you a humble apology for having detained you so long, but I thought that it might be to your convenience that this recapitulation should be made of some things which might be treated in our discussions, and I have only now to thank you very much for your kindness in listening to me so patiently, and to express a hope that you will be good enough to give me generally and at this stage in our proceedings your ideas as to the course which we should take in regard to our future meetings."