

Third Day.  
18 April 1907.

FUTURE  
CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
CONFERENCE.  
(Mr. Deakin.)

ference to consider in the first place and afterwards for the Secretary of State to arrange with the dominions over the seas for the date of the next meeting. What have we to do with three years or two years, or any fixed period now? How can we judge now?

Dr. JAMESON: I think it is useless; I do not think it matters very much, because if a special Conference was summoned that Conference would decide whether it was necessary to meet again within six months or four years.

Mr. DEAKIN: I do not think we gain anything by it; it is simpler without it.

CHAIRMAN: That these words be omitted. (*Carried.*) That disposes of the first paragraph, and we proceed now to the second paragraph: "That it is desirable to establish a system by which the several Governments represented shall be kept informed during the periods between the Conferences in regard to matters which have been or may be subjects for discussion by means of a permanent secretarial staff charged under the direction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies with the duty of obtaining information for the use of the Conference, of attending to its resolutions and of conducting correspondence on matters relating to its affairs."

Mr. DEAKIN: As to the word "system"—"it is desirable to establish a system by which the several Governments represented shall be kept informed"—is that intended to cover all that follows, or does that imply something more than the secretariat?

CHAIRMAN: I think we took it from the Australian resolution; we took as much as we could.

Mr. DEAKIN: Yes, but it has possibly a different complexion now. I do not know that I can suggest any amendment. You have taken the proposal that it is a system and you attach it then to the next sentence "by means of a permanent secretarial staff."

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. DEAKIN: I do not know that this qualifies it.

CHAIRMAN: You want to make it a system?

Mr. DEAKIN: Yes. The system is further defined in the concluding portion of the sentence, "obtaining information, attending to resolutions, and conducting correspondence."

CHAIRMAN: That is also taken from the Australian resolution?

Mr. DEAKIN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: I so entirely agreed with it that I wished to follow it.

Mr. DEAKIN: I am looking at these words in their present association, in order to endeavour to satisfy my mind as well as I can at the first hasty