

to ministerial responsibility, that we can incorporate them (the Agents-Generals) in the system in the sense of bringing them within the secretariat, but that we wish to improve in every way our means of communication with them and through them I think may stand without saying.

With regard to Mr. Moor's observations, I am not quite sure if I correctly followed them. I think he asked for information on practically all subjects such as commerce and the like. What this resolution immediately before us deals with, are the subjects which have been or are to be discussed at a Conference, and the secretariat is to deal with the Conference. No doubt in the organization of the office, if it is reorganized in the manner I have indicated, we shall be only too glad to do all that is in our power to further the communication of information on all subjects through that part of the office to the self-governing Colonies, whether it deals with matters connected with the Conference itself or beyond it.

Those are my views as far as I can form them on the spur of the moment on the opinions expressed. I do not know whether Sir Wilfrid Laurier would still wish to postpone a decision on this question, or whether we may decide it now.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I am quite satisfied upon the principle conceded, that what is done is to be done on direct responsibility. That is the only subject, as originally proposed, to which I demurred, because it seemed to be the creation of an independent body. The moment it is recognised here that it is to be under direct responsibility, I am satisfied. I am quite prepared to accept the new principle, but I would not like to commit myself immediately to the drafting of the resolution, which perhaps may be improved. Before we go any further, I would like to call Mr Deakin's attention to that part which is taken from the draft sent by Australia, "Attending to its resolutions." Will Mr. Deakin kindly explain what he means by that?

Mr. DEAKIN: May I, without reiteration, say something which appears to be necessary in the way of self-justification before answering Sir Wilfrid Laurier's question. It must be due to my clumsy method of handling my argument, but I appear to have conveyed my meaning so unfortunately as to suggest to you, my lord, that I have been rudely reflecting upon this great department. Of course, I do not speak without premeditation, but without a studied choice of epithets. I should have preferred to handle this subject without "brushing the dust off a butterfly's wings," if I could have accomplished my object. I had to convey our sense of dissatisfaction, but have failed, apparently, to explain its cause. May I say that the dictatorial attitude, which may be usually properly defended, so far as it exists, does not, so far as my knowledge goes, exist at all to any notable extent. That is not our complaint. Our complaint is not that we are treated too peremptorily, but that representations of ours are met neither with an understanding of the real causes from which they spring or of our precise intention. Our responsible and representative governments are dealt with as you deal with a well-meaning Governor or well-intentioned nominee council. Sufficient knowledge of our circumstances on many questions would show that we were expressing the sentiments of the great body of our people who have considered some question or questions which directly and materially affect them, and regarding which they have formed strong and clear conclusions. Our representations are met, as you are quite entitled to meet them if you please, by an absolute refusal in some cases, or by a qualified refusal in other cases. With that we have not so much dispute as with the fact that we seem to be refused, not merely upon inadequate, but upon inappropriate or unreal grounds. The particular representations we make are

Third Day.
18 April 1907.

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FUTURE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
CONFERENCE.
(Chairman.)