

Mr. F. R. MOOR : Personally, I should like to use a happier term as reflecting the Colonies we represent in South Africa. We have not yet got to that condition of things when we might be safely designated as Dominions, and I think, with Sir Wilfrid Laurier, it might be just as well to think the matter over carefully.

Third Day.
18 April 1907.

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FUTURE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
CONFERENCE.

Mr. DEAKIN : There is no possible objection to that, except the natural disappointment of the public, which, however, might be mitigated if the *précis* of the discussion were now presented without giving the resolution arrived at—just the outline of the discussion in a general way. Otherwise, if they have to wait until Saturday, it means that Australia will not have the information until Monday or Tuesday.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL : As I understand, we have really got through the committee stage and the report stage, and all that remains, with regard to the resolution, is the third reading; so that we shall not have to begin detailed consideration again.

CHAIRMAN : I understand that we pass the Resolution, and it is only a question of wording which remains open.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : It stands for third reading, as Mr. Churchill says, and we have time to consider the expressions.

Mr. DEAKIN : There is no objection now to a *précis* being given to the Press.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : I would not give the *précis* until we give the Resolution itself.

CHAIRMAN : The next meeting of the Conference is fixed for Saturday, at 11 o'clock. There were two other points on the agenda paper for to-day. One is as to the organization of the Colonial Office which was incidentally mentioned in the discussion, and I do not know that I have any more to say than I have said, but if Mr. Deakin wishes to have it further discussed we had better defer it to another day.

Mr. DEAKIN : I would like some further discussion upon it.

CHAIRMAN : The other resolution is with regard to Imperial Defence. That Resolution is from Australia : "That it is desirable that the Colonies should be represented on the Imperial Council of Defence, and that the Colonies be authorised to refer to that Council for advice any local questions in regard to which any expert opinion or assistance is deemed desirable." Perhaps if I make the statement which the Prime Minister has given me, it would meet the whole case. The Prime Minister considers that it might be with advantage made clear to the representatives of the Colonies at the coming Conference that the Committee of Imperial Defence is intended to provide the means of discussing questions of a general or local character relating to defence. It should, therefore, be open to the Government of any self-governing Colony to submit these questions through the Colonial Office and to obtain such advice as the Committee is able to give. If so desired any representative of a colony which may wish for advice may be summoned to attend as a member of the Committee during the discussion on the question raised.