

Fifth Day.
23 April 1907.

MILITARY
DEFENCE.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : And the responsibility for any particular officer so selected would continue to the particular Government under which he was serving.

Mr. HALDANE : He would be a member of their General Staff detailed for this general service.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : Yes, I think that is so. There is one word here which it is thought might be improved—"fostering."

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : I merely make just this suggestion, that instead of "which shall be the means of fostering the study of military science," we should say, "which shall study military science." I do not care very much which it is.

Mr. HALDANE : Yes, "which shall study military science in all its branches." That is quite as good. If that is agreed to I have no criticism upon it.

Mr. DEAKIN : I have some abbreviations to suggest.

Mr. HALDANE : Then it will be "which shall study military science in all its branches."

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : I think that is all, as far as I am concerned.

Mr. DEAKIN : Will Sir Frederick Borden kindly listen to this, and see if it will not simplify it—"That this Conference," omitting the next two words, "cordially approving the exposition of general principles embodied in the statement of the Secretary of State for War"—omitting the next words and substituting "recommends to the Governments represented"—omitting the next words "the need of developing for the service of the Empire a General Staff selected from the forces of the Empire." So that it would read: "That this Conference, cordially approving"—this is all we do—"the exposition of general principles embodied in the statement of the Secretary of State for War, recommends to the Governments represented the need of developing for the service of the Empire a General Staff selected from the forces." Would that meet your view, Mr. Haldane?

Mr. HALDANE : That meets my view. It is shorter, and I am in favour of anything that is short.

Mr. DEAKIN : It gets rid of a good many words; we cordially approve the exposition of general principles, and recommend to our Governments the need of developing a general staff.

Mr. HALDANE : "Recommend the desirability" might be better.

Mr. DEAKIN : Very good; I was only shortening it. It is at present rather winding.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : Sometimes it is well to have these long statements, and I would let it stand as it is.