

Tenth Day.
2 May 1907.

PREFERENTIAL
TRADE.

Dr. JAMESON : The point Mr. Moor wishes to make is that you need not, therefore, be frightened of retaliatory measures by foreign countries. There was retaliation on the part of Russia, and, notwithstanding that, they take more tea. One of your points at the beginning of your address was that, supposing this preferential system was adopted, India would suffer very much probably from retaliation by foreign nations.

Sir JAMES MACKAY : One of the points in my address was that it had been argued that India could not suffer by retaliation from foreign countries, because in many of her exports she had a monopoly.

Dr. JAMESON : Then I made a mistake. That it might suffer I thought was a strong point made against our theory of preference. If you say India would not suffer from retaliation on the part of foreign countries, that is satisfactory.

General BOTHA : Lord Elgin, and gentlemen, I have listened with great attention to all the arguments on this question, but I have not been able to bring myself so far to acquiesce and agree with all that has been said here. The question of preferential trade is a matter that was handled by the Crown Colony Government in the Transvaal, and they had a Customs Conference, but the people of the Transvaal have never been consulted on the question of preferential trade. I myself have had no time to get a mandate from the people of the Transvaal on the matter, and I must state that all I can now do is to express the opinion that the resolution of 1902 should continue to stand as it does. I do not see any chance of pressing upon the Mother Country any addition to that resolution. The position that we take in the Transvaal, now that we have Responsible Government, is that the Mother Country ought to leave us alone as much as possible, to regulate our own affairs, and, therefore, it is all the more difficult for me to come here and interfere with matters concerning the Mother Country. So far as I can judge the situation, it appears to me that the British people made their voice and opinion heard on this matter during the last general election in England; and, therefore, I am only prepared to stand by the Resolution of 1902, and not to go further. And I only want to say this, that although no preference is given by the Mother Country to the Transvaal, the bond between the Transvaal and the Mother Country will not thereby be weakened. That is all I have to say.

Sir ROBERT BOND : Lord Elgin, and gentlemen, the views of the Colony that I represent were set forth by me at the last Conference, and I stand in somewhat the same position in respect to the resolutions before the Chair as the Prime Minister of Canada. The resolution which will be found on page 36 of the Blue Book was concurred in by me, and I shall therefore adhere to it, especially as my Government are at the present time taking steps to see how the principle contained therein can best be carried into effect. I shall again support that resolution when submitted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier as I understood from his remarks on Tuesday last it will be. In the meantime I should like to express my deep appreciation of the very able manner in which the resolutions now before the Chair were put forward by the Prime Minister of Australia, and to say on behalf of my government that we desire to co-operate in every way possible towards the establishment of preferential trade between the Colonies themselves and between the Colonies and the United Kingdom.