

being misinterpreted. I was speaking to an audience of ladies—the Victoria League—where I met a deputation from the British Women's Emigration League. Both in speaking to me complained as others did of not receiving the encouragement which they thought they were entitled to from the Government of this country. Their complaints related to matters extending over a certain number of years, and therefore refers not to any particular government but to your governments in general. Complaints of what we in the Colonies with our habits of State action certainly consider an unsympathetic attitude in your governments and departments generally are constantly made. I was speaking on that platform in that relation, urging them not to cease their admirable work of sending out women of character and reputation and assisting them to become established in the Colonies, nor to cease to use your educational systems to familiarise them with our advantages. I urged them not to be discouraged by any cold-shouldering on the part of governments or their departments. Some of my colleagues here were present. I was urging them not to relax their efforts nor to permit themselves to be crushed, but to appeal from the departmental neglect and to rely upon public support to enable them to do what we in the Colonies think our Governments ought to assist them in doing there. It was in that particular relation the word "cold shoulder" was used. I had not at the moment anything in my mind that has transpired at this Conference.

Eleventh Day.
6 May 1907.
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PREFERENTIAL
TRADE.
(Mr. Deakin.)

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : I am sure I am delighted to hear that.

Mr. ASQUITH : And I, too.

Mr. DEAKIN : If I had anything to say on that topic that would not have been the meeting or the place at which I should have said it.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : That is what I thought. It would have been better to say it here face to face. I am not quarrelling so much with what you said as with the interpretation placed upon it by certain journals. I am not sorry I have referred to it, because it has given Mr. Deakin the opportunity of clearing up that matter.

Mr. DEAKIN : I have corrected it in several places already.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : All I say is, that we have given to the Colonies the answer which they would have given us if we had endeavoured to induce them for Imperial or other reasons to change their fiscal system, a system established, according to Mr. Deakin, purely in the interests of Australia. That is the fiscal system you consider best in the interest of Australia.

Mr. DEAKIN : Our fiscal system in the interest of Australia and our preference system to the interest of the Empire.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : We could have given them no other reply to any proposal which involved the taxing of the food of the people; and the Colonial representatives knew that before they started for this Conference. I would ask them to consider what are the conditions of a thickly-populated country like ours, dependent for its supplies on other lands. If Australia and New Zealand had the same population per square mile as Great Britain has, then the Australian census would reveal the presence of more than a thousand millions of men and women and children crowded on Australian soil, dependent inevitably as we are for the very necessities of life upon what is brought to their harbours of the surplus of other lands. Let Australia pray God, when that time comes, that she may have no slums on her soul.