

co-operation is impossible because we do not take the same view about fiscal matters. It would be a very sad thing for the Empire.

Dr. JAMESON : I should be delighted if Sir Joseph Ward's suggestion of co-operation is put. I would vote for it with both hands without this first part.

Twelfth Day.
7 May 1907.

PREFERENTIAL
TRADE.
(Mr. Lloyd
George.)

Mr. DEAKIN : Dr. Jameson wants this without the preamble.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : I think the preamble is all right.

Dr. JAMESON : This puts us in a ridiculous position. We have said the members of this Conference outside His Majesty's Government are in favour of preference as a method of the unity or whatever you like to call it. His Majesty's Government gives a direct negative, and we are both to vote for liberty of action. It is quite true we have liberty of action, so it means nothing. We all agree we are to have liberty of action, but what is implied in this is that we are voting Yes is No, and No is Yes.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : I do not quite see that, for this reason. We, the whole of us, affirm that we reserve the undoubted right for our self-governing Colonies to do what we think right in our own borders, and we will, none of us, give it up. The British Government say exactly the same thing. It is evident they cannot vote for preference. It is equally evident that we all voted for preference. You cannot do more than to make a declaration as to what you want. Unless we are unanimous and all agreeable to enter into preference treaties and systems, you cannot get a preferential treaty. That is a certainty. There is not much to be gained by saying we make a declaration in our speeches—which we have all done,—and when it comes to a resolution we are all going to vote one way and the British Government the other. It follows, as a matter of procedure, that if they do not vote we cannot get preference unless they assent to it. So I want to bring about the feeling of co-operation at the end of the resolution, believing there is to be more done in the future, and that we cannot do everything to-day.

CHAIRMAN : I do not wish to raise unnecessary objections in the least. Perhaps, with the prudence of a Scotsman, I rather wanted to see it in writing. I have seen it in writing now, and we have no objection to adding those words proposed by Sir Joseph Ward.

Dr. JAMESON : If Sir Joseph Ward will allow me to answer what you have said, it seems to me this would have been an admirable resolution before we started the question at all, whether there should be preference or not. We ought to start on that basis because we all believe it; but having gone on that and come to absolutely opposite positions, to now bring in the liberty of action surely is absolutely useless, and the only reason it can be brought forward is to emphasise the fact that all we have done is not worth anything.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : I think, on the contrary, His Majesty's Government has come a good way down to meet us here. They say, "Very well, we accept the resolutions you have just affirmed, but we want each party to be left to decide how to do it."

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : Yes, but let us co-operate where we can.

Dr. JAMESON : Outside the preference question this would be admirable.