

Dr. JAMESON : Very well, I will propose it.

Mr. ASQUITH : This is as to preference on present dutiable articles. I am not going to take up any time. You understand our position in the matter. We think it would concede the principle without doing any substantial good to anybody.

Twelfth Day.
7 May 1907.

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PREFERENTIAL
TRADE.

Dr. JAMESON : Yes, I understand that, but the main reason is it will help me to keep the preference going in South Africa if I put it here, even if I only vote for it myself, but I hope General Botha will vote with me on it.

CHAIRMAN : The resolution moved by Dr. Jameson is : "That while affirming the resolution of 1902 this Conference is of opinion that as the British Government through the South African Customs Union—which comprises Basutoland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate—do at present allow a preference against foreign countries to the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and all other British Possessions granting reciprocity, His Majesty's Government should now take into consideration the possibility of granting a like preference to all portions of the Empire on the present dutiable articles in the British tariff."

Mr. DEAKIN : It is only a request to consider. You do not dissent from that ?

Dr. JAMESON : The consideration of possibly doing it.

Mr. DEAKIN : You are not asked to say you will do it or not.

Mr. ASQUITH : We have considered it.

Mr. DEAKIN : You can consider it again.

Mr. ASQUITH : If you please we will take the same attitude with regard to this as with regard to the other—an attitude of reservation. We do not conceive we are free to do this.

Mr. DEAKIN : You are always free to consider it if not free to grant it.

Dr. SMARTT : You are doing it at the present moment.

Mr. ASQUITH : I was not aware of the case of Bechuanaland and Basutoland.

Dr. JAMESON : It has been very advantageous to those two Protectorates.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : That means a reduction in your duties if it is given effect to—not an imposition of duties.

Mr. DEAKIN : It means only a reduction if it is granted, but it does not promise that any reduction will be granted.

Mr. ASQUITH : But it means that we are to consider the question whether we shall treat the foreigners and the Colonies as it were differently, and that we conceive we are not able to do.