

23 May, 1911.]

AGENDA AND DAYS FOR MEETINGS.

[1st Day.

Mr. FISHER : I am prepared to go right on; I think that is enough.

General BOTHA : Hear, hear.

The PRESIDENT : You will observe, as regards the subjects put down for Friday next and Monday and Tuesday next, it is suggested, as I said in my opening remarks, that it would be more convenient to have the discussion of them at the Committee of Imperial Defence, the reasons being that we should there have the presence of all our great experts, military and naval, both Sir Arthur Wilson from the Admiralty—

Mr. FISHER : But you have passed over the questions, under Tuesday, of the Imperial Council and the Organization of the Colonial Office.

The PRESIDENT : I am coming back to that. I am only dealing with the dates of the sittings just now. I suppose we are all agreed that it would be better that these military and naval defence matters should be discussed at the Committee of Imperial Defence. (Agreed.)

There are some subjects which are so technical, and also which for the most part do not cover a very wide range, that it is thought it might be more convenient that they should be discussed by committees of the Conference. It would be almost a waste of time to bring the whole Conference to bear upon them. You will see on Thursday, June 1st, there are some of these Board of Trade subjects—Labour Exchanges; the Enforcement of Arbitration Awards; Weights and Measures; International Exhibitions, and so on. They are not unimportant, but they are very much committee points, and I think the Conference would probably agree that it would be a saving in time and labour if they were relegated to a committee. I think the same may probably be said of these matters—they are highly technical, although they are highly important—which are put under the headings of the Treasury : Double Income Tax; Double Estate Duty; and Stamp Duty on Colonial Bonds. Both New Zealand and South Africa are interested in those, I think; South Africa I know is.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, of course, will attend the discussion of those matters, with the Secretary of the Treasury, and I think probably, as they are highly technical, they might be more conveniently dealt with in committee. Possibly the same observations might apply, if you turn over the page, to certain of what I will call Home Office Questions, particularly uniformity in Accident Compensation, Immigration, and Aliens Exclusion law. Those, I think, are mainly topics suggested by New Zealand, Sir Joseph, and if for any reason you think they should be discussed in plenary conference—

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : May I interject a word? What advantage would there be in having these matters discussed in committee before being referred to here? Would it not be better to have them first mooted here and afterwards dealt with in committee?

The PRESIDENT : If you please.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Yes, for instance, immigration and the exclusion of aliens are very important.

The PRESIDENT : That probably would be the more convenient way—to bring them in the first instance before the Conference, and if we find it necessary, we can refer them to committees.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : I suppose some of them could be disposed of immediately at the Conference.