

*2nd Day.]*

IMPERIAL COUNCIL.

[25 May, 1911.]

The PRESIDENT : You treat them as separate States ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Perhaps if you would allow me, I might go on to the functions of this Council. That the functions of this Council are to be limited and to be mainly consultative and revisory. (7) An Executive to consist of not more than 15, of whom not more than one be chosen from the members of the Senate. That there be transferred to this Imperial Parliament of Defence exclusively :—(a) Those matters common to the whole Empire—that is, all those in which every part of it is alike interested.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : Will that be concerning defence only, or everything ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : It is to deal with defence in times of peace and war—that is, Imperial Defence.

Mr. PEARCE : Shipping ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : No.

Mr. FISHER : I understood you to call it an Imperial Parliament of Defence; that is one of the difficulties we meet with. This is going to deal with general subjects, and the difficulty of it is that you stated definitely just now that it would be an Imperial Parliament of Defence.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : So far as the name is concerned, that is so. After you have heard what I suggest, if the name is in any way anomalous to the proposals contained in it, I have not the slightest objection to changing it. There is no trouble about the name so far as I am concerned; but I want to try and indicate what I believe would be a good thing if it could be carried out.

Mr. FISHER : I am very sorry to interrupt you, but the point is this : this is a select body from Members of Parliament called specially to deal with defence, I understand, and now you are trenching on to other subjects besides defence.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : No.

Mr. FISHER : I beg your pardon.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : (a) Only in regard to those matters common to the whole Empire—that is, all those in which every part of it is alike interested. I am dealing with naval defence. (b) Those matters which can be satisfactorily undertaken only by the Empire as a whole. Including :—(1) Peace and war treaties and foreign relations generally.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : Does that treat with commerce ?

The PRESIDENT : It is not defence.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : It is all bearing on defence.

Mr. FISHER : I do not understand it in that light.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : I will try to make it as clear as I can.

The PRESIDENT : It is to have exclusive control over the Empire as a whole in all questions involving peace or war.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : That is so, with England reigning supreme upon it.