

25 May, 1911.]

IMPERIAL COUNCIL.

[2nd Day.]

The PRESIDENT: The new body is to have that exclusive power of treaties and foreign relations too.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: (1) Peace and war treaties and foreign relations generally. (2) Imperial Defence and the providing of the revenues for the foregoing purposes and for the general support of this Imperial proposal.

For the first 10 years after the first election of this Parliament it shall have no power of taxation, but the amount payable by each of the oversea Dominions represented as its proportion of the revenue required for the purposes I have indicated shall be deemed to be a debt due by each Dominion and shall be raised and paid by that Dominion to the Exchequer of the Imperial Parliament of Defence. (B) At the expiration of 10 years such amount shall be raised and paid in such manner as the respective Dominions agree to. (c) This Imperial Parliament to determine the amount to be contributed by the overseas Dominions for the following purposes: (1) Imperial Defence, (2) War. The amount to be contributed by the oversea Dominions, estimated *per capita* of population, not to exceed 50 per cent. of the amount (estimated *per capita* of population) contributed by the United Kingdom for these purposes; but for all other purposes the contributions shall be on an equal *per capita* basis. This is dealing entirely with defence, and with the Imperial relations, and with the relations that are closely allied with defence of those matters which may bring the whole Empire into a war.

Mr. PEARCE: Would you mind repeating the proportions? I did not catch your figures as to the proportion they should contribute.

Mr. FISHER: The United Kingdom twice the amount of the oversea Dominions.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: That is so; the amount to be so contributed for Imperial Defence and War shall, estimated *per capita* of population, not exceed 50 per cent. of the amount (estimated *per capita* of population) contributed by the United Kingdom for these purposes; but for all other purposes the contributions shall be on an equal *per capita* basis. And the reason for that must be obvious: at present the British interests are so very much greater than those of the outlying Possessions that it is only a fair proposition to concede that there should be a difference as between them, and I believe the difference suggested here is not an unfair one.

In submitting this matter I have not interfered—and I do not propose now, except so far as to indicate what is passing through my mind, to interfere in any way in connection with the politics of the Homeland. I have not done so at any time, and in anything I am stating here I am stating it only from the point of view that I believe that circumstances in the future will call for it as being required to enable the great work of Empire to be carried on successfully. What I am indicating here presupposes in the United Kingdom a completed system of local autonomy for the national divisions of the Kingdom, each, including England, having its own Parliament—

The PRESIDENT: What we call Home Rule all round.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: Yes. Of course, I am not discussing the pros and cons of it, but what I am suggesting here presupposes that a system of that kind will be brought into being; and if I may be allowed to say so, in my opinion, as one who is perhaps entitled to express his opinion in connection with a matter of this kind, it appears to me to be a necessity in connection with the development that has taken place both in the Old World and in its relationship to the outlying portions of it, and to other important countries too, that such a system should be brought into being.

Presupposing that that alteration should be made, as an outcome of that alteration necessarily there would be a tremendous change made in the Old Country in connection with the present Imperial Parliament. As I have said, what I am suggesting presupposes developments taking place in the Old Land in that respect.