

2nd Day.]

RECONSTITUTION OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

[25 May, 1911.]

Sir JOSEPH WARD: That is a different point. I hope this proposed Committee will not be dropped. I look upon it as a step in the right direction, but I should, in principle, object to that Committee voting on any matter, because the whole essence of the proceedings of such a Committee would be unanimity of decision; otherwise one Dominion could refuse to act, and then the whole spirit of co-operation would disappear. Such a Committee, however, is what I want.

Mr. FISHER: What about a record being made?

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I think they ought to have a record of their proceedings.

Mr. FISHER: A record of all that has been said?

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I do not think that is necessary, but certainly a record of resolutions.

Mr. FISHER: I do not want a record of what is said.

Mr. HARCOURT: A record, if any, would be only minutes of the meetings.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I do hope we shall not abandon the setting up of such a Committee, because it is the only bridge we shall have between the Conferences.

Mr. FISHER: Could we pass this matter by in the meantime, and try to draft some resolution in words which will meet the wishes of the Conference in the matter?

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I should be quite agreeable to that, of course, if Mr. Harcourt concurs. It is a matter which requires a little consideration, and I am ready to meet the suggestion which has been made, that we should postpone it until to-morrow.

The PRESIDENT: To-morrow we are otherwise engaged, but it can be postponed until a later day.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: Yes, I think that would be better.

The PRESIDENT: If you think there is any probability of agreement upon the subject.

Mr. FISHER: It is only postponed for the purpose of drafting a proposal. We should not re-discuss it.

Mr. PEARCE: Might I make the suggestion that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should put his proposals in print and let us see them?

The PRESIDENT: Yes, if you like we will circulate a memorandum. I think that a most reasonable suggestion.

Mr. HARCOURT: Yes, I will do that.

"That it is desirable that all matters relating to self-governing Dominions as well as permanent Secretariat of the Imperial Conference, be placed directly under the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom."

The PRESIDENT: Before passing from the subject, I should like to say a word in regard to a proposal made on the Agenda Paper in the name of the Union of South Africa—that the matters relating to the self-governing Dominions