

glad to hear what was said about reparation. Apparently I missed the report of the negotiations: in all probability the negotiations took place between the time I left New Zealand and before I arrived here.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE: That is so, I think.

MR. MASSEY: I should be very glad indeed to hear a statement made—not merely on my own account, for I know it will be of interest to every one present—of what the exact position is so far as reparation is concerned.

LORD CURZON: If we circulate the short statement upon that question it might save trouble.

MR. MASSEY: Thank you, that will be good enough for me.

LORD CURZON: I will certainly let you have it.

FUTURE OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

MR. MASSEY: I want briefly to refer to some matters which I think should be dealt with. The League of Nations has already been referred to. I do not know what the future of the League of Nations is going to be, or what effect it will have in preventing war. I should like to think it would do all that it was intended to do by its promoters, but we know, most of us, in past history that attempts to prevent war have failed. The Holy Alliance, arising out of the Congress of Vienna, was just one, and had a similar intention to the League of Nations. I do not want to say the League of Nations is beyond hope, because I know better; but the Holy Alliance did fail. I do not want to find fault with the League of Nations—but until we change human nature I am afraid it will be impossible to prevent war, much as we should like to do it.

IMPERIAL COMMUNICATIONS.

Then there is the Imperial Shipping Committee set up in pursuance of a resolution passed at a previous Imperial Conference. I refer to what is termed the Imperial Shipping Committee, but I understand it is only a temporary arrangement. In the first place, I thought it was to be a permanent organization, but so far it is only temporary. I do not know when its term of office comes to an end, but I do want to emphasize that the matter of communication between different parts of the Empire is probably one of the most vital things that this Conference could deal with. It is the old story of the highways. If we do not have good highways between different parts of the Empire, then we shall find ourselves in very serious trouble; and there is a very great deal of dissatisfaction at present with the manner in which shipping matters between different countries of the Empire are being dealt with or arranged. I do not want to make difficulties, but I think the position should be faced and some better arrangements made. I want to say a few words about the holding of future Conferences. One of the difficulties is, as Mr. Hughes and myself well know, that it is a long journey from Australia and New Zealand to the heart of the Empire, making it almost impossible to attend these gatherings yearly; and I think these Conferences should be held yearly; but if anything is going to be done in that way, we can look forward to improvements in wireless and improvements in the cable system, yet anything that we do at present must be based upon steamships and railways. Something ought to be done, and, while I do not want to commit the country to it, it may resolve itself into a question of subsidies, so that we may get our mails carried, and passengers carried, and our products carried from one country to the other at the lowest possible rates consistent with fair profits, and, so far as mails and passengers are concerned, in a very much shorter time than it is taking at present.

SITUATION IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

There is just one word I want to say regarding another subject, and I am only going to refer to it by way of emphasizing the necessity of something being done. I mean the difficulty in the New Hebrides, where there is a dual form of Government. I am sure most of the members of the Conference understand the position in the New Hebrides and the conditions under which the people are governed at present. The present system is absolutely unworkable, and getting into a worse condition all the time. I do not know what to suggest—except that it might be possible to