

arrange an exchange of territory so as to provide one Government for these islands ; that ought to be a matter to be put before the French Government. There is no question about the fertility of the islands. There is quite a large area, and a large native population rapidly diminishing in number.

IMPERIAL CONFERENCES SHOULD NOT ALWAYS BE HELD IN LONDON.

In conclusion, I would like to say a word on behalf of the Dominions. I have the utmost affection for the heart of the Empire—it is the Mecca of every British citizen ; but I do think that, in the interests of both the statesmen of the United Kingdom and the people of the Dominions, that meetings should be held periodically in the overseas countries of the Empire. If my suggestion is given effect to it would give the Prime Minister and Mr. Churchill — not both perhaps together — an opportunity of visiting the Dominions. You cannot govern the Empire from the windows of Downing Street. I do hope the opportunity will be taken by statesmen at present in the United Kingdom to visit the overseas countries of the Empire, and they will then understand the views of these countries and the aspirations of their peoples. I do not think that there is anything else I want to say at this juncture. I had no idea that I should take up so much time. I should just like to say this : The people in New Zealand never before seemed to appreciate to the same extent the importance of the Imperial Conference until this occasion. They were perhaps never so enthusiastic on any previous occasions. There was practically no opposition to my coming to London, and the one point that was impressed upon me in Parliament and at the public meetings which I attended a few days prior to leaving the Dominion—the one point that was impressed upon me—was to stand for unity of Empire, and if I stood by that they would forgive all my shortcomings in other directions. I have nothing more to say, Prime Minister, and again I thank the members of this Conference for listening to me so attentively as they have done.

OPENING SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE SRINIVASA SASTRI.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE (to the Honourable S. Sastri) : Would you begin now, do you think ?

THE HONOURABLE SRINIVASA SASTRI : I will take about fifteen to twenty minutes.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE : We have plenty of time, then, for that.

INDIA'S ENTHUSIASM FOR THE EMPIRE.

THE HONOURABLE SRINIVASA SASTRI : In the memorable speech to which we listened yesterday you made a striking allusion to the generous enthusiasms and noble ideals for humanity which the war has kindled everywhere. India, let me assure you, is actuated by these enthusiasms and ideals in the same measure as other parts of this Empire. That the British Empire is the most fitting exponent of these enthusiasms and ideals we realize, and it is the peculiar good fortune of India to remain within the British Empire and take part in the work that we need ever increasingly for the realization of these noble aims and purposes.

The Princes for whom my friend, His Highness the Maharao of Cutch, will speak, and the peoples of India whom it is my privilege to represent here to-day, send their hearty allegiance to the Central Council of Empire on this occasion. We made our contributions to the conduct of the recent war ; we sent you supplies of wheat, making dangerous inroads on the scanty stocks of our own people. We made munitions for the soldiers to use on the field of battle, we made money contributions out of our poverty, and we sent you men to the tune of 1,274,000, which comes up to over one-half of the total overseas forces employed in the war.

DIFFERENCE IN STATUS OF INDIA'S REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PREMIERS OF THE DOMINIONS.

Of these contributions, Prime Minister, you made handsome acknowledgment yesterday, and please accept our gratitude for the honourable mention of that fact in your speech. We, His Highness the Maharao of Cutch and I, consider it a privilege to sit at this table where history is made, and if I may strike a somewhat