

inter-Imperial relations, foreign policy, defence, and Empire trade and oversea settlement. He also suggested certain directions in which further progress was possible.

Speeches were made in reply by the Prime Ministers of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, and Newfoundland, by the President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, and by the Maharaja of Burdwan for India. The Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs also made a short statement on the establishment in 1925 of the Dominions Office as a separate office from the Colonial Office. In the course of this statement he mentioned that Southern Rhodesia being now a self-governing colony, he proposed to ask the High Commissioner in London to assist him in matters arising at the Conference, particularly on the economic side, where the interests of Southern Rhodesia were concerned. These opening speeches were published in full immediately afterwards.

### III. MESSAGE TO THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN.

In accordance with the practice followed on previous occasions, the first official act of the Conference was to send a message of greeting to Their Majesties the King and Queen. The words of this message were :—

“The Prime Ministers and other representatives of the Governments of the British Empire assembled in Conference, at their first meeting and as their first official act, desire to express their respectful greetings and fidelity to the King, and their earnest hope that Your Majesty and Her Majesty the Queen may long be spared to strengthen the ties of affection and devotion which unite the peoples of the British Commonwealth under the Crown.”

His Majesty's gracious reply was read aloud by the Prime Minister of Great Britain at the meeting on the 20th October, and was in the following terms :—

“I have received with feelings of appreciation and gratitude the message which, as your first official act, you have been good enough to address to me. The Queen joins with me in thanking you for your good wishes. I shall follow with interest and sympathy your discussions of those important questions which will come before you, and the settlement of which, I trust, will promote the unity and greatness of the Commonwealth of the British Nations.—GEORGE, R.I.”

### IV. LOSS OF H.M.S. “VALERIAN.”

At the meeting held on the 26th October the Conference passed the following resolution of sympathy in the loss of H.M.S. “Valerian,” which was sunk off Bermuda in a hurricane on the 22nd October with the loss of eighty-five lives :—

“The Conference desires, on behalf of all parts of the Empire, to place on record their deep sorrow at the loss of H.M.S. “Valerian” with so many valuable lives of officers and men, whilst returning from a cruise undertaken to enable His Excellency the Governor of the Bahamas to survey and relieve the damage done to the Islands by the previous hurricane.

“As representatives of the Governments of the Empire we are profoundly conscious of the services rendered by the Royal Navy not only in war, but also in peace, and of the risks and dangers constantly endured by officers and men in carrying out their duties, and we desire to express our deep sympathy with the relatives and friends of those who have lost their lives whilst so engaged.”

### V. PUBLICITY.

The Conference decided that as regards the question of publicity the procedure and arrangements should be similar to those adopted in 1923.

At the unanimous wish of the Conference, Mr. J. C. C. Davidson, C.H., C.B., M.P., Parliamentary and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, who had been in charge of the general arrangements as to publicity in 1923, was asked again to undertake the work in consultation with the members of the Conference and their staffs, and to be present at the meetings of the Conference.