There were sundry other points. The Administrator, they said, ought not himself to have gone into the field. Even this criticism I am bound to say I have never fully understood. It was not as if Mr. Hofmeyr had taken technical control of the aeroplane. Was it really his duty, while retaining, as he must, the formal, to offload on to his subordinates the *real*, responsibility for taking action? Was his function properly that of a colonel acting as umpire while his battalion practises skirmishing under his second-in-command? However, as the Council endorsed this criticism, I take it there must be something in it.

In view of the circumstance that, in Major Herbst's words, "the whole point on which they (the Bondelzwarts) went to war was that they refused to deliver up Morris"[1]—who "had contravened three laws"[2]—to the police authorities to stand his trial in a court of justice, there is a certain irony—or perhaps you will say a certain fitness—in the fact that this Mr. Hofmeyr, this first person to use under the League's auspices overwhelming force, in the interests of peace, against those who with violence refused "arbitration", should subsequently, at the 1924 Assembly, have been the first delegate to cast—in the name of "Afrique du Sud"—a solemn vote in favour of the Protocol.

VI. An Attempted General Sizing up.

§1. *A truly "Special" Relationship.*

My purpose to-day is to conclude this course with an attempt to sum up in a general way the attitude and policy of the several Dominions as members of the League: but before doing so I think it well to recall to your minds the peculiar, not easily definable character of the "special relationship" recognised as subsisting between the Dominions and Great Britain. A quotation or two may help me. Here, for instance, is Mr. Doherty, Minister of

[1] *Ib.*, p. 121.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 122.

Justice, explaining to the Canadian House of Commons the concept of Canadian nationality:

> The purpose of the Bill was to define what constituted a Canadian national.[1] It did not contemplate in any way to affect the status of any Canadian as a British subject. Notwithstanding its enactment they would all remain, of course, British subjects; and under the definition as proposed nobody would be a Canadian national who was not a British subject. But the purpose of the Bill was to define a particular class of British subject who, in addition to having all the rights and all the obligations of British subjects, had particular rights because of the fact they were Canadians. He thought they had always understood that without a specific statutory definition there had for a long time been such a person as a Canadian.

Or again, listen to the Irish Minister for External Affairs informing the Dail in Dublin of the footing on which the Irish Free State has become a party to the Court Statute:

> After further examination of the position with reference to the Court it was decided that as the ratification of the late United Kingdom covered the Saorstat, and that as they could be held to be bound by it, the League should be notified that they wished to be placed on the list of States that had accepted the Statute.[2] The League was so informed on 25th August . . . "It is merely a request that our name should be put down as adhering to a Covenant which we were already bound by."

And yet the Irish Free State was not deemed to have become *ipso facto* a member of the League!

How and when did Dominion status originate? This is the South African Premier referring, after the 1926 Imperial Conference, to some by-gone judicial proceedings:

> (That was) "previous to the new status. May I correct myself? I should not speak about 'new status', but only the status as stated lately."[3]

When did Dominion nationhood originate? Commenting, in the Canadian Parliament, in 1921, on what had been described as the customary procedure in the making of trade-agreements,

[1] J.P.E. II.2, p. 327.
[2] J.P.E. VIII.1, p. 190.
[3] J.P.E. VIII.3, p. 641.

an honourable member observed "that was prior to our becoming a nation ".[1] " Oh no, " replied the Minister of Trade and Commerce, " it is said that Canada became a nation a long time ago, during Sir Wilfrid Laurier's time. "

Perhaps a still clearer light on the extremely simple constitution of the Commonwealth will be got from the declaration concerning Nauru, made in 1923 by Sir Joseph Cook to the Permanent Mandates Commission. This from the official Minutes:

> " Sir Joseph Cook said that in this respect the representatives of the three Powers might be regarded as a trinity in unity.[2] He represented the British Empire for the simple reason that Australia had been selected by the three sections of the Mandatory Power to govern the island of Nauru.
>
> " Last year some confusion had existed in the minds of the Commission as to the functions of the Nauru Phosphate Company, and on the question of how far the exercise of those functions impinged upon the functions of the Administrator. This question, however, had now been made clear by an agreement signed by the three sections of the Mandatory Power, in which it was laid down that:
>
> > "" All ordinances made by the Administrator shall be subject to confirmation or disallowance in the name of His Majesty, whose pleasure in respect of such confirmation or disallowance shall be signified by one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, or by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia acting on the advice of the Federal Executive Council of the Commonwealth, or by the Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand acting on the advice of the Executive Council of the Dominion, according as the Administrator shall have been appointed by His Majesty's Government in London, or by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, or by the Government of the Dominion of New Zealand, as the case may be. ""

The chairman, we are informed, on behalf of the Commission, " took note " of this statement made by Sir Joseph Cook. It was all that he could do, poor man!

As further evidence of the intimacy of the association between the Dominions and England you may notice the appointment in several cases of an English public man to represent a Dominion

[1] J.P.E. II.2, p. 346.
[2] P.M.C.3, p. 177.

at the Assembly. Had Professor Gilbert Murray, or Lord Robert Cecil, or Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, been, say, Frenchmen, they would hardly have been picked upon by the Pretoria, or the Wellington, Government. We even find curious instances of a British Empire representative at the Council table being permitted to speak, as it were with a second voice, though not with a second vote, for an absent Dominion. Thus Lord Cecil spoke for Australia in December 1923,[1] and in August 1928 Lord Cushendun, Sir James Parr's train having, he supposed, been delayed, assumed, admittedly without any prior authority and yet without exciting any comment, to express before the Council the satisfaction, the gratitude and the good intentions of the Government of New Zealand.[2]

§ 2. *Quot " Dominions " Tot Sententiæ.*

But the crucial question of course is whether in the exercise of their votes the Dominions have thought and decided for themselves or whether they have in effect constituted just so many extra votes for Great Britain. Sir Robert Borden has spoken of the " absolute cooperation and understanding " with which the representatives of Great Britain and the Dominions had worked in Paris.[3] Lord Milner had assumed that this tradition of a common front would necessarily be maintained in Geneva. " Anything like dissension between different British States in the Councils of the League would be so overwhelmingly condemned by public opinion in all of them that it should be an easy task for statesmanship to avoid it. "[4] What would have been the effect of such a complete avoidance of dissension? The objection of other nations, said General Hertzog, to the Dominions being members of the League of Nations was on the ground that they were not free.[5] Gradually, however, the world came to appreciate that

[1] C.27, p. 333.
[2] C.51, p. 1454.
[3] J.P.E.I.1, p. 88.
[4] D.H, p. 344.
[5] J.P.E.I.1, p. 197.

in practice the Dominions could vote as they liked. It had taken some time for Paris, General Smuts told the Cape Town House of Assembly, to realise that the Empire, instead of being one central government, consisted of a league of free, equal States working together for the great ideals of human government.[1] And you will remember Mr. Rowell's words re porting in Ottawa on the first session of the Assembly:

> " Apparently one of the surprises of the Assembly was the independent attitude of the representatives from the Dominions of the British Empire.[2] The representatives of the majority of the States apparently went to Geneva believing that the views of the Dominions and their votes would necessarily follow the views and the votes of Great Britain, and when they found this view did not prevail there was very great surprise. When one of the Canadian delegates incidentally mentioned, by way of illustrating a certain point, that we in Canada did not even permit the statesmen of the Mother Country, for whom we had the greatest respect and admiration, to interfere with our domestic affairs, they thought it was proclaiming a revolution. They had an idea that the statesmen of Great Britain managed our affairs. "

The position was also described by Sir George Foster:

> " I was driver ", he said, " of the team from Canada and I have no knowledge . . . of any friction between any of the members of the British Empire delegations, and I do not believe that any existed.[3] We did not always vote the same way. We did not always talk the same way. Each State was perfectly independent in giving its views, and in that way I think maybe a better accord and better results were obtained than if there had been any thought of acting as a unit or if there had been any coercion in any way. But there was none of that. "

§ 3. *How the Dominions stand upon the Diplomatic Stage.*

I have emphasised once more to-day the special position of Dominion members of the League for the obvious reason that it is one of the keys to any intelligent interpretation of their general attitude and policy. To put it more specifically: there are three

[1] J.P.E. I.1, p.193.
[2] J.P.E. II.2, p. 311.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 304.

consequences, or implications, of their special position, without an appreciation of which it would be easy to misconstrue some of the things done and said on their behalf. First, as players on the diplomatic stage, their history for the most part is as short as that of the League itself: they are newcomers. Secondly, with one foot now in the field of international multiplicity, they still have one foot more or less firmly planted in the older field of commonwealth unity, so that the onus may easily be considered to lie upon those who wish more weight to be placed upon the forward foot. And thirdly, differing from most of their fellow-members, it is almost exclusively for the purposes of League membership that some of them have a foot in the field of world diplomacy at all.

§ 4. *Recent Arrivals.*

Firstly, then, they are newcomers.

In Article 22 it is contemplated that mandates shall be conferred upon what are described as " *advanced* " nations. If I may make a confession, there used to be a time when, as a national of South Africa, one of the nations to receive a mandate, I got a certain satisfaction out of that adjective " advanced ". South Africa was not merely a dominion, not merely a nation. She was an *advanced* nation. This seemed to imply a graceful tribute to her cultural development, a peculiar confidence in her standards of justice and sense of responsibility to the peoples under her care. Happy to believe in all these things myself I was gratified to find the world at large believing in them too.

It was only after some time that, making a closer study of the content of Article 22, I came to perceive that the word " advanced " as there employed might be held not to connote a recognition of so many high qualities as I had thought. Article 22 starts from the notion of backward peoples not yet able to stand by themselves. In such a context it now seems to me that the adjective " advanced " serves merely to take a country out of the category so described as " backward ". The Dominions, it was

conventional to assume, were sufficiently advanced to be able to stand by themselves, and perhaps this was all that the adjective implied. I say *conventionally* assumed because at that stage what was known was only that the Dominions were not incapable of taking on their own responsibility an important part in a modern war; and that they were at any rate well capable of standing by themselves within the fostering ambit of the British Empire. Very little, for instance, was known as to how they would shape if really left to their own resources "under the strenuous conditions" of the world of modern peace-time diplomacy.

The fact is of course that in this last respect the Dominions with the possible exception of Canada had still a great deal to learn. Canada for decades before the war had had with one of the most powerful States on the globe, relations as manifold and as intimate as could well be imagined. But apart from the contact of Canada with the United States, the Dominions till the time of the war have had relatively little in the way of official international relationships. As practitioners of diplomacy it would, at least in 1919, had been an exaggeration to classify Australia, New Zealand and South Africa as "advanced nations".

§ 5. *Knowledge of the Game.*

Widespread indifference towards and ignorance of world affairs, common enough in countries with centuries of international history, was *a fortiori* to be expected in countries which were beginning to engage in world politics for the first time. I fancy even in England or Switzerland one might have heard the remark, "So the League is going to settle the Memel question? I wonder what they'll do with it. I suppose they'll give it to the Turks!" But surely it could only have been in a Dominion that an article in a leading newspaper, summarising a lecturer's story of the gratitude of Mgr. Seipel to the League Council for its part in the rehabilitation of Austria, ascribed the emotion and eloquence to "the aged Austrian Emperor". In parliament too, especially from the rank and file, you had plenty of curious conceptions.

> "I am", said the Hon. N. A. Belcourt, "a very strong believer in the League of Nations.[1] As far back as 1906 I proposed that an address be presented by both Houses inviting Their Majesties King Edward and Queen Alexandra to visit Canada. It occurred to me that the visit to Washington of Their Majesties under the conditions then existing would result in the extension of the Entente Cordiale so as to take in the U.S.A. I added further that it would probably lead at an early date to the inclusion of Asia. We would then have had an alliance encircling the world, and very likely sufficient to prevent any great war. The resolution was adopted unanimously, and with great enthusiasm, in the House of Commons. I believe that all the large cities of Canada passed resolutions endorsing the action of Parliament and urging that the invitation be acceded to. It was sent over to the Colonial Office, and with that want of vision that has sometimes been displayed in that particular quarter, the request of the Parliament of Canada and those large cities was thrown into the waste-paper basket."

But this sort of thing was not confined to the rank and file. It was one of the best informed and most zealous of the League's exponents in Canada, whose services as a delegate I have commended in these lectures, who, rounding off in the Ottawa Parliament an enumeration of the League's successes, exclaimed, "And Danzig is now a great, free, self-governing city, with a corridor attached to it".[2]

Some people lay more stress on the point of geographical remoteness.

> When he had spoken of General Smuts as a suckling in European politics, said General Hertzog in the Union Parliament, he had not meant it in a humiliating sense.[3] The same would apply to America, which, realising its lack of knowledge of European difficulties and intrigues, kept aloof. It was not a matter of intellect; it was a matter of their not having grown up in the atmosphere of European politics . . . It was quite wrong to think that, living 6,000 miles away, they could understand the problems of Europe.

General Smuts too compared South Africa to the United States, but not especially on the basis of geography. They must be patient, he said . . . : he still hoped that another spirit would arise in

[1] J.P.E.V.4, p. 742.
[2] J.P.E. III.3, p. 562.
[3] J.P.E. IV.3, p. 595.

the U. S. A.; there, just as in South Africa, politics went too far, and it was almost impossible for the nation to judge soundly on any question.[1]

§ 6. *Suspicions, Doubts, Antipathies.*

Along with the general ignorance there was evidence, in those early days, of considerable uneasiness, accompanied even by signs of positive hostility. The theoretical possibility of a clash between the claims of the League and those of Empire unity was canvassed both in New Zealand and Australia, to the discrediting, not, of course, of the Empire, but of the League. Both in New Zealand and in Canada there were those who saw in the new status the first step towards breaking up the Empire. In South Africa a section of the then official opposition were prejudiced, I think, from the outset against what may have been thought of as " Smuts's League ".

General Hertzog had doubts as to its fundamental principles. Here are his words:

> He was never from the commencement very much taken up with the League, because it is very plain that the way in which it is constituted is not the right way, and gave the body more the character of an alliance of Powers to be ready in case a war broke out than to actually be a body to keep peace between the nations. Unless its character altered, he felt convinced it would never attain its object.[2]
>
> In his opinion peace could only be guaranteed when there was not only a League of Nations and its Covenant, but when every responsible and irresponsible person was convinced that war was morally culpable.[3]

A more serious basis of dislike for the whole business was the failure to differentiate between the Covenant and the rest of the Peace Treaties. It was solemnly moved by Senator F. W. Reitz, no mere back-bencher, but a former President of the Orange Free State, that South Africa should exercise her right to withdraw

[1] J.P.E. I.4, p. 743.
[2] J.P.E. VI.3, p. 594.
[3] J.P.E. X.2, p. 380.

from the League.[1] Mr. Merriman, a member of General Smuts's own party, in urging, as you will recall, that the mandate over South West Africa should provide " as much scope and as little limit as possible ", said he wanted to see the country " annexed and made part of the Union, so that they might be free from the shackles of the League of Nations ".[2] People asked, and it was a searching question, what good the Dominions could derive from their membership. Some other small States no doubt might see in the League a bulwark of their security. Not so the Dominions. " The only league of nations I have any faith in ", said Mr. G. J. Garland in New Zealand, " is a league of nations of the British Commonwealth ".[3] And elsewhere, especially in Australia, similar tendencies were shown.

Canada happened on the other hand, apart from the League, to be " possibly the safest State, in a strategic sense, on the face of the globe."

§ 7. *That Good Understanding on which so much depends.*

One of the most important factors in forming the attitude of some of the Dominions towards the League, would, very obviously, be the character of their relations with the Mandates Commission.

In an earlier lecture I drew your attention to a number of reasons why, in my judgment, it was, or would have been, natural for the Permanent Mandates Commission to look with a certain suspicion upon the conduct of certain Dominions in their capacity as Mandatory Powers. You will agree that it is greatly to be desired that the Dominions should deserve, and enjoy, the confidence of the Permanent Mandates Commission. Their relationship should be one of cooperation, not of mutual distrust. But this cuts both ways. As the Dominions should deserve the trust of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and as one would wish to see the Permanent

[1] J.P.E. IV.3, p. 582.
[2] J.P.E. I.3, p. 554.
[3] J.P.E. III.1, p. 153.

Mandates Commission giving them credit for good faith, so one would like to see the Dominions on their side giving the Permanent Mandates Commission credit for good sense. I do not know that this has always been the position: you remember General Botha's words in Paris. You remember the comments of the Permanent Mandates Commission upon the assistance given them by Major Herbst; I could also quote to you Sir James Allen and, later, Mr. Hofmeyr begging for support from Geneva.[1]

However that is for the most part ancient history. Let me quote to you from the proceedings of the Sixth Committee of the Assembly in 1930. Here is Australia:

> "The Permanent Mandates Commission" said Mr. Brennan, "is. . . the best judge, we may assume, of the scope of its duties.[2] For my part, I have pleasure in putting on record the fact that Australia welcomes observations and enquiry by that body for two main reasons. The first is that we think it proper and entirely desirable, in the common interest, that the Commission should carry out its duties thoroughly and conscientiously, as I believe it does. Secondly, we realise that enquiries and suggestions made by and on behalf of the Commission are likely to be very helpful to the Mandatory.
>
> "With great respect I submit, as a suggestion only, that these principles should nevertheless be subject to certain qualifications. . . ."
>
> "One of these qualifications is that questions which, from their very nature, reflect adversely on the Mandatory, should not as a rule be raised unless the source of the complaint is disclosed, as a guarantee of good faith and responsibility, and in order to permit of the substance of the complaint being closely scrutinised. The second qualification we suggest is that as a general rule the Commission ought not to concern itself unduly with details of administration, with which the Mandatory must, from the fact of its trusteeship, be considered qualified to deal effectively . . . It is as well that the difficulties should be appreciated and it is still more important that there should be some common understanding of the nature and extent of the obligations involved."

Mr. te Water, of South Africa, in his turn declared that in spite of difficulties, his government was determined to fulfil the mandate

[1] 2A.Pl., p. 352 and P.M.C. 4, pp. 42, 49, 50.
[2] 11A.6C., p. 51.

both in the letter and in the spirit.[1] "I would like to say, in conclusion, from my own personal knowledge of the relationship between my Government and the Mandates Commission, that the very happiest understanding now obtains between these two institutions." Sir Thomas Wilford expressed the hope that Samoa some day soon would be "the shining jewel of the mandated territories".[2]

§ 8. *Giving ?—or Getting ?*

Even the League's most ardent supporters did not find very material arguments in recommending the League. The appeal was made not to the self-interest of the Dominions, but to their altruism.

General Smuts recalled that, as the influence of South Africa had been great in the formation of the League, she should give it every chance, and he did not grudge it one penny if they knew the League was going to contribute towards the creation of a better world.[3] So too, Sir Herbert Ames, the League's first Financial Director, returning home to record in Ottawa a solemn declaration that in entering the League of Nations Canada "had made no mistake"[4] and pointing to the greatness of Canada's opportunity, went on: "For years to come Canada's rôle will be that of helper. We joined the League for what we could give, not for what we could get."[5] The same idea occurs in a speech by Mr. Doherty.

> "Some countries have a more individual benefit, or advantage, to derive from the operation of this League than others.[6] While those other countries will, of course, share in the great benefit and advantage of living in the better world that we believe the League is destined to bring about, there is, nevertheless, to them no special immediate national advantage to be derived from membership. Canada is—at all events she believes she is—in that latter position. The one great motive that we have evoked, when we appealed to our people to join energetically in the work of the

[1] *Ib.*, p. 58.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 56.
[3] J.P.E. I.3, p. 544.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 470.
[5] *Ib.*, p. 474.
[6] 2A.Pl., p. 231.

League, was the appeal to their sense and desire of service, the appeal to their hearts that moves them to give, and give ungrudgingly, that service in the interests of the world as a whole."

§ 9. *The New Status.*

In some Dominions of course the separate membership was acclaimed as a notable advance: but the advance seems to have been appreciated rather as a movement away from constitutional subordination than as one towards full diplomatic participation in foreign affairs. Here was the best tangible manifestation of that "right to an adequate voice" which had first been accorded during the war.[1] When Sir Robert Borden concerned himself in 1919 to secure in Paris as prominent a place for the Dominions as was given to other small States, it was not because this would in fact give Canada any greater influence upon the peace terms than she might already have enjoyed through the British Government. It was status he cared about rather than the enjoyment of influence. Notice how Lord Robert Cecil, in pressing President Wilson to recognise the Dominions as eligible for Council seats, used the argument that none of them desired or were likely in future to desire actual election.[2] General Smuts too was careful to stress the double significance of the new position:

> "For South Africa, as a British Dominion, it has a double significance; firstly, to secure world peace; secondly, as affording additional recognition of the Dominions, which have been made equal members in the Assembly, and given a full right to be elected into the Council of the League".[3]

And again:

> There had been misgivings that South Africa might be drawn into the great vortex of European politics.[4] Frankly, the new States must inevitably bring responsibilities, but "you cannot ask for recognition and admission among the nations of the world and still think you can sit on your ant heap in South Africa".

[1] D.H., p. 177.
[2] H.M. I, p. 481.
[3] J.P.E. I.1, p. 194.
[4] *Ib.*

The result has been that New Zealand, for example, not being especially elated at her emergence from colonial status into full partnership, has been content to think more of the interests of the firm than of her prerogatives as an individual partner, and has openly disclaimed any desire to cut an independent figure upon the international stage. When a certain Bill was under discussion which would confer on the Government wide powers in relation to Samoa, it was enough for Sir Francis Bell to assure Parliament that nothing under those powers would be done "without the consideration and approval" of the Imperial authorities in London.[1] At the Assembly's third session the same statesman baldly announced that, the position of his country in the discussion being that of a small part of the British Empire, she was not likely, except in relation to mandates, to speak otherwise than on the advice of the British delegates.[2]

> "If there had been time for consultation", asked the same Sir Francis Bell, after the Chanak incident, "in what way, in what sense, was it worth consulting us, or Australia, or Canada?[3] . . . Is there any man in New Zealand who thinks we are really fit to judge? By 'we' I mean the Government. I am quite sure the Opposition would say that we are unfit. I am a member of the Government myself, and I have no sense of fitness to advise the Imperial Government in matters of foreign policy."

What were the words of the psalmist? "Lord, I am not high-minded. I have no proud looks. I do not exercise myself in great matters which are too high for me."

Sir Francis was bound to make the exception in regard to mandates, for, as Mr. Winston Churchill told a questioner in the House of Commons at the time of the Bondelzwart trouble, the administration by the Dominions of their mandated territories was a matter in which those in England, except through ordinary membership of the League, had no concern.[4] "I hope", he added, in reply to a further question, "that we shall find

[1] J.P.E. I.1, p. 176.
[2] 3A.Pl., p. 146.
[3] R.T. 59, p. 630.
[4] J.P.E. III.4, p. 757.

something better to do on the League of Nations than to attack our own Dominions". *Our* Dominions, forsooth! However, it was only Mr. Churchill.

The strangeness of New Zealand's apathetic attitude did not wholly escape notice in her own parliament. Mr. Holland, the leader of the Labour Party, on the occasion of the Treaty debate, marvelled that they should have the extraordinary spectacle of a little island (Nauru, with its phosphate deposits)—he thought some 12 miles in circumference—overshadowing in the Prime Minister's statement practically the whole of the Peace Treaty.[1] And here is a quotation from the New Zealand correspondent of the Round Table:

> "The Dominion first learned how it stood on the Protocol from the cabled report of Mr. Austen Chamberlain's address to the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva which appeared in our newspapers on March 13th and 14th.[2] When Mr. Chamberlain said that we were against the Protocol we knew it must be so, but our minds were a complete blank on the subject until he let the cat out of the bag."

§ 10. *A Privileged Position.*

New Zealand is no doubt an extreme case. So long as the Commonwealth remains in strict legal theory a single complex whole, and so long as she feels no economic, sentimental or other necessity for setting up a system of direct official contacts with foreign capitals, the interest of her people in matters international is likely to deepen only by slow degrees. For, thanks to the constitutional link, it is largely a matter of free choice for a Dominion whether or not it shall develop for itself what I may call an extra-League of Nations foreign policy at all. Whereas for most other countries their policy in the League has been a new branch put forth by the old tree of a traditional foreign policy, and taking from that traditional policy much of its strength and character, the League policies of the Dominions are like so many seedlings planted out

[1] J.P.E. I.1, p. 165.
[2] R.T.59, p. 627.

in virgin soil. This fact, combined with their Commonwealth position, makes their true importance a little difficult to assess—both for themselves and for others. It gives them a peculiar independence, if they should care to make use of it. Formally within the magic circle of the Empire, they are, in their diplomatic activities, "like little boys who swim on bladders." They can, with relative impunity, venture beyond their depths. The *enfants gâtés* of the Imperial Conference, they are given to saying fairly frankly what is in their hearts, and if sometimes they adopt a slightly self-righteous and condescending tone, there seems to be none to say them nay.

§ 11. *Their Comparative Detachment.*

A further fact that sometimes contributes to putting them in a category by themselves is that, whereas the bulk of the other delegates, including those of overseas countries, are diplomatic persons habitually resident in Europe and soaked in the esoteric atmosphere of international politics, Dominion delegates quite often are people whose concern with world affairs is more or less *ad hoc*, who have come a long distance in order to attend the Assembly and for whom it is in fact something of a strange adventure, especially for those of them who do not understand French. By opening permanent offices in Geneva the Irish Free State, Canada and South Africa have, it is true, sought the means of keeping better *au fait* with the day-to-day progress of events, and of ensuring for their Assembly delegates an element of continuity and intimacy with the local technique. But one still has to a certain extent the impression that the Dominions, at any rate those of the South, are *in* the milieu of international negotiations rather than *of* it—perhaps you will say, happily for them. When M. Briand throws out casually a suggestion for European cooperation, he is liable to start a new chapter in history. There are instant reactions in various quarters, of that too spontaneous kind which we instinctively ascribe to careful previous preparation

of the ground. Assume, if you like, that when the Irish Free State makes a pronouncement on disarmament consequential adjustments in national defence schemes are effected in all the important capitals. Assume it, if you like. But when General Hertzog of South Africa, or Mr. Brennan of Australia warns Geneva that the public opinion he represents is becoming restive, the news is calmly received;[1] and when even such a world-figure as General Smuts instructs his delegates to draw the League's attention to the Reparations question, the political as distinct from the merely moral consequences are essentially slight.[2]

Do not suppose that I would wish you to discount what I have here called the distinctively moral consequences of the proceedings in Geneva. These are not entirely within the League's control. They depend on the degree of publicity given at any particular stage by the world's press to those proceedings, and on the zeal with which responsible, thoughtful, civilised folk in the more important countries are devoting themselves to an understanding of the great perplexing problems of our time. From this point of view, when Sir Robert Borden feels prompted to observe that the statesmen of to-day are still as it were children playing about in "the kindergarten of peace", he does a far greater service by making the remark from the Assembly platform than by printing it in an article or a book or uttering it in his national parliament.[3]

The comparative detachment of the overseas countries gives them a sense of perspective such as the League and the diplomatists often too obviously need. Doubtless as time goes on the Dominions will be increasingly recognised as having a peculiar function in this regard; and they on their part will so find their respective levels as neither to err, as New Zealand sometimes does, on the side of excessive humility, nor, on the other hand, to run the risk of getting frowned upon for having too much to say.

[1] 11A.Pl., pp. 55, 76.
[2] J.P.E. IV.3, p. 583 and 3APl., p. 46.
[3] 11A.Pl., p. 35.

§ 12. *The Commonwealth as a Factor in British Foreign Policy.*

In connection with our study of the policies of the Dominions it is relevant, I think, to consider also for a moment the effect they may be having upon the policy of England.

It is, I believe, true to say that in one respect the Dominions constitute not simply an apparent, but a real fetter upon Great Britain's freedom. This has been playfully expressed by saying that England has still some way to go before she achieves full Dominion status. You remember how both in relation to the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and to the Geneva Protocol the British policy, if not founded upon, was partly buttressed with considerations dictated by the composite character of the Empire.[1] You remember Sir Austen Chamberlain's 1927 Assembly speech, in which, while exhorting other countries to follow the lead given at Locarno, he warned his hearers that in urging England herself to go yet further, they knew not what they asked. "You are asking", he cried, "nothing less than the destruction of the British Empire".[2] Many of my friends were puzzled to know what he might be alluding to. My own belief is that he had in mind pronouncements such as that made by General Smuts on Armistice Day 1925:

> There were, he said, natural and inevitable centrifugal tendencies at work in the Empire and he much feared that Locarno had given some impetus to them.[3] A fear was sometimes expressed, which he did not share, that the League of Nations must inevitably weaken the links of Empire. Incidents like Locarno were far more likely than the League to sow seeds of dissension and division.

A dozen channel tunnels, someone has said, will scarcely give England the continental outlook on world affairs.

Under some governments England will perhaps show less consciousness of these restraints than under others. The history

[1] 5A.3C, p. 143 and C.33, pp. 446, 450.
[2] 8A.Pl., p. 98.
[3] R.T.61, p. 19.

of Geneva politics at certain periods has been largely a story of the planning of other Powers to seize the psychological moment when Great Britain should once more be ruled by a government of the Left. Of all the leading member States the British Empire has in the past eight years been the least consistent in her League of Nations policy. The result, if inconvenient for everybody, may well have been found peculiarly so for the Dominions. If you want to tease a chameleon, alter every few minutes the colour of his surroundings. Political communities, even young ones, have not the accomplishments of professional quick-change artists.

One does not know how the Imperial Conference of 1926 came to resolve that the time to accept the Optional Clause had not yet come. Some, but not all of the Dominions, subsequently showed signs of a willingness to reconsider this decision. One does not know how, within a few months of the change of government in England in 1929, all the Dominions as a group were led to reverse their attitude. And the Optional Clause is typical of a whole class of questions. It is evident, that hitherto, if they have been an appreciable impediment, they have not been an absolute clog upon the freedom of the British government in the shaping of its day-to-day policy.

On the other side we may notice what amounts, at least in theory, to a beneficial aspect, from a general point of view, of the Commonwealth factor in British policy. Mr. J. T. Thorson, commenting upon a dictum laid down at the Imperial Conference of 1926, said

> it followed that Great Britain could no longer commit Canada to any foreign policy unless Canada concurred in it.[1] War would be more difficult for Great Britain to wage since she did not automatically carry the Dominions with her. The necessity for consultation with the Dominions was a guarantee of delay, and therefore a guarantee of peace. The change was as beneficial to Great Britain as it was to Canada and the world at large.

And surely this is true. Those "insecure" States that distrust their fellow-members of the League may at least rely on England

[1] J.P.E. X.2, p. 315.

not to resort to that war of aggression which would mean almost inevitably the dissolution of her Empire. Even from Australia, next to New Zealand the most acquiescent of the group, there have been warnings. While Mr. Massey, at the Chanak crisis, cabled at once, unconditionally promising a contingent, Australia, through Mr. Hughes, attached conditions to her promise. To uphold the *status quo*[1] Australia 'would be there'.[2] But, if Mr. Lloyd George should be rash enough to embark upon any mere "filibustering expedition", he might have to embark alone —or words to that effect.

As for South Africa and Canada, they both took the line that their official attitude, even in a crisis, could be formulated only after Parliament should have met and deliberated.[3] Before again becoming active belligerents in another, or even in the same[1] war, they would want to know the reason why.

§ 13. *The Dominions and Membership of the Council.*

I mentioned a little time back that at the Peace Conference it was not generally thought that the Dominions would ever be serious candidates for Council seats.[4] At that time of course the Council was to have included only four seats for non-permanent members. The claim of a Dominion to actual election, as opposed to mere formal eligibility, was in consequence so slender as hardly to enter into practical calculations.

When, however, in 1926, there came to be nine seats for non-permanent members, the matter appeared in a very different light. Dominion membership of the Council was now a practical issue. At that session of the Assembly it became known that the

[1] It is curious to note that the ground given by Mr. Hughes to Parliament for promising Australia's help was that the country was pledged in that sense by its signature to the Treaty of Sèvres (J.P.E. IV.1, p. 101). Whatever we may think of such a reading of its terms, it is relevant to recall that not having been ratified, the Treaty in question was not, as a matter of fact, binding on anybody.
[2] J.P.E. IV.1, p. 96.
[3] J.P.E. IV.2, p. 275 and 3, p. 591.
[4] H.M.I, p. 481.

Irish Free State was actually a candidate. Canada being the senior Dominion, it would perhaps have been natural had she shown a certain displeasure at this sudden turn of events. Sir George Foster, however, in the course of a speech on the composition of the Council, contented himself, in reference to the Irish candidature, with an indication that it had come as news to him.[1] At the same time, lest the Assembly should have drawn the contrary inference from their past silence on the subject, he declared in plain language that the members of the Commonwealth had by nó means renounced their titles, as good as those of any other group, to stand from time to time for election to the Council. The Irish Free State, though securing 10 votes at the first ballot, was not in the end successful. Next year, Canada was herself a candidate and at the second ballot " got in " by a narrow margin.[2] And, as we noticed, so far from her remaining a merely ornamental member, her representative took a decided and independent line, particularly in the matter of procedure on Minorities questions.

§ 14. *An Anxious Mother-country.*

The subject before the Council, when Canada first took her seat, was one on which it was understood that, after an exposé by the rapporteur, certain other members should next give their views. It thus came about that when, in the early stages, Canada, in the person of Mr. Dandurand, first lifted up her voice, she was sharply interrupted on a point of order by the rapporteur, who reminded the chairman of the understanding that other States were first to be heard. Mr. Dandurand, however, returning to the charge, succeeded in making it known, on behalf of himself and his Finnish colleague, that they wished not to be understood as having any opinion on a matter to the study of which they were only then for the first time about to apply their minds. A legitimate intervention, even at that juncture and even on the part of a Dominion !

[1] 7A.Pl., p. 72.
[2] 8A.Pl., p. 116.

And it made the rapporteur look a little unfortunate. A trivial incident; yet with a certain interest for the student of Commonwealth relationships, for the rapporteur in question was Sir Austen Chamberlain. For him it was pure bad luck, for, if there really seemed to him a possibility that a newcomer might " put his foot in it ", and if he felt, in some indirect way, responsible for the feet of a British Dominion, he was obviously justified, at so delicate a moment, in taking precautions.

The incident is not in the Minutes, but the meeting was public.

§ 15. *Future Candidatures.*

Canada's three-year period expired in 1930, when the Irish Free State in turn got elected.[1] Ostensibly she offered herself, not as a Dominion, but as a small European State and I do not pretend to know in which capacity we must consider her to have been elected. It is unlikely, I think, that any other Dominion will have a chance while Ireland retains her seat.

There is no reason to suppose that any rigid order of rotation will be followed by the Dominions in submitting themselves as candidates. Australia, it is known, waived any claim she may have had to precedence over Ireland. Nor need we suppose that Canada, now that her first period has passed, will need to wait before competing again until every other Dominion has served a term. As the sole representative, in the League, of North America, if for no other reason—and there are plenty of other reasons—Canada has a strong case for relatively frequent election to the Council.

§ 16. *Distinctive Qualifications.*

It is, I consider, in the general interest that, whether on the Council or elsewhere, Dominion minds should take an effective part in the League's deliberations. I say this not merely because I consider that, as politics go in the modern world, Dominion politics are as clean, and Dominion traditions of public service as

[1] 11A.Pl., p. 128.

pure as those of any other country. Nor do I here particularly insist upon the freshness with which it is often possible, in a Dominion capital, to view a primarily European problem. Rather am I thinking of the distinctive contribution which their peculiar experiences have put them in a position to make.

Take, for instance, the League's central problem of the fostering at one and the same time of loyalties both to a national and to a supra-national centre of moral influence. Or take the problem of ensuring cooperation between effectively independent cabinets, the problem, that is, of running the League's machinery on the unanimity principle. On such questions, the Commonwealth with its Imperial Conference has certainly some light to throw. General Smuts, in his pamphlet, noted the parallelism between the two groupings. So too Sir Robert Borden:

> " The British Commonwealth is in itself a community or league of nations which may serve as an exemplar to that world-wide League of Nations which was founded in Paris. "[1]

There is doubtless a certain danger of overdoing the analogy between the British Commonwealth and the League, for the one represents a process of resolute constitutional loosening, the other a process of hesitant drawing together. It is in itself an alluring theme into which we shall not enter now.

Let me remind you also of Canada's firsthand experience of the uses of a demilitarised zone and of a system of international joint investigation as factors in the maintenance of good neighbourly relations. Take again the lessons Australia feels she can teach, from actual practice in the industrial field, in regard to compulsory arbitration as a method of solving, or, as some of her statesmen would prefer to say, of multiplying, difficulties.

Lastly, when you consider the racial and national antagonism which still unfortunately persists in the world, and the part it is to be hoped that the League will from time to time be permitted to play in the bringing of peoples together in friendly forgetfulness of by-gone strife, where so hopefully as in Canada or South Africa

[1] J.P.E. I.1, p. 89.

can you look to find men with real personal understanding of the issues and conditions involved? You might read the speech of Mr. McKenzie King, Canadian Premier, extolling the memory of Champlain, a Frenchman, the great founder of Canada—Canada, the " land of reconciliation ".[1] Or read the passage in which, at the first Assembly, Lord Robert Cecil, the chosen spokesman of General Smuts, recalled how his own father, Lord Salisbury, as Conservative Prime Minister in England, had conducted a bitter war against the little republic for which General Smuts had fought.[2] As in Canada, so in South Africa, two formerly warring peoples of European stock have been finding the secret of living peacefully together, not merely in the same world, but " within the bosom of a single State ".

§ 17. *In what Spirit?*

If you ask me to characterise shortly the spirit in which the Dominions have worked within the League, there are several points it is easy to make. Frankness requires me to recall that, in earlier days particularly, they gained a certain reputation for cheeseparing tactics in the Budget Committee. Remember that, from their standpoint, the early scale of allocation of the League's expenses amongst its Members was quite fantastically unfair, and also that those distant parliaments had little idea for what sort of organisation they were helping to pay. Even General Smuts, who told the Union Parliament that he did not grudge the League one penny[3] and that he would pay the £25,000 himself willingly if he thought that they were by that little mite doing something towards helping those people,[4] was obliged in the end to default on a part of South Africa's contribution.

I have already referred, in describing the proceedings in the Second Committee, to the spirit of sincerity in which the Dominions have played their part. There has been no mental reservation and no *arrière pensée* about their utterances. They have liked it to be

[1] 9A.Pl., p. 59.
[2] 1A.Pl., p. 99.
[3] J.P.E. I.3, p. 545.
[4] J.P.E. IV.3, p. 600.

seen that their voting for a given resolution could be taken to mean that the resolution in fact had their genuine approval. A striking example of their scrupulous fidelity to truth was afforded at the first session of the Assembly, when the very earliest recorded intervention of a Dominion delegation in the League's proceedings took the form of Canada's formal dissociation of herself from the Assembly's tribute of respect to the memory of J. J. Rousseau![1]

New Zealand, in particular, has sometimes seemed conscientious to the point of pedantry. It is as though, this being her first appearance, with a fresh and therefore stainless record, in the field of international politics, she has been as anxious as a virtuous new boy at school to make a good beginning and avoid bad marks. When criticised for maintaining a double system of machinery for handling on the one side the affairs of the Cook Islands and on the other side the largely similar affairs of Samoa, the Prime Minister, without denying that the arrangement was wasteful and inconvenient, explained that, while the Cook Islands were legally part of New Zealand's own territory, Samoa, even though under a C mandate, was definitely not a part of such territory and must therefore be administered under a separate department of external affairs.[2]

For whatever it may be worth in this connection I refer you also to the reply of the Irish Free State Minister who, when asked in Parliament whether Ireland would use her influence in a certain sense with members of the Council, refused to do so—for that, he said, was "not the proper method".[3]

But pedantry, parsimony and sincerity, admirable virtues no doubt so far as they go, have never of themselves carried men to very great heights of human endeavour. I believe I may claim that in the persons at least of some of their leading men the Dominions have given proof of other more positive and constructive qualities than those. There were those in every Dominion who realised

[1] 1A.Pl., p. 43.
[2] J.P.E. II.2, p. 406.
[3] J.P.E. X.2, p. 443.

from the first that the new status implied not merely new capacities, but new responsibilities also and a new opportunity for helping forward what was good and resisting what was evil.

There have been gibes levelled at South Africa for having secured a peculiar prominence in the records of the first few Assemblies by choosing as her delegates such famous men and zealous apostles of the League idea as Murray and Cecil. But I submit that the Union Government, in so exercising its discretion as to ensure the presence in Geneva of two men so well fitted to serve the wider interests of the League itself, may have been thinking just as much of advancing those wider interests as of advertising the Union. I do very deliberately claim that, in the Dominions as much as anywhere in the world, there is a strong strain of generous sentiment in relation to the League. You find it expressed in various forms. Here is Mr. Bruce, as Premier of Australia:

> There were a great number of sceptics in the world; there were many people who said, through ignorance, that the League of Nations was no good, and would do nothing.[1] There were other people who throughout life suffered from a dread of appearing to take an idealistic view of anything, instead of the practical view of a hard-headed commonsense person, and those people had not the courage to say what they really thought."

Or listen to that sturdy patriot, Massey:

> He believed that they (the Empire) had been specially protected by Providence and preserved for some great purpose which had not been revealed up to the present; but he believed that a part of that purpose would be to assist in bringing peace to the whole world.[2]

Limited, perhaps, but by no means an ignoble vision. Then you will remember many instances of good words spoken in Canada. And, of course, there is General Smuts:

> He considered, he told Parliament, that all else he had done in his lifetime was as dust and ashes compared with the small effort he had been able to contribute towards building up this new organisation for the future government of the world.[3]

[1] J.P.E. III.1, p. 115.
[2] J.P.E. III.4, p. 880.
[3] J.P.E. I.1, p. 193.

§ 18. *Conclusion.*

During this short course of lectures I believe it may have seemed to some of you that it was rather too cynical a picture of the attitude and policy of the Dominions that I was painting. If so, I think you will have misunderstood me. It is my sincere conviction that if all its members could accept the League in the same temper as have the Dominions in general, and especially Canada, whose conception of her rôle therein seems to me a model for everyone, the world would be safer for peace than it is to-day. If I have sounded cynical it will have been because I have had to combat a temptation to be partisan. My object has been to enlighten you, rather than to guide. You are competent and entitled to form your own judgments, and it has been no part of my purpose to make propaganda among you in favour of the Commonwealth to which my country belongs. I will however at the same time admit that in my belief there is no more effective form of propaganda than the sort of thing I have been trying to give you. One-sided argumentation in international affairs is likely to convince only the already half-persuaded. In a world where all are human it is as a rule enough that we should understand in order that we may condone. Even if you do not admire or applaud the conduct of the Dominions, I hope I have given you a sufficiently intelligible picture of their position to enable you to condone it.

You may complain perhaps that, after all these quotations and all this talk about the Dominions, I have failed in the end to leave you with any precise and specific conception of what their policy, or policies, is, or are. But you must know already what my excuse will be. I spoke, I think, this afternoon of the other States as having developed, for League questions, a new branch of the growing tree of a traditional foreign policy. I might have put my idea in another way, by saying that, in this period of transition while world society is in process of adjusting itself to this "great new fact", the policy of the old-established States has been put, so to speak, into the melting-pot. It is being moulded anew. This

would be an exaggeration, but it helps me to make my point. My suggestion is that if the policy of other countries can be thought of as in the melting-pot, the policies of the Dominions can be more fittingly described as in the incubator. After the many passages I have quoted, and the observations I have made, I believe you are in as good a position as I am to prophesy what will ultimately emerge.

The Dominions, in spite of General Smuts, could, I consider, to a large extent withdraw and 'sit on their ant heaps'; but I do not think they will do so. So long as the League remains an agency through which they feel they may make some contribution to the peace of the world, I believe they will support it loyally and serve it well. And in doing so they will doubtless discover, in the words of President Cosgrave, leader of the Irish delegates in 1923, that "as the life of a man is bettered and fructified beyond measure in a harmonious society of men, so must the life of nations reach a much fuller liberty and a much fuller dignity in the harmonious society of states." [1]

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[1] 4 A. Pl., p. 25.