

## CONGRESS OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF THE EMPIRE.

In June, 1896, a meeting of the third Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire was held in London, Eng. Previous meetings of this Congress were held in 1886 and in 1892.

One hundred and seventy-two Chambers of Commerce were represented of which 32 were Canadians.

The following subjects were discussed (alphabetically arranged).

1. Arbitration for International Disputes.‡
2. Bills of Exchange, uniform procedure.‡
3. Bills of Lading Reform.\*
4. Boards of Labour Conciliation and Arbitration.†
5. Codification of Commercial Laws of the Empire.\*
6. Consultative Imperial Council.†
7. Copyright.‡
8. Decimal system, weights, measures and currency.†
9. Emigration.\*
10. Imperial Commercial Relation.†
11. Interimperial postal and telegraph routes.\*
12. Light dues on shipping.†
13. Postal facilities.‡
14. Railway extension of South-west China.‡
15. Rates of freight to South Africa.‡
16. Rules of the road at sea.‡

## RESOLUTIONS PASSED.

1. That in the opinion of this Congress differences or disputes arising between different governments, which cannot be adjusted by diplomatic agency, should, as far as possible, be referred to arbitration.

2. That in the opinion of this Congress the laws relating to Bills of Exchange should be made uniform in the British Empire, also that uniformity with the laws of Continental Powers should, wherever practicable, be established internationally.

3. That this Congress expresses strong disapproval of the method adopted in bills of lading of inserting clauses contracting shipowners practically out of all liability, and requests the London Chamber of Commerce to arrange conferences with shipowners in order to eliminate these clauses, or failing such conferences, that steps be taken by the associations forming the Congress to introduce bills into the respective parliaments defining the liabilities of shipowners.

4. That this Congress desires to express its satisfaction at the steady progress which has been made in advancing the principle of conciliation and arbitration in labour disputes and avoidance thereby, in many instances, of the disastrous effects of strikes and lockouts, and pledges itself to use its utmost endeavours to promote the extension of the movement throughout the Empire.

5. That the Bills of Exchange Act of 1882, the Partnership Act of 1890 and the Sale of Goods Act of 1893 and other consolidating statutes having established the practicability and benefit of codifying British commercial law, it is highly expedient that the commercial law of the whole British Empire should now be embodied in a code; and that, therefore, government be memorialized by the Congress to initiate the steps necessary in order to the appointment, for the purpose of drafting such a code, of a commission on which the United Kingdom and all the colonies and countries embraced in the Empire should be duly represented.

6. That as a first step towards Imperial Federation it is desirable that a consultative imperial council should be formed, whose members for the time being should be resident in the United Kingdom; that the council should be called together in the cases where the general interests of the Colonies represented are affected in matters of trade, finance or imperial defence; that this council should consist of members elected by every self-governing colony in the same adequate and relative proportion to its electorate, and that its functions should be purely consultative; that the Crown Colonies should also be represented on this council.

\* Discussed in each of the three Congresses.

† Discussed in the 1892 and the 1896 Congress.

‡ Discussed in the 1896 Congress only.