

The British Commonwealth is not and never has been a rigid structure based on statutes and treaties. It is, in fact, a free association based on common interests, common understandings, and subject to growth and change as a result of mutual adjustments. These have taken place throughout the years from the time that colonies were given responsible government and, later on, dominion status, until finally they became recognized for what they are to-day—sovereign, independent nations of the British Commonwealth. Just as the Statute of Westminster in 1931 registered changes that had occurred, so it would be true to say does the Declaration of 1949 describe the status of the Commonwealth at the present time.

In conclusion, I would like to express my deep satisfaction with the good spirit which existed throughout the talks. The representatives of all the eight nations present stressed their strong desire to remain members of the Commonwealth with all that that connection means and connotes in mutual support, trust and understanding.

London, 28 April, 1949.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given ; printing (548 copies), £6.

By Authority: R. E. OWEN, Government Printer, Wellington.—1949.
Price 3d.]