

- (4.) Cost ought to be considerably reduced by—
 (a.) Less amount involved in preparation of documents as set out in (2); reduction of work in other respects.
 (b.) Greatly lessening present heavy fees in Crown colonies.
 (c.) Possibly rather lower fees charged for registration than for other cases in the self-governing dominions and India.
- (5.) Though not referred to in the report, it might if desired be feasible to arrange for extension of examination by English Office.
- (6.) The scheme appears to afford a good basis for further arrangements between different parts of the Empire to facilitate and cheapen the cost of obtaining patents and paving the way to some form of Empire patent.

I have confidence in recommending its adoption, but consider that it should apply only to British subjects and residents of such parts of the Empire affording similar concessions to the people of this country. It is not requisite at present to consider the amount of fee necessary if the scheme is adopted, but I am of the opinion that the charge should be rather lower than for patents in the ordinary course.

Accompanying papers.

I append printed copy of report of Conference, minutes of the meetings, and a few other papers relating to the matter.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. C. LEWIS, Registrar.

4th January, 1923.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE.

HELD AT THE PATENT OFFICE, LONDON, FROM THE 12TH JUNE, 1922, TO THE 23RD JUNE, 1922.

REPRESENTATIVES.

UNITED KINGDOM: W. Temple Franks, Esq., C.B., Comptroller-General of Patents, Designs, and Trade-marks (Chairman); A. J. Martin, Esq., O.B.E., Assistant Comptroller.

CANADA: W. J. Lynch, Esq., I.S.O., Chief of Patent Office.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA: R. G. Ferguson, Esq., Commissioner of Patents.

NEW ZEALAND: J. C. Lewis, Esq., Registrar of Patents, Designs, and Trade-marks.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA: C. W. T. B. Juta, Esq., Registrar of Patents, Designs, and Trade-marks.

INDIA: H. G. Graves, Esq., Late Controller of Patents and Designs.

COLONIES AND PROTECTORATES: G. Seth, Esq., Solicitor-General of the Straits Settlements.

NEWFOUNDLAND was not represented.

Secretaries:—

B. G. Crewe, Esq., Patent Office (Secretary); G. H. Creasy, Esq., Colonial Office (Assistant Secretary).

1. ORIGIN OF CONFERENCE.

In December, 1919, a memorandum on the subject of a British Empire patent was drawn up by the Comptroller of the Patent Office, London (Appendix A), and in January, 1920, this memorandum was circulated to the Governments of the self-governing dominions and India. A brief *résumé* of the memorandum and of the ensuing correspondence was later submitted to the Conference of Prime Ministers and Representatives of the United Kingdom, Dominions, and India held in June, July, and August, 1921, and was considered by a Special Committee under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. As a result, the following recommendation, which was concurred in by the main Conference, was agreed to:—

“The Committee recommends that a Conference of representatives of the Patent Offices of His Majesty's Dominions shall be held in London at an early date to consider the practicability of instituting a system of granting patents which should be valid throughout the British Empire.”

In pursuance of this recommendation, invitations were addressed by His Majesty's Government to the various Governments, and delegates were nominated by all the self-governing dominions (except Newfoundland) and India. There was, in addition, a delegate representing the colonies and protectorates, nominated by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

2. MEETINGS OF CONFERENCE.

The meetings of the Conference, which were held at the Patent Office, London, commenced on the 12th June, 1922, and terminated on the 23rd June, 1922. There were ten meetings in all.

3. ORAL EVIDENCE.

Before opening the discussion on the first day the representatives considered the desirability of admitting oral evidence from outside bodies, and decided that no useful purpose would be served by hearing such evidence, unless in the course of the discussion the Conference itself found it necessary to call expert evidence on any particular point.

No witnesses were in fact called during the meetings, but the Conference had before it particulars and data as regards applications for patents in the Empire compiled in the Patent Office, London (see Appendices B, C, and D), and important information as to the practice and procedure in the dominions and colonies was supplied by the representatives themselves.