

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

As I have said, I want to be brief, and I shall not delay here any longer. You, Sir, have referred to the constitutional questions which have been raised by the Union of South Africa for this convention. May I here say that those questions no longer have to deal—and I am very glad to say it—with an amendment or change of the constitution of the Commonwealth. As far as that is concerned, I think that the principles upon which it has been founded will last and will at any rate for very many years not require any further amendment; but what is contemplated by South Africa is that, if I may use the words of the Prime Minister, we must now try to co-ordinate our policies of action in such a way that we shall be as mutually helpful as possible. That is all that is contemplated by the suggestions or proposals which are being made by South Africa in this case.

FOREIGN POLICY.

Then, Sir, you have touched upon the European situation, and here let me say this: that I feel that this Conference will be known more by what it is going to achieve in the interests of peace and the maintenance of peace in the future than by anything else which I think we shall be able to do here on this occasion. May I say here that, as far as South Africa is concerned, more and more she is feeling, she is realizing, how closely she is implicated in the fate of Europe and in the fate of the world. If there is anything that has been brought home to us in South Africa more than anything else it is, I think, this, and you can well understand how during these last anxious days, I might almost say years, which you have had here in Europe, the hearts in South Africa were no less filled with anxiety as to what might happen. I wish to take this opportunity, Sir, of assuring you of our very hearty appreciation of the manner in which the British Government has succeeded in steering through these difficult times. At this Conference I feel that this matter will be the most important, though we may think, perhaps individually that there are economic and other questions of very great importance. But this question no doubt, I take it, will be felt—certainly will be felt by us from South Africa—as the greatest question that can be discussed and deliberated upon at this Conference.

I can only hope that with respect to this question we shall each contribute our very best so that we may eventually achieve what is the very best not only for us individually but also for the Empire and for the world at large.

With those few words, Sir, I shall end, leaving anything else to be deliberated upon later when the occasion arises in committee.

STATEMENT BY HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA GAEKWAR OF BARODA ON BEHALF OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION.

Mr. Prime Minister and Members of the Conference: It is my privilege to address the Imperial Conference on behalf of India, on this historic occasion when the Conference follows closely upon the Coronation of the Sovereign to whom the great communities here represented all acknowledge allegiance.

DEVOTION OF INDIA TO THE CROWN.

The splendid and moving ceremony of two days ago, the vast crowds gathered together in order and freedom at the centre of the British Commonwealth, the presence here to-day of men representing different communities in widely separated parts of the world—all remind us that the Crown remains as it has been for generations. It is still surrounded and sustained by the reverence and affection of millions: it is still the visible symbol of the Empire's unity and the centre of its loyalties.

We are confident that His Present Majesty, with His Gracious Consort by his side, will show himself a worthy heir of the highest traditions of the British Monarchy; and, as spokesman to-day of the Government, Princes, and peoples of India, I tender to Their Majesties respectful greetings and our assurances of unswerving devotion and attachment.

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMONWEALTH.

The internal affairs of India are not before this Conference; but you will not expect that speaking for India to-day, I should pass them over in silence. For many years I have been closely concerned with public affairs in my own State and outside it; and during that long stretch of time I have always striven to watch events, and, what is more, to interpret them with detachment—to divine those unseen currents of ideas, emotions, aspirations, which ultimately determine the course of history. Nowhere do those currents flow more strongly than in India to-day. The great cities of India ferment with social and industrial vigour. But much more far-reaching is the fact that the traditional life of the peasant, the very foundation of India, is being touched, I will not say shaken, by many influences; it is awakening from a long quiescence. It is not too much to say that the whole of India pulsates with life. And this vast energy, which is now being released—to what goal is it to lead her many millions? I answer—politically, towards the attainment of her full stature