work the high commissioner had the support of Mr Chamberlain, who paid a visit to South Africa which extended from Christmas 1902 to the end of February 1903. He sanctioned the calling of an inter-colonial conference, which led to a customs convention including all the British possessions in South Africa, and to united action regarding railway rates and native questions.@@1

The great expenditure incurred during the war had led to much deception as to the growth of trade, while the large sums spent on repatriation and other temporary work main- tained this deception for some time after the war had ceased. But before 1903 had ended it was manifest that this had been a spurious activity, and a period of marked commercial depression, lasting until 1909, ensued. This de­pression was in considerable measure due to, and was largely aggravated by, the comparative inactivity of the Rand mines, and that inactivity was due in turn to the insufficiency of native labour—Kaffirs being employed to do all the unskilled work on the mines. At the close of 1903 the mine-owners, to meet the deficiency, asked for permission to import Chinese. The consent of the high commissioner and of the home government was obtained, and in June 1904 the first batch of coolies reached the Rand. They came on three-years’ indentures, over 50,000 Chinese being eventually brought over. This introduction of Chinese labour met with considerable opposition. The South African objections were economic and racial, based on the results which had followed the introduction of Indian coolies into Natal. In Natal these coolies had been allowed to remain after the completion of their indentures, and had succeeded in prac­tically monopolizing the petty trade of the country. They had also rapidly multiplied, so that by 1904 they were more numerous than the whites in the colony. The introduction of this large alien element, leading from 1895 onwards to the passing of restrictive measures in Natal, was a mistake which South Africans elsewhere had no desire to repeat. But these objections were overcome by regulations which made repatriation compulsory, and which definitely restricted the coolies to unskilled labour in the mines. These regulations also met the objections voiced by Australians and New Zealanders that the country won for Great Britain at such cost had been thrown open to hordes of Asiatics. In Great Britain, however, the restrictive regulations were precisely those which aroused criticism, the objection taken being that the conditions imposed were of a servile character, if they did not actually make the coolies “ slaves. ” In the attacks made upon the Unionist government this cry was loudly voiced by the Liberal party in England, and in the political campaign which followed, the “ Chinese Slavery ” issue un­doubtedly helped to swell the majority obtained by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman in January 1906. Milner’s own object in assenting to the introduction of the Chinese was—besides aiding to put the gold mining industry on a more stable basis— to obtain revenue for the great task he had on hand, “ the re­starting of the colonies on a higher plane of civilization than they had ever previously attained and in respect of the working of the mines and consequently in providing revenue the intro­duction of the Chinese proved eminently successful; but in February 1906 the Campbell-Bannerman administration felt it incumbent to announce that no ordinance imposing “ servile conditions ” would be sanctioned. The point as to whether the original conditions were or were not servile was never legally tested, for eventually on the grant of self-government to the Transvaal the Botha cabinet decided (June 1907) not to renew the indentures nor to permit any new importation of coolies. The economic situation had in the meantime considerably altered, and the Transvaal was able to bring pressure upon Portugal to permit the recruiting of many thousands more Kaffirs from Mozambique province. By February 1910 the last of the coolies had been repatriated.

By the middle of 1904 the high commissioner and Mr Alfred Lyttelton, who had become secretary for the colonies, agreed that the work of reconstruction had so far progressed that steps

should be taken to give the Transvaal “ representative govern­ment. ” This decision was made public in July of that year, and was followed by marked political activity. The Boers in the Transvaal, headed by Louis Botha, formed an association which was called *Het Volk* (the people), and in the Orange Colony a similar organization, the *Oranjie Unie,* was formed. On the 31st of March 1905 the text of the new constitution was issued by letters patent. Short of granting full self-government it was of a liberal character. It provided that the legislative council was to consist of not fewer than six or more than nine official members, and, provisionally, of not fewer than thirty or more than thirty-five elected members. Seats were to be allotted on a voters’ (not population) basis, and there was to be an automatic redistribution of seats as voters increased or de- creased in given localities. These provisions—subsequentIy adopted in the electoral law of the Union of South Africa—were made to secure equal rights for the British and Dutch sections of the community. The promulgation of the Lyttelton constitution was quickly followed by the retirement of Lord Milner. He left South Africa in April 1905, and was succeeded as high commissioner and governor of the Transvaal and Orange River colonies by Lord Selborne. But before the new constitution could be established a change of ministry in Great Britain put the Liberals in office, with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as premier (Dec. 1906).

A sudden change was now made. Sir IL Campbell-Bannerman, with several of his colleagues in the ministry, held that the annexation of the republics had not been justified, but there was no question now, as there had been in 1881, of a restoration of independence; that matter the Boers themselves had settled by their acceptance of British sovereignty. The Liberal leader held, however, that the Boers should be given self-government at once. Experience, he declared@@2 had proved, unfavourable to the working of representative institutions, and it was safer and better to begin with respon­sible government. Moreover, the cabinet looked forward, without forcing it in any way, to the federation of South Africa. In the Transvaal the burghers of British origin were about equal in number with those of Dutch origin, and the fairly even balance of parties might be held to be a guarantee against retrogression; in the Orange River Colony it was notorious that the grant of self- government meant handing over the control of the country not simply to the Boers, but to that section of them which since the war had exhibited the greatest racial bitterness. In these circumstances the decision of the Liberal cabinet, however generous, was fraught with peril. But the policy of complete trust in the Boers was a bold one, which was justified by success.

The new letters patent instituting self-government in the Transvaal were issued on the 12th of December 1906; the ejections were held in February 1907, and gave the *Het Volk* party a clear majority of seven (in a house numbering 69 members) over all other parties. General Botha became premier, with Mr Smuts as colonial secretary. In the Orange River Colony the first elections under the self-government constitution were held in November 1907, and out of 38 seats in the House of Assembly *Oranjie Unie* candidates secured 29. A ministry was formed with Mr A. Fischer as premier and Generals Hertzog and de Wet as prominent colleagues. These triumphs of the Dutch section of South Africans were followed in the general election in Cape Colony early in 1908 by a sweeping victory of the Bond, helped by the suffrages of re-enfranchised rebels. Dr Jameson—who had been premier of the colony since the Progressive victory at the election of 1904—was succeeded as premier by Mr J. X. Merriman, who was regarded as a Bond nominee. Thus, working within constitutional lines, the Dutch Afrikanders had attained in three out of the four self-governing colonies, political supremacy. The situation in 1908 was, however, radically different from that which existed before the war of 1899-1902. Then half the white population of the Transvaal were as “ helots ’’; now the

@@@1 This action was on the lines of the commercial federation scheme of Cecil Rhodes, who had died in March 1902.

@@@2 In a speech in the House of Commons, February 19, 1906.