

Sir JAMES MACKAY : My Lord, I was anxious not to interrupt Sir William Lyne in the course of his remarks, but there was a point where I think he was not quite accurate, and it would only be right to correct him. I understood him to say that the Indian sailors on P. and O. steamers were paid at the rate of $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day. This would be equivalent to nine rupees a month, and there are no Indian sailors, as far as I am aware, who are paid at less than 18 rupees a month.

Tenth Day.
2 May 1907.

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PREFERENTIAL
TRADE.

Mr. DEAKIN : Ninepence a day.

Sir JAMES MACKAY : That would make $9d.$ a day, in addition to which they get their clothes when they come into cold climates, and the steamers carry, as a rule, double the number of Indian sailors that they would of Europeans. What induces shipowners engaged in tropical trades to employ Lascars or Indian sailors is not economy; but it is because they are really more used to the heat, and they stand the climate better than Europeans do. It is a great hardship for European sailors to be constantly employed in the tropics, and I think, as Mr. Deakin pointed out the other day, the men employed in North Queensland, when they first go there, before they are acclimatised are inclined to give way to drink, and Indian sailors are sober, steady and well behaved men. These are the reasons that induce shipowners engaged in the Eastern trade to employ Lascar sailors. I hope you will excuse me, Sir William.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE : Certainly. I am very much obliged, my Lord, to Sir James Mackay for his information. What I said was, that when India placed her people upon nearly the same footing as our British white people in Australia regarding wages and other conditions, then it was time enough for India, which is not in the same category as Australia or the other self-governing Colonies, to make a comparison between one set of men and another set of men; and, in addition, I said that I believed the wages paid were $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ That is what I was informed on the P. and O. boat the "Britannia." If it is otherwise, I am glad to know it; but that does not do away at all with the point of my argument.

Sir JAMES MACKAY : I do not know from whom Sir William got his information on board the P. and O. steamer.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE : From several of the officers — not the chief officers, but the petty officers. That, however, does not change at all the comparison I was making, even supposing it is $9d.$, and I presume it is not $9d.$ when they are employed in India and not on the boat. I do not know what their wage in India in rupees is, but I know it is very low. Our men in Australia — and I am not going to compare, nor did I desire to compare, the white men on the boats with the black men, what I compared was the wage of the black men with the wage of the white men in Australia — our sailors get, I think I am quite within the mark in saying, from $6l.$ to $7l.$ a month; I am not quite sure, at any rate it is not much under that, if any, and the difference between that and $9d.$ a day is a very great deal even to sailors. That was the object I had in making the comparison I did, although I am thankful for the correction as far as it goes.

Sir JAMES MACKAY : If I may say so, Sir William, I do not think it has ever been proposed in this country, by the Board of Trade or by the shipowners, that Lascar crews or Indian crews should be employed in the coasting trade of Australia.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE : But they are.