

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE.

to vessels registered in Australia apply to vessels trading on her coasts.

SIR JOSEPH WARD: I think you will find it an advantage to ascertain whether we are all agreed as to vessels registered first.

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: I do not think we can be unanimous. There will be vessels registered in Australia, but never trading here at all. They might be trading between the United Kingdom and America.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Supposing you put it this way: "Vessels registered *whilst* trading in that possession."

HON. DUGALD THOMSON: That does not read well.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: I think, if you will allow me, I will put the motion as it is, because the moment you alter it, it takes away the intention I had in moving the motion. This motion has been considered by my officers, and they rather object, so far as they are concerned to altering the motion, because it will do away with the object of it. Take that very point that was raised just now when I was agreeable to deal with the word "registered," then some other words will have to be put in. I would rather see whether we cannot be unanimous on this motion as it is.

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: I will not stand in the way of Sir William putting the motion as it is, but it does not come up yet, because we have not decided the question. Until we get rid of the registered vessels, we are not yet in a position to say whether the law shall extend to something else. Your motion is: "That the law of any British possession shall operate in regard to vessels registered and usually trading" shall do something more than that. We have to get rid of this.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: I will move as an amendment on Sir William Lyne's motion that after the words "vessel registered," the words be inserted "whilst trading in that possession."

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: That alters the whole meaning.

MR. PEMBROKE: Would it not help us if Sir William will tell us what his object is?

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: I rather appeal to Sir William Lyne to hold that back until we have considered the "registered vessel."

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Is there any objection to the registered vessel?

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: Not whilst trading.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: We might become a ship-building country, and we might turn out vessels of our own. There are any amount of vessels turned out at Glasgow. There might be vessels registered in Sydney and trading to Hong Kong and elsewhere and never coming near the port. I do not say our law should not operate; but the first part of that is not intended to apply to those vessels.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Which vessels? It is intended to apply to any vessels trading on our coast. I prefer to have the motion as it is, and I am quite prepared to restrict it to within territorial waters—that is, our territorial waters.

MR. NORMAN HILL: I am afraid we could not possibly support the motion as it stands. We are anxious to fall in with your views and go step by step and see how far we can agree with Sir William Lyne. We are quite willing to agree that the Colonial law extends to ships registered in Australia whilst trading in that Colony. That is the first step.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Now, do you object to the vessels not registered?

MR. NORMAN HILL: I would ask Sir William to say what is the next step.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: I want this to deal with every vessel that comes into our waters, and trades on our coast or the New Zealand coast whilst they are there, no matter whether they are registered vessels, or what they are.

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: But your motion goes a good deal beyond that. I do not think you intended it to, but I think it does.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: If I put in the words, "whilst in territorial waters," I don't see that it does.

DR. WOLLASTON: I should like to explain the practical difficulty that is in the way is this: Australian registered ships go, for instance, to India; they go to India for a cargo of goods, and bring them back, and if our law operates with them, they have to provide all these scales, and at a considerable expense. If this is not passed, a British vessel registered in Great Britain might come out there and engage in the same trade, go from Melbourne to India and compete with our own ships, and not comply with these conditions.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: They could not possibly do that, because it applies only to vessels registered whilst trading in that possession.

DR. WOLLASTON: We want to trade out of the possession.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Then we are intending to try and make it apply to vessels no matter where they are registered.

DR. WOLLASTON: I am talking about the foreign trade from Australia to another country.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: I shall try and make it apply to that too.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: I would like to stand by the resolution, and I will add the words, "within territorial waters," if it is desired.

MR. FERNIE: Do you mean it to apply to a ship going to Melbourne?

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: If she is in our waters, she is under our laws.

MR. FERNIE: Would you make it apply to all foreign ships?

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: She has only to go a few miles outside of the limit and she is away.

MR. NORMAN HILL: The claim which is now put forward is a claim which no nation has ever before put forward with regard to any other nation.

HON. DUGALD THOMSON: I think there must be some misunderstanding. With regard to this, we have already passed resolutions, one of which says, "that the conditions imposed by Australian or New Zealand laws as regards manning should only apply to vessels registered in these colonies or engaged in their coasting trade." We have already passed several resolutions as regards other provisions to that effect.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: That was the resolution that was passed in my absence and I objected to.

SIR JOSEPH WARD: Might I suggest this would do what Sir William Lyne wants, say after the words "British possession," "which operates in regard to vessels registered and usually trading in that possession or during the period such vessel is engaged in the coastal trade."

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: I do not care about the wording: I want it to embrace what I said.

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: We want to be sure as to whether we are agreed in substance.

SIR JOSEPH WARD: I suggest what I have just stated: "or during the period such vessel is engaged in the coastal trade, and strike out "or usually trading."

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: That is only preamble.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: If those words were added they could carry with them the necessity of registration.

SIR JOSEPH WARD: Put "or trading during the period."

MR. NORMAN HILL: Why not leave out "registered"?